

Some restaurants and restaurant chains also purchase imported pork products. For example, *VIPS* is a nation-wide restaurant chain with sales in the order of US \$500 million per year. A buyer in Mexico City purchases for 74 *VIPS* restaurants as well as 20 *El Portón*, four White Table and four Boston Pizza restaurants. *VIPS* buys frozen meat products exclusively. Purchases of pork products are in the order of 35 tonnes per month. The company imports directly and only in full truckload (FTL) quantities, although this can be a combination of products. Smaller orders are obtained from importer/distributors. The larger distributors are described in the following sections.

LABATT MÉXICO

Labatt México is a joint venture between a branch of the Gutierrez family of Mexico and the Labatt family from Texas. The company distributes to the food service sector, while *Surtimex*, an associated company, sells to the retail sector. Annual sales are in the order of US \$5 million.

Labatt sells to medium and large restaurant chains including the Hard Rock Café, as well as the high-class hotels including the *Presidente* and the Nikko. *Labatt* handles an inventory of more than 1,000 items, more than half of which are imported. *Labatt* buyers say that there is potential for Canadian imports of deli-products and bacon.

MEXPO

Mexpo is the exclusive importer-distributor for McCain in Mexico. About 70 percent of their sales are to the food services sector with the balance going to the retail sector. The company's clients include the major retail chains as well as McDonalds, *VIPS*, Sanborns and a number of airlines. It mainly imports frozen meat products.

FOOD SERVICES DE MÉXICO

Food Services de México is a Mexican company that is associated with Sysco, based in the United States. Sales are about 80 percent food and 20 percent equipment. Meat is a relatively new product for the company and volume is relatively low so far. The company imports entirely from the United States. Products include about 364 kilograms of bacon per month, and about 909 kilograms of ribs per month.