

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report addresses one of approximately 80 sectors reviewed as part of a broadly-based study commissioned by the U.S. Trade, Tourism and Investment Development Bureau of the Department of External Affairs. The objective of this study is to provide a preliminary indication of potential opportunities for the expansion of Canadian exports into the United States. The findings in each report are based on an analysis of U.S. trade statistics and a limited survey of U.S. importers and trade associations from a broad cross-section of U.S. industry.

The purpose of each report is to assist Canadian companies in identifying potential export opportunities that may justify further investigation. While the reports do not provide analyses of Canadian export industries or their international competitiveness, they do provide other kinds of information that should be useful. For example, each report provides information on individual companies that have indicated an interest in new sources of supply, some of which are quite specific. Information on U.S. import market size and shares and on industry publications and trade fairs that the companies surveyed felt were most useful are also provided. As such, individual reports in the series should be of particular interest to small and medium-sized Canadian companies that either are not yet exporting or that would like to increase their level of exports to the United States.

Footwear is one of the sectors examined during the study. A survey of U.S. importers of footwear was conducted to determine the effects of the devaluation of the U.S. dollar on imports from major developed countries and potential opportunities for Canadian manufacturers to replace these imports. The results of the survey were significant. The devaluation of the U.S. dollar was reported by 84% of the respondents to have inflated the costs of imported footwear, thus prompting them to begin an active search for alternate suppliers. Although many of the importers surveyed had never tried Canadian sources, the majority of respondents were definitely interested in hearing more about Canadian sources of supply as substitutes for the higher priced offshore goods which they were importing.

In addition to the analysis of specific market opportunities, this report contains the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of U.S. companies that were surveyed and that expressed interest in new sources of supply of footwear. These importers indicated a strong preference to receive information via the mail, through the participation of Canadian companies in trade fairs or