

Middle East Trade Statistics - 1992

The following contains a summary of the export/import statistics for Canada and the Middle East for 1992 in forms that effectively illustrate recent trends and changes in Canadian commercial activity in the region.

OVERVIEW

Exports from Canada to the region are continuing to enjoy steady growth, particularly to the countries of the lower Gulf, Iran and Saudi Arabia. If taken as a total for the region, the figures would seem to indicate a small decline in exports to the region (\$1.16 billion in 1991 vs \$1.01 billion in 1992). When the figures are subjected to a country-specific analysis however, the picture that emerges is significantly more positive:

- Saudi Arabia exports, while showing an increase over 1991 (\$286 million in 1991 vs. \$296 million in 1992), do not however, include \$88 million of GM LAV's that originated in Canada in 1992 but were transhipped via France. With these figures factored in, the 1992 Saudi Arabia export total is approximately \$375 million, a 26% increase over 1991, increasing the Middle East figures to over \$1 billion. The figure could have been even higher if the level of barley exports to Saudi Arabia had not declined in 1992 due to much lower Canadian crop levels and increased foreign subsidies. The commodity breakdown for Saudi Arabia also reflects the increasing diversification of Canadian exports to that market. The figures do not include the increasing number of joint ventures, service contracts and manufacturing agreements that are becoming a significant percentage of Canadian commercial activity in the Kingdom.
- Exports to Iran continued to increase, from \$333 million in 1991 to \$359 million in 1992, this despite EDC not yet having concluded the proposed Line of Credit.
- Kuwait export figures for 1991 (\$336 million) included an aircraft leasing contract worth \$304 million. The 1992 figures (\$24 million) reflect pre-Gulf war export levels.
- Import/export levels have remained steady over the last five years and are consistently diversified over many sectors.
- A significant increase in exports to Lebanon (86%) are the result of the reconstruction efforts underway in that country and illustrate the revitalisation of an important Canadian export market.
- The increase in exports to the UAE (55%) and Oman (40%) reflect an increasing diversity in the types of Canadian exports to the region and the increasing shift in commercial activity towards the countries in the lower Gulf. The opening of a Canadian Consulate in Dubai, staffed by a Trade Commissioner, is intended to take advantage of this trend.