



amount, one in each succeeding year. There will be the need to modernize and re-focus mechanization towards the private farmer. Companies interested in joint ventures will find willing partners in Syria. The growth of the private sector in agricultural processing will create further opportunities for Canadian machinery exporters, with finance for projects readily available.

Other growth areas where potential exists for Canadian exporters are the pharmaceutical and plastics industries, but we are still in the process of identifying specific opportunities.

The **oil and gas** sector will provide a continuing demand for products which will extend the life of existing oil fields, as exploration has not resulted in new commercially exploitable sites. The production and use of natural gas will be expanded, and the gas pipeline network has been expanded to serve more of the generation capacity and industrial uses.

Other opportunities for Canadian business exist in **food processing and packaging machinery** and **technology products**. Canadian Lumber could also increase its market share.

CONSTRAINTS

Major competitors continue to be the European Union countries, led by Italy and Germany, followed by Japan, France and the U.S.A. The Syrian businessperson is normally fairly conservative; he depends on personal relationships rather than North-American style corporate relationships. He will normally prefer to set up a long term personal business relation built on mutual trust, which requires the Canadian business person to devote more time than one would in North America to conclude a deal. Trust is a precious commodity in this market and it is the gateway especially when doing business with the private sector.

The system of public sector purchasing in Syria depends on competitive tendering. By law, there must be at least three bidders or the tender call is cancelled and repeated. Bidders must submit bid bonds or be excluded from consideration. If a tender is awarded, the bid bond must be replaced by a performance bond of, normally, ten percent of the value of the contract. In years past, Syria was very slow to return the bid bonds of unsuccessful bidders. The situation has greatly improved and we have heard of no recent case of delays in return of bonds.

