

Shipment by Land

Under the NAFTA, the right of entry for Canadian and American trucks will be gradually phased-in over a six-year period. Under a memorandum of understanding between Canada and Mexico, Canadian trucking companies now have the right to cross into Mexico. They must transfer their load to a Mexican carrier within 20 kilometres of the Mexican border. Canadian carriers may also pick up north-bound goods within this area. There are no direct rail links to Mexico from Canada, but shipments can be made using US railways and multimodal "piggyback" services.

Truck Services

Road transportation to and from Mexico has grown in importance in recent years. Only large quantities of bulk commodities are outside the domain of truck transportation. Refrigerated cargo moves almost exclusively by truck. Overall, about 60 percent of all Canadian shipments to Mexico travel by truck.

The exporter should ensure that arrangements have been made to transfer the shipment to a domestic carrier at the Mexican border. Some trucking companies simply transfer the trailer to a Mexican tractor. Others reload the cargo into a Mexican trailer.

Many Canadian trucking companies have developed arrangements with American and Mexican truckers to provide a complete transportation package. The best alternative is a logistics company or freight forwarder which has a presence in Canada, the US and Mexico. This will facilitate customs procedures, including the opening and closing of transportation and exportation (T&E) bonds in the United States.

Road transportation from major Canadian cities to the Mexican border at Laredo, Texas, takes about four days in full truck loads (FTL) and up to seven days for less-than-truckload (LTL) shipments. Once customs is cleared, another two or three days are required for the goods to reach Mexico City.