Lack of aggressiveness, commitment, and the persistence required to compete in the U.S. market.

Temporary withdrawal from the market: Once in the market it is important to maintain a presence. Re-entry is substantially more difficult than the original entry.

Lack of persistence: If the initial effort is not successful, don't give up. Examine the same clients for an alternate niche. If the frozen food buyer rejects your proposal, examine the package size and look for another opportunity, perhaps in the deli section. Upgrading your packaging may allow the product to be marketed differently.

Overly optimistic timetables for success: Once marketing starts it is not uncommon to expend 2-5 years of resources to create a successful market.

Wanting to sell to the biggest retailer first: Large operations do not want to do missionary work. The product must be a proven seller. It is best to start with some of the smaller firms.

Companies are not willing to enter trade shows in order to find reps or distributors. They feel that the expense is too great.

Insufficient research into reps or brokers, with the result that the agent is not providing the type of service the exporter wants.

Helpful Hints

•Think big but start small. Initially it may be best to target a medium-sized market rather than a large market like Los Angeles or Chicago.

•Know your lead time (the approximate time from order to delivery) in dealing with prospective buyers.

•Determine your introductory allowances/promotions as to amount and length of offer.

•Establish your terms of sale (cash discounts, slotting fees, etc.) and be prepared to match your competition.

•Determine pallet quantities (tier and tie) for your products if shipped palletized.

•Establish minimum order quantities in pounds or cases. Wherever possible, pool truck shipments.

•Determine product liability, insurance, name of carriers, limits, etc.

The Decision to Export

A decision to export must be preceded by a thorough analysis of the financial performance of the company, its export potential, and its product line. This analysis could take the form of a series of questions. Here are some examples:

•Are you prepared to make a long-term commitment to exporting?

•What are your present domestic financing requirements?

•What resources are available?

•What will be the effect of export sales on finances and resources?

•Can the company withstand two or three years of export losses?

•What contribution to profits will exporting make?

•How much production is available for export?

•What products can be exported or adapted for export?

•Can they be delivered competitively?

•Who are the end users?