
The section entitled "Transportation Selection Check List" contains additional points exporters should ask themselves before and after making transportation decisions.

Trucking

Trucking is the primary transport mode used to move goods between Canada and Mexico. Approximately 40% of shipments moving from Canada to Mexico go by road [see Appendix A]. Within Mexico itself, 60% of all freight haulage goes by truck.

A comprehensive range of goods are shipped by road, with only bulk commodities being really outside the domain of truck transport. Nearly all refrigerated cargo bound for Mexico is carried on specially equipped trucks. Substantial cold storage facilities can be found in Brownsville and Laredo, Texas. Trucking is also the principal mode of transport for small, less-than-truck-load (LTL) shipments of general merchandise. Rail caters mainly to carload shipments and air targets high value goods.

In general, road transport from major Canadian cities to Laredo takes 3 to 7 days and once customs have been cleared, 1 to 2 days are needed to reach Mexico City. Laredo is the principal border crossing between Mexico and the United States, but trucks have several other points to choose from (see Map, page 47). In fact, the ongoing flurry of infrastructure developments (new bridges, expanded lanes, etc.) at numerous border crossings bodes well for increased motor traffic.

Numerous trucking companies will transport goods down to Laredo but most do not have an affiliated Mexican network and must arrange for a Mexican trucking company to take over the cargo at the border. This can involve lengthy time delays (from 2 to 6 days) as customs procedures and transshipment occur. Some companies have the means (and willingness) to simply transfer their trailer to a Mexican tractor which decreases the time spent at the border. Others lose even more time as their cargo is moved from one trailer to another. At present, there are no known interchange agreements between Canadian and Mexican trucking companies. Some American firms, including companies operating in Canada, already enjoy the benefits of interchange agreements with Mexican firms or have established subsidiary companies in Mexico. In any case, Mexican regulations state that a Mexican driver and truck/tractor must transport all goods within that country, so some form of transfer is inevitable.