

First-time Exporter's Guide — Continued from page 9

NEBS introduces companies to the essentials of exporting via training sessions and first-hand exposure to contacts and market information on U.S. border states. NEBS Plus is a recent expansion of the program, designed to help more experienced exporters investigate markets in other U.S. regions.

NEBS and NEBS Plus missions are often planned around trade shows to give participants an in-depth look at a specific business sector. Missions last from one to three days and may include:

- pre-mission briefing on export services and programs available from the Canadian and provincial governments;
- travel to a Canadian post in the United States;
- briefing on border procedures;
- presentation by U.S. manufacturers' representatives, sales agents or distributors;
- tour of a relevant trade fair;
- visits to local wholesalers or retailers;
- briefing on local U.S. markets;
- meetings with Canadian Consulate trade officers and potential agents or distributors; and
- distribution of export information guides and kits.

A fee of \$100 applies to each company representative. The government may cover up to two nights hotel accommodation, as well as assistance on a case-by-case basis with trade show entrance fees. Air fare, transportation and personal expenses are the responsibility of the participant.

Who qualifies?

Canadian companies incorporated and operating in Canada that have an interest in but are not yet exporting to the United States on a regular basis are eligible for NEBS programs.

Canadian companies currently exporting to the United States that have sales of less than \$2.3 million are eligible for NEBS Plus missions to other U.S. regions.

How do I apply?

Contact your nearest International Trade Centre.

What can International Trade Centres in Canada and Canadian posts in the United States do for me?

The International Trade Centres (ITC), located across Canada, work with partners at other levels of Government to help Canadian exporters plan appropriate export strategies and take advantage of opportunities in foreign markets. Trade officers can provide current information on international markets, joint ventures and technology-transfer opportunities, trade fairs and missions, and trade-related conferences and seminars.

ITCs can also assist export-ready companies prepare a marketing plan, a key element before considering entering any export market and especially important when dealing with highly competitive U.S. markets. With a detailed marketing plan in hand, you are better positioned to take advantage of the services offered by trade commissioners at the

Canadian offices in the United States.

Trade commissioners and business development officers at Canadian consulates in the United States know local business environments and can help you penetrate regional markets. Trade commissioners can promote your company to local customers; screen local industry contacts; advise on market channels; identify opportunities; advise on local competition; recommend appropriate trade fairs; identify suitable foreign firms to act as agents; help you find credit and business information on potential foreign partners; intercede to help solve problems with duties, taxes or foreign exchange; and advise and assist you with foreign joint ventures and licensing.

The Canadian consulates are best able to assist you if you are export-ready. They will require complete information about your business, including contact information, detailed description of products and their competitive advantages, "sales pitch," business goals, marketing plans, activities in the market and supply capabilities.

