

DOCUMENTS AND LOGISTICS

The responsibilities of the Mexican agent, distributor-importer include obtaining any necessary permits in advance, advising on labelling and documentation requirements, and arranging for the physical clearance of the goods through Mexican customs. Depending on the product this can be very simple or quite complex. Most of the Mexican regulations affecting imports are binding on the importer of record. But compliance with some of them requires support from the exporter. Seemingly small errors in documentation can cause serious delays at the border. Therefore, as a practical matter, the onus on compliance often falls on the Canadian exporter.

DOCUMENTATION

In addition to the standard documents required for all international trade, shipping to Mexico may require any or all of the following:

- A certificate of compliance for goods which are subject to Mexico's system *Normas Oficiales Mexicanas (NOMs)*, official standards.
- Sanitary or phytosanitary certificates are required by *Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería y Desarrollo Rural (Sagar)*, Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development, for a wide variety of unprocessed animal and plant products.
- Import permits from the *Secretaría de Salud (SS)*, Secretariat of Health for a variety of foods, beverages, chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers and personal or health care products, including cosmetics.
- A North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) certificate of origin, if the goods will receive preferential treatment under that treaty.

In addition, products must have labels affixed which meet the requirements of the Mexican labelling decree. These requirements are subject to frequent change and the exporter should rely on the distributor to advise of all requirements well before shipping. Documentation issues are discussed in detail in the publication *Documents and Regulations for Exporting to Mexico*, which is part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) *Export i Mexico* series and available through the InfoCentre.

LOGISTICS

Except for bulk commodities, most Canadian goods are shipped to Mexico by truck, most frequently via Laredo or Brownsville, Texas. All goods must be cleared through customs at the US-Mexico border by a Mexican customs broker. Typically the goods are received by a forwarding agent or logistics company on the US side of the border. In most cases, a transportation and exportation (T&E) bond will have been issued by an American broker at the Canada-US border. The US broker closes the T&E at the US-Mexico border. The Mexican broker notifies the