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In their Conference on the Economy held in Regina in 1985, First Ministers noted the major contribution made by the export sector to Canada's national income and expressed concern at the decline of Canada's share of world markets. To meet this challenge, First Ministers endorsed the need to generate widespread support for a new trade strategy for Canada which would embody three principal elements:

- a) to increase Canadian competitiveness;
- b) to maintain and increase access to foreign markets;
- and
- c) to achieve more effective international marketing.

It was recognized that these objectives can be met but only if a full and effective partnership of the federal and provincial governments, the private sector and labour can be achieved to ensure a more focused and consistent approach to international marketing. Appropriate means of assembling and organizing information to suit specific needs is a foundation of the process of consultation from which consensus would be reached. To this end the current computerized planning system was conceived.

In addition to the geographic perspective of this report, information from the data bank is available in a variety of configurations, the most important of which are synopses of 16 sectors and a variety of market reports. Information from these reports can be obtained on request from the geographic or sectoral bureaux of the Department.

The purpose of this synopsis is to provide those engaged in the process of promoting exports from Canada the means to obtain condensed market information on export opportunities. It does not attempt to cover all aspects of foreign markets and by design avoids minutiae and detail. It is intended to highlight what, in the opinion of Canadian Trade Commissioners abroad, is important in their respective territories and what tactics they envisage would be most appropriate to exploit the market. Where markets or sectors in these synopsis stimulate interest on the part of exporters, they are invited to seek out more detail information and further background direct from the post, the geographic and sectoral bureaux of the External Affairs and International Trade Canada or the International Trade Centres currently located within the provincial offices of Industry, Science and Technology Canada.