

Jamaica National Investment Promotion Ltd. (JNIP), a "one-stop" promotion agency that centralizes government dealings with potential investors. JNIP may be contacted directly at 15 Oxford Road, Kingston 5, telephone (809) 929-4000.

Like other CARICOM countries, Jamaica offers potential investors a range of tax and non-tax incentives, proximity to North American markets, good shipping and air connections and preferential access to European Community and CARICOM markets. Up to a 15-year tax holiday is available for approved industries, as is duty free importation of machinery, equipment and raw materials for the duration of the tax-free period. In the Kingston Free Zone, manufacturers operate free of foreign exchange controls and duty for the production of goods to be exported outside of CARICOM. The government is currently planning an expansion of the Free Zone facilities.

Areas in which investment is being welcomed include textiles and garments, building supplies, electronics, furniture, tobacco products, horticulture and food processing. Assembly operations have existed in Jamaica for a number of years. Potential investment is evaluated according to factors such as employment created, export earning potential, contribution to food self-sufficiency, and the level of capital inflow. The preference is for joint venture arrangements, although proposals for all sorts of investments are being processed and approved.

Potential investors should bear in mind a number of negative factors with which the government is currently attempting to deal. Among these are the poor quality of service by some public utilities, most notable of which is the unreliable power supply, the shortage of managers, and the unsettled industrial relations climate.

Further information is available in Canada from Ms. Kay Baxter, Counsellor, High Commission for Jamaica, 275 Slater Street, Suite 402, Ottawa, K1P 5H9, telephone (613) 233-9311; or Mr. Danny Powell, Trade Commissioner, 214 King Street, Suite 206, Toronto, telephone (416) 598-3008/3393.

An agreement to avoid double taxation and a foreign investment insurance agreement are in place between Canada and Jamaica.

Major Market Opportunities

Traditionally, Canada has supplied foodstuffs (salt cod, sardines, wheat, skim milk powder) newsprint, and pharmaceuticals to Jamaica, as well as periodic shipments of major capital equipment. While the Jamaican Government is committed to releasing foreign exchange for imports of essential items such as foodstuffs and pharmaceuticals, as well as for raw materials and inputs for export-oriented manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, Jamaican imports are severely limited by a critical shortage of