

Documentation

Every product exported to Mexico requires a specific set of accompanying documents. It is best to work with a Mexican customs broker to ensure that documents appropriate to the transaction are included with the shipment. At a minimum, all shipments require the following:

- a commercial invoice;
- a packing list specifying contents; and
- a bill of lading or air waybill.

Mexican customs officials insist on the *absolute accuracy and completeness of these documents*. Any discrepancies can lead to delays, penalties or even confiscation. For further information and assistance, contact the nearest Mexican Trade Commission.

The commercial invoice must be signed by the exporter, showing the marks, numbers, types, and quantities of products being shipped. The document must be presented in its original form with up to 11 copies. A Spanish translation

must accompany the English original. The invoice must also show all costs including an itemization of the freight charges and insurance since Mexican tariffs are calculated on the basis of the value of the goods plus the cost of insurance and freight.

Sanitary certificates in quadruplicate must accompany the shipment of live animals, seeds, plants, and related products. These are provided by various Canadian government agencies and the original must be notarized by a Mexican consulate in Canada before shipment is made.

Special labelling requirements apply to silver and nickel plated goods, wearing apparel, leather goods, packaged foodstuffs, beverages, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, prepared feeds, and insecticides. For these products, consult with the customs broker, representatives of the Mexican Trade Commission in Canada, or the Mexican government agency regulating imports in your sector.

Standards

Product standards are an important consideration for companies exporting capital goods, machinery and industrial equipment to Mexico. Standards are the purview of the Mexican Bureau of Standards (*Dirección General de Normas*), commonly referred to as the DGN, which is part of SECOFI. This institution establishes the weight and measurement standards for the country. The metric system is used in Mexico and standards for goods are determined according to the International System of Units. Generally, Mexican standards follow those that are widely adhered to in the industrialized countries. In addition, Mexico follows the standards set by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), the American Society for Testing of Materials (ASTM) and the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE).

All imported goods, including building and construction materials, electronics, chemicals and medical equipment, require a quality and standards authorization from the DGN called the "NOM" before they are allowed into the country. DGN publishes quality standards for a wide range of products in its catalogues. Canadian firms are advised to consult with a customs broker or freight forwarder to find out whether a given product conforms to DGN standards and is therefore eligible for a NOM.

More detailed information and copies of DGN standards may be obtained by contacting:

Secretaría de Industria e Inversión Extranjera
Dirección General de Normas
Depto. de Certificación y Verificación de Normas Obligatorias
Av. Puente de Tecawachalco No. 6, Piso 1
Col. Fuentes de Tecawachalco
México, D.F.
México
Tel: 540-2620 or 589-9877, ext. 130

Where a NOM is required, applications must be made to the following special division of SECOFI:

Dirección General de Asuntos Fronterizos
Periférico Sur 3025, Piso 7
Col. Héroes de Padierna
Del. Magdalena Contreras
México, D.F.
México
Tel: 683-4394 or 683-7055, ext. 2706