

IMPORTERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

Importers and distributors include the *Centrales de Abastos* which are large distribution hubs in urban areas that bring together smaller brokers, import agents and concessionaires. They play an important role in distributing products which are imported in relatively small volumes. There are numerous importer/distributors in Mexico; a few of the largest are described in the following sections.

SERVICIOS INTEGRALES DE REFRIGERACIÓN

Servicios Integrales de Refrigeración is the most important importer and distributor of fresh and frozen food products in Mexico City. This young company achieved sales of US \$15 million in its second year. The company is owned jointly by Mexican and American interests. It operates cold storage facilities in Monterrey, Mexico City and Guadalajara. Facilities include six freezers with a capacity of 360 pallets frozen and 200 pallets refrigerated. The company presently handles only American products, of which pork comprises about 20 percent.

JAMÓN SERRANO DE MÉXICO

Jamón Serrano de México is a small Mexican processor of Spanish-type cured ham. It operates a facility near Mexico City, with annual sales in the order of US \$2 million. *Jamón Serrano* uses its own fleet of trucks to supply delicatessens, four- and five-star restaurants and hotels, as well as the major retail chains. The company distributes only in the Mexico City area.

Products are purchased from domestic suppliers including *Kowi*, *Lancer*, *Alpro* and *Pisa*. They purchase about 1,800 hams per month and require a weight of between 9 and 9.5 kilograms each.

The company formerly imported deli-products from Spain but this was stopped because of health regulation problems. It wants to find Canadian suppliers for raw materials for processing into sausages and cured or cooked products. *Jamón Serrano* would also like to import Italian-type cured ham, and deli-products such as salami, mortadela, bacon and hot dogs.