

Synthetic resins represent the greatest volume of imports. Rigid plates of plastic material, PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride) based granules and sand, polypropylene films, and manufacturing wastes are also imported in a lesser scale.

Color concentrates (masterbatches) for coloring polyethylene, polypropylene, PVC and polystyrene, are included in the total raw material import figures previously shown.

There are industries that import plastic manufacturing waste material and also collect local plastic waste, thus obtaining a domestic source of raw material.

Machinery and Equipment Imports

The machinery and equipment installed in Guatemalan factories is principally purchased in U.S.A., Germany, Japan, Austria, Italy and Spain. Machinery and equipment acquisitions are usually done through local representatives and distributors, through direct contacts with manufacturers and in specialized trade fairs which take place in different parts of the world.

It is difficult to establish the quantity of new equipment purchases, but the president of the Plastic Manufacturers Union estimated that the whole industry will make from 3 to 5 large purchases per year.

Trends and Expectations

The Guatemalan total volume of imported resins and raw material has grown in the last five years at an annual average rate of 12.5% from a total of 25,000 tons in 1986 up to 40,000 tons in 1990. Early in this period (86/87), the growth was even higher (50.7%) reaching stable levels by 1989/90.

This trend is a natural consequence of the countries economic behavior which also experienced a general growth beginning in 1986, after several years of negative rate, reflecting the increase in investors confidence and the nation's economic stability.