

## Preface

Canadian exporters are discovering a new Japan. Firms which have focussed their efforts on specific target market segments have seen their results soar. Their success bears witness to important changes which have recently occurred in the Japanese market.

Since the mid-1980s, the substantial appreciation of the yen, Japan's concerted policy of domestic demand stimulation and a shift toward a more open import regime have significantly enhanced the competitiveness of Canadian goods in the Japanese market.

New export opportunities are not limited to the greater Tokyo area where soaring real estate prices add to the high cost of doing business in Japan's largest and most densely populated city. Major cities such as Hiroshima in the Chugoku region have experienced significant economic growth.

Once home to Japan's marine main street, Chugoku has been hard hit by the recent decline in shipbuilding and steelmaking. However, since the region contributes six per cent of Japan's total gross domestic product and comprises six per cent of the country's population, it represents a significant global market. The region is made up of five prefectures — Tottori, Shimane, Yamaguchi, Okayama, and Hiroshima. The principal cities of Okayama and Hiroshima prefectures function as the region's commercial centres.

This guide describes Chugoku as a market and outlines the opportunities it holds for Canadian exporters.

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*The Canadian Embassy and Consulate General in Japan have made important contributions to this series of market studies. Additional assistance and information is available from the Embassy in Tokyo, the Consulate General in Osaka and the Consulate in Fukuoka.*

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