

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report addresses one of approximately 80 sectors reviewed as part of a broadly-based study commissioned by the U.S. Trade, Tourism and Investment Development Bureau of the Department of External Affairs. The objective of this study is to provide a preliminary indication of potential opportunities for the expansion of Canadian exports into the United States. The findings in each report are based on an analysis of U.S. trade statistics and a limited survey of U.S. importers and trade associations from a broad cross-section of the U.S. industry.

The purpose of each report is to assist Canadian companies in identifying potential export opportunities that may justify further investigation. While the reports do not provide analyses of Canadian export industries or their international competitiveness, they do provide other kinds of information that should be useful. For example, each report provides information on individual companies that have indicated an interest in new sources of supply, some of which are quite specific. Information on U.S. import market size and shares, and on industry publications and trade fairs that the companies surveyed felt were most useful, are also provided. As such, individual reports in the series should be of particular interest to small and medium-sized Canadian companies that either are not yet exporting, or that would like to increase their level of exports, to the United States.

Furniture is one of the sectors examined during the study. A survey of U.S. importers of furniture was conducted to determine the effects of the devaluation of the U.S. dollar and potential opportunities for Canadian manufacturers. The results of the survey were significant. Over 90% of the respondents reported that the devaluation of the U.S. dollar had increased the costs of their imported furniture. The majority, as a consequence, were interested in hearing about Canadian sources of supply for possible substitution for higher-priced imports now being purchased. Importers indicated a preference to receive information from Canadian firms via the mail or at trade fairs. Price and quality are key considerations in the decision to import.

Information on companies that are interested in new sources of supply of furniture as well as those who are seeking specific types of furniture has been compiled. Popular U.S. trade fairs and publications are also provided.