

2.2 Information Needs of Canadian Exporters

2.2.1 Types of Information Needed

Exporters were asked to identify their most important information needs for conducting export activities. As shown in Exhibit 3, information on foreign markets was identified most frequently (66% of the firms interviewed) followed by information on:

- . foreign government regulations and policies (identified by 42% of respondent firms);
- . export assistance programs (41%); and,
- . Canadian government regulations (21%).

Needs vary somewhat by sector. Foreign market information is considered most important by: consultants (77%), forestry equipment manufacturers (79%), and oil and gas equipment manufacturers (83%). Both the consulting and oil and gas sectors sell a large proportion of their products and services to third world and non-market economies which are difficult to penetrate. The forestry equipment sector faces a diffuse market of logging contractors and small companies, which possibly explains its requirement for more market information.

Information on foreign regulations is considered most important by the fisheries (60%) and food products sectors (71%), reflecting their concern with health and labelling requirements. In contrast, the software and oil and gas sectors are less concerned about foreign regulations: only 27% and 21% respectively identified this as their most important information need.