
VI. Documentation of Shipments to Mexico

Any shipment to Mexico will entail three basic documents, namely:

- **Commercial invoice**
- **Packing list, and**
- **Bill of lading,**

and, depending on the commodity, there may be a requirement for:

- **Special certificates, and**
- **Import permit.**

The special certificates would be for a limited range of products, such as agricultural goods needing a phytosanitary certificate, while the import permit would be necessary for an ever diminishing number of goods (now about 200 commodities), and scheduled for further liberalization under NAFTA. In some sales, the Mexican importer may want certain additional documentation, such as a pro-forma invoice or a certificate of origin.

When preparing a shipment, exporters are advised to consult the Department's guide "Shipping Documents and Customs Regulations for Exports to Mexico", which is periodically up-dated, any of the commercial reference books listed in the bibliography, or to obtain current advice from the Mexican importer and Canadian trade officers. Exporters will learn that some documentation in Spanish or in English with a Spanish translation will be necessary.

Of the documents listed above, a transportation company usually has its own forms for the bill of lading, provides these to the exporter, and can advise exporters on proper completion. The bill should include full information on the marks, serial numbers, quantity of packages, kind of packages, and the gross weight in units of the metric system. The bill customarily should include the name and address of the shipper, name and address of the Mexican importer, consignee or customs broker, port of origin and port of destination, description of the goods, listing of freight and other charges, number of bills of lading in the full set and date and signature of the carrier's official acknowledging receipt on board of the goods for shipment.

For a **maritime shipment**, there should be three originals, plus three copies. These should be sent through an international messenger service to the importer in Mexico or the customs broker.