

Canadian Building Products Export Council Proposed: Input Solicited to Assess the Industry's Needs

A joint Industry, Science & Technology Canada (ISTC) and External Affairs and International Trade Canada (EAITC) study has been announced to examine the building industry's requirements for export promotion assistance.

The study will assess—by means of a questionnaire to be sent to building materials manufacturers throughout Canada—the value and perceived need industry places on a Canadian Building Products Export Council.

Canada has considerable strength in the manufacture of building materials and is recognized internationally for its wood frame residential construction system. The Canadian government and private-sector organizations have successfully promoted the adoption of wood frame construction techniques in offshore markets for more than 30 years.

Adoption of wood frame systems has had significant impact on wood products exports in Europe and Asia. However, exports of finished building materials, including windows and doors, cabinetry, floorings, manufactured housing and other structural, finishing and hardware products, have lagged behind commodity exports.

In an effort to address this imbalance and assist the building

products manufacturing industry in promoting its products in export markets, the creation of an Export Council is being proposed.

The announced study will look at the respective costs and benefits involved, define the Export Council's mission and goals, specify its method of operation and promotional activities, identify sources of financing and propose a five-year financial plan.

As markets become globalized, it is perceived Canadian building products manufacturers will have to increasingly become export-oriented in order to remain efficient and competitive in pursuing new economic opportunities.

In view of the increasing international competitiveness of the building products market, domestic manufacturers may require co-ordinated initiatives among themselves and public sector support for such efforts.

Future growth in employment, balance of payments earnings and productivity gains in the building materials industry could well depend on increasing the Canadian value-added to wood frame housing and building products exports.

With the pace of international market developments in Europe, the Pacific Rim, the U.S. and with

trade liberalization resulting from the current General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, the time to establish a Canadian Building Products Export Council may have arrived.

Canadian building products manufacturers wishing to receive a copy of the questionnaire or more information on its scope and intent should contact Murray Hardie, Senior Commerce Officer, Resource Processing Industries Branch, ISTC, Ottawa. Tel.: (613) 954-3037. Fax: (613) 954-3209. Or contact John Lang, Deputy Director, Resources and Chemicals Division (TAR), EAITC. Tel.: (613) 996-3436. Fax: (613) 995-8384.

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tugal, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, and Austria. The study also mentioned Australia and Thailand as countries that import frozen vegetables.

The study also showed frozen vegetable consumption trends in various countries. For example, in Italy and Spain, demand blossomed later than in other countries, but frozen vegetables now account for up to 40% of the market there for all frozen products. Despite market fluctuations, sales of fast-frozen vegetables should stabilize in the years ahead. The countries covered by the study included the 12 members of the EEC, eight other European countries outside the EEC, and nine countries outside Europe.

For any information on the study—which is not available from EAITC/Info Export—or to order a copy, contact the Librairie du commerce international, 10, av. d'Iéna, Paris 16^e BP 438-75233, Paris, CEDEX 05. Tél.: (1) 45.05.34.60. Telex: LICOMIN 206 811 F.

For more information on frozen vegetable exports, contact Suzanne Lalonde at EAITC's Agri-Food Division (TAA). Tel.: (613) 996-3597. Fax: (613) 995-8384.

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