Of the three groups of pesticides, herbicides have had the most research funding and have seen the greatest technological progress. On the other hand, they have been the most susceptible to pirating and violation of intellectual property rights. As a result of the increasing difficulty of operating in the agricultural chemical market, production facilities have been consolidating.

The USDOC expects the value of product shipments to increase approximately 10% in 1989 to $5.5 billion (in 1982 constant U.S. dollars). This estimate is based on an expectation of increased cultivation responding to crop price increases which resulted from the 1988 drought. The USDOC notes that the consolidation trend will continue in the long term. This trend is attributed to several causes including the weakened dollar, a long-term decline worldwide in planted acreage and, most importantly, increasingly stringent environmental regulations, particularly with regard to toxicology.

This chapter has provided a definition of the products included within the scope of this report, the criteria used for their selection and a summary of U.S. imports of those products for 1982-88. Where available, a short-term outlook for the corresponding U.S. industry has also been provided. As this report is intended only to provide a sectoral overview and an indication of the opportunities that may exist for increased Canadian exports, individual readers are strongly encouraged to conduct more in-depth research on any potential opportunities identified.

Users of this report who are interested in undertaking further research into specific markets are also encouraged to contact any of the Canadian Government Trade Development offices listed in the final Appendix to this report, to determine what assistance may be available to them.