

The Environmental Market in Argentina

Agricultural producers may need tools or techniques allowing them to apply erosion control or alternative working methodologies when natural conditions demand so. Producers may also need to diversify their farming, cattle-raising, dairy-farming, and other techniques through the application of intensive technologies including irrigation systems and the application of agrochemical products and nutrients. Ministries of Agriculture or of the Environment should be contacted. At the moment, the main environmental agency is the *Secretariat of Natural Resources and Human Environment*. For a list of relevant associations and government entities, refer to Appendix 3.

According to US Best Markets Report (BMR) for pollution control equipment, Argentina's total market was USD 12.0 million in 1993 with an expected average annual growth (%AAG) of 16%, from 1993 to 1995. The size of the import market was estimated to be USD 3.0 million in 1993 with an expected %AAG of 20%, from 1993 to 1995. But as previously mentioned, due to new legislation and probable financing to SMEs, demand should grow even more.

HELPING OUT SMEs!

In 1992, 108,458 companies were classified as SMEs in Argentina. They employed an average of 9 staff members each. At the time, SMEs contributed 42% of the country's industrial production. Now, they only account for 30% of the industrial production. This is due to the open-market policies and the difficulty that SMEs find in surviving without the protection of high tariff barriers. Their production methods are far from sophisticated and they do not have the financial resources to ensure adequate treatment of their wastes or much needed technology transfers.

The Association for the Development of Environmental Management (ADEGA) is setting up a project called the *Argentine Center for Clean Production (CEPLA)*. The goal of the center is to become the facilitator, for the transfer of know how, between local Argentine SMEs which need to learn how to operate in an environmentally safe manner, and foreign SMEs that have gained the expertise and already possess the technology.

In a study carried out by ADEGA, in which executives from 212 industrial companies were interviewed, 67% of the firms said they were planning to invest in environmental projects, of which 30.3% of the funds would go to the transfer of foreign technologies. Many SMEs have joined forces to form the *Cámara Argentina de la Pequeña y Mediana Empresa* (re: Appendix 3). United, their search for technology becomes more effective and more promising.