

DOCUMENTATION

Every product exported to Mexico requires a specific set of accompanying documents, and Mexican customs officials insist on the absolute accuracy and completeness of all documentation. It is best to work with a Mexican customs broker to ensure that documents appropriate to the transaction are included with the shipment. The following basic documents are required for freight shipments to Mexico.

COMMERCIAL INVOICE

The most important shipping document is the commercial invoice and it must accompany all shipments, whichever the carrier (by air, sea, train or truck, even if the person is hand carrying the items) and whether or not the items are for sale in Mexico (including temporary imports, samples, literature or gifts). The commercial invoice, for whatever amount it covers, no longer needs to be legalized by a consulate. Invoices should be prepared in Spanish. If they are prepared in any other language, the Spanish translation may follow the original text in the invoice, or the invoices should be accompanied by a written translation signed by the seller, the buyer, or the customs broker. All weights and measures should be indicated in metric equivalents in addition to or instead of other systems.

The original and all copies should be signed manually by the exporter, indicating the name and position of the signee. The signature may be accompanied (although it is not required) by a statement to the effect that the value and other details thereof are true and correct. Only in the case where the exporter does not sign the invoice, the Mexican importer could sign it to certify that it is correct. The commercial invoice must contain the following information:

- a) place and date of issuance;
- b) complete name and address of buyer or importer in Mexico;
- c) complete name and address of exporter;
- d) detailed description of the merchandise;
- e) f.o.b. unit value and total value of each item listed on the invoice;
- f) signature of seller, name and position; and
- g) shipper's invoice number and customer's order number.

All shipments to Mexico must be insured. In the case of maritime shipments, the commercial invoice, together with the packing list and the bill of lading should be sent to the Mexican importer through an international messenger service (DHL, Federal Express, etc). When the goods are shipped by air, all documents (invoice, packing list and airway bill of lading) accompany the goods on the plane and the airline is responsible for their delivery to the importer or customs broker. It is usually useful to accompany the invoice by a catalogue or other literature of the goods shipped (if available), since it may be very helpful for their proper classification for import duty purposes.

PACKING LIST

A packing list is necessary when more than one package is shipped. This document should be sent, together with the commercial invoice(s), to the buyer or customs broker as consignee. The number of copies needed can vary between 4 and 7, according to the means of transportation. The packing list may be included within the invoice, and the list should include: