

Import Duties and VAT

Under the Harmonized System, bottled water is coded thus: 2201.10.01, mineral water; 2201.10.02, carbonated water; both are subject to 20% ad-valorem duty. Simple non-mineral, non-carbonated purified (potable) drinking water is classified as 2201.90.01 dutiable 10%. In addition to the above, imported drinking water pays about 6% of the invoice price as customs clearance charges, plus 15% value added tax.

Distribution Channels

Imported bottled water is distributed wholesale in the market by importers, distributors or representatives of foreign suppliers, who sell to retail outlets such as supermarket chain stores and department stores, and to leading restaurants, hotels, tourist resorts, etc. Bottled drinking water of domestic origin is distributed throughout the country via distributorships established by individual companies or "concessions" which handle a variety of brands by volume. Importers/distributors of bottled water, foreign producers and countries of origin are given in Annex I.

Import Requirements

Imported water does not require a license or permit. However, the importer, distributor, agent or representative must obtain a registration number from the Secretaría de Salud (Ministry of Health):

Dirección General de Control
Sanitario de Bienes y Servicios
SECRETARIA DE SALUD
Donceles No. 39, Piso 1
Col. Centro
06010 Mexico, D.F.
Tel: 510-3999, 512-9283, 521-3050

in order that imported products for human consumption may be marketed in Mexico. Products may be sold with the original labels affixed. However, the importer, distributor, agent or representative must place a sticker on each bottle or package identifying the producer and/or exporter, country of origin, name and address of the importer and the registration number provided by the Ministry of Health.

Doing Business in Mexico

For the Canadian company or business person who is inexperienced where dealing with Mexico is concerned, the following chapters will indicate some of the aspects that should be carefully considered, in order to achieve any degree of success.

Foreign Exchange

Mexico does not exercise any controls on the transfer of foreign exchange