

Rising dollar — *continued from page 1*

Indeed, 90% of exporting companies view the value of the dollar as pivotal to their success in foreign markets. Forty-three percent believe the dollar will remain at current levels (US\$.75-.76 when the survey was taken), while 37% think that it will increase in the next six months. Only 20% of businesses now expect the dollar to decline, which is less than the 30% reading in the spring.

Companies in nearly all industry sectors expressed greater trade confidence, with base and semi-manufactured goods, information technology and transportation posting the most impressive gains, while the ban on Canadian beef and sluggish demand for consumer goods kept the confidence levels of companies in the agri-food and consumer goods sectors unchanged.

Confidence levels in Western Canada rose to 77 from 74 TCI points as exporters anticipate continued export growth in oil and gas, industrial equipment and agri-food. Similarly, increasing U.S. demand for resource-based exports from the Atlantic region caused confidence levels to rise to 76

from 73 across the region. In Ontario and Quebec, where the rising dollar is felt more acutely because of the size of the manufacturing sector, trade confidence remained unchanged during the last six months.

The survey also found that Canadian businesses have become even more bullish in their hiring intentions with 34% planning to add staff in the next six months, compared with 30% last spring. The majority (59%) see their hiring intentions remaining the same and only 6% said they intended to decrease staff.

The U.S. (80%) continues to be identified as the export market of choice by Canadian exporters, followed more distantly by the European Union (19%), Asia (17%) and Central and South America (11%). In the last 18 months, there has been a considerable upgrade in the importance of the Asian market for Canadian exporters.

EDC Economics expects the global economy to expand by 4% in 2004 compared with 3.3% in 2003. Growth is expected to be balanced around the world: 4.5% in the U.S., 3.6% in

Canada, 6% in Asia, 4.5% in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, 2% in Western Europe and 1.2% in Japan.

Opinion Search Inc. conducted the survey in November. A total of 1,000 respondents participated. The TCI was calculated based on a total of 688 responses out of the total surveyed (those who responded to all five elements of the TCI: six-month projections on global and domestic economic conditions, trade opportunities, domestic and foreign sales). The survey results are considered accurate to +/-3%, 19 times out of 20.

The full report can be accessed through EDC's Web site at www.edc.ca/docs/ereports/tradeConfidence/index_e.htm.

EDC provides trade finance and risk management services to Canadian exporters and investors in up to 200 markets. Founded in 1944, EDC is a Crown corporation that operates as a commercial financial institution.

For more information, contact Daniela Pizzuto, EDC Public Affairs, tel.: (613) 598-6829, e-mail: dpizzuto@edc.ca. *

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Minnesota to host international medical conference

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA — June 23-25, 2004 — The first annual **Medical Alley MedEdge International Conference** will bring together more than 1,000 industry professionals working at the frontiers of medical science. Canada will be a Silver Level sponsor of MedEdge and the Canadian Consulate General in Minneapolis has reserved a block of booths for a Canadian pavilion.

This conference will be held under the auspices of Medical Alley, an organization that promotes dialogue and synergy among all the diverse segments of the health care industry, in a region that has led the world in the development of medical knowledge.

For more information, go to www.mededgeinternational.com, or contact Dana S. Boyle, Business Development Officer, Canadian Consulate General in Minneapolis, e-mail: dana.boyle@dfait-maeci.gc.ca. *

CeBIT 2004

Technology Partnering Forum

HANNOVER, GERMANY — March 18, 2004 — Information and communications technology (ICT) researchers are invited to participate in a **Technology Partnering Forum at CeBIT 2004**, the world's leading event for information technology, telecommunications, software and services.

Organized by the Science and Technology Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Canadian and European Partners of **Information Society Technologies - Europe Canada (IST-EC)** and the Canadian Embassy in Berlin, the forum will provide selected Canadian ICT researchers with an

opportunity to address and meet with their counterparts, as well as business and financial leaders from Europe and around the world.

The forum will take place in Future Parc 2004, CeBIT's science and technology special exhibit where major national and international research organizations and companies will meet to present results of their R&D, and demonstrate their capabilities.

IST-EC is a two-year joint project established to foster collaboration between European and Canadian researchers in the ICT sector. IST-EC's methodology includes the organization of partnering sessions at major international conferences such as CeBIT,

where participants present their project ideas, meet with potential partners and initiate joint R&D projects. For more information, go to www.ist-ec.org.

For more information on CeBIT, contact Jim Burt, Science and Technology Division, DFAIT, tel.: (613) 996-4292, e-mail: jim.burt@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: www.cebit.de. *

Project Qatar 2004

DOHA, QATAR — September 19-23, 2004 — **Project Qatar 2004** is the first international trade exhibition for building, construction and environmental technology and materials and will attract international and Arab manufacturers and suppliers.

Opportunities

High demand for construction technology, power, building materials and equipment makes Qatar an ideal market for new suppliers and products. Qatar's rapid regional and global economic and commercial expansion is making it one of the most vibrant countries in the region. Although much of Qatar's business activity is focused on its oil- and gas-related industries, there are other types of industry in the country, mostly carried out by the private sector.

Major areas covered are the production of materials for the construction industry and the building of new hotels and touristic venues. Revenue from oil concessions is also being used for developments such as roads, housing, landscaping and environmental projects, power plants, hospitals, schools and parks.

For more information, contact George Sanderson, Commercial Counsellor, Canadian Embassy in Kuwait, e-mail: george.sanderson@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, or Bechara Nacouzi, tel.: (514) 685-3530, fax: (514) 685-6873, e-mail: bnacouzi@videotron.ca. *

Thousands flock to French livestock show

RENNES, FRANCE — September 14-17, 2004 — **SPACE 2004** is France's largest livestock show and is appropriately situated in the heart of Brittany, which produces over half of France's supply of pigs, chickens bred for meat and egg-producing chickens, and about 40% of the country's dairy livestock. In 2003, this show attracted 114,256 visitors, 8,390 of whom were from outside France. Of the 1,378 exhibitors, 394 were international.

Some Canadian exhibitors at SPACE 2003 included Semex France, a subsidiary of Guelph-based **Semex Canada**, which develops genetic technologies, products and services for livestock producers; **Eurobiosor**, a

Quebec-based company and subsidiary of the Centre de recherche industrielle du Québec (CRIQ), which produces a farm effluent treatment system; and Montreal-based **Lallemand Animal Nutrition**, which develops yeast and bacteria for agricultural applications.

Attending SPACE 2004 could prove to be very profitable for Canadian companies looking to sell livestock products in France or other parts of Europe. **For more information**, contact Yannick Dheilley, Commercial Officer, tel.: (011-33) 1-44-43-23-61, fax: (011-33) 1-44-43-29-98, e-mail: yannick.dheilley@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: www.space.fr. *

UAE to host IT show this fall

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES — October 3-7, 2004 — **GITEX Dubai** is the largest technology trade show in the region. In 2003, 774 exhibitors and more than 82,000 visitors from around the world took part. Attend GITEX and capitalize on outstanding networking opportunities, display your latest technologies and launch new products and services targeting the Arabian market. **For more information**, contact the Canadian Consulate in Dubai, tel.: (011-971) 4-314-5555, fax: (011-971) 4-314-5556, e-mail: dubai-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca. *