



# ► Forest Products

## Important market facts

- France has the most important forest territory in the European Economic Community (14 million hectares).
- Three-quarters of French forests are privately owned.
- The forest-products industry employs some 500 000 people in 85 000 companies.
- This resource is the second worst sector in the country's balance of trade.
- France imports in the following proportions:
  - 40-50 per cent for wood pulp;
  - 25 per cent for paper-board; and
  - 25-30 per cent for timber.
- The volume of imports in 1986 amounted to 1.7 million m<sup>3</sup> of softwood and 1.1 million m<sup>3</sup> of tropical hardwood.
- Scandinavian countries dominate the import market.
- Canadian wood products have a reputation for high quality.

- Canadian pulp and rough softwood are exempt from customs tariffs. These exemptions also apply to newsprint and softwood plywood within tariff quotas.
- Basic forest products, timber and wood pulp are imported through specialized agents.

## Market trends

- The deficit in this sector is continually rising.
- The three main sectors in this market are construction, joinery, and do-it-yourself.
- The needs of the construction sector will increase only if related techniques are improved.
- In the joinery sector 63 per cent of window frames are still made of wood, but PVC (polyvinyl chloride) is increasing in popularity.
- The do-it-yourself sector is constantly increasing (turnover in 1985 was \$5.3 billion - 4 000 retail outlets).

## Recommendations for Canadian exporters

- Joinery: Canadian producers will have to offer softwood that is better suited to market needs (clear components suitable for a natural stained finish; with small sound knots suitable for a painted finish).
- Do-it-yourself: the sole opportunity is the delivery of rough sawn lumber to remanufacturing plants.
- Construction: other higher value components (sidings, panelling, shingles and shakes).
- The French market is in the process of opening up to higher added value components. Canadian producers will have to adapt to the new conditions.

## Additional information

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