

EXPORT TIPS: EUROPE

1) Shipping goods to Europe?

If so, it is important to be aware of the rules and regulations by which you must abide in order for your products to arrive without delay. For example, did you know that your goods must be approved by the Government Certifying Authority in the Europe country for which your goods are to be transported? And that a Certificate of Origin must be obtained as a result? For more information on the shipping protocols when exporting your goods, visit the European Commission Transport: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/index_en.htm.

2) Market access conditions - why are these important?

Market access conditions include things like customs, tariffs, free trade agreements, non-tariff barriers, and the like – things that have the potential to limit the amount of market access your products have to the European market (or elsewhere). Researching the level of market access not only from Canada but from the European Union as well is crucial to determine the feasibility of the chosen export market. To find out more about the market access conditions in your chosen European market, check out the Market Access Database: <http://mkaccdb.eu.int/mkaccdb2/indexPubli.htm>

3) Do you know the food safety and inspection requirements for Europe?

It is very important to stay up-to-date on the food safety and inspection requirements for the European market to which you intend to export goods. Failing to satisfy all requirements will result in the ineligibility of your product costing precious time and money lost. To make sure you are aware of the latest changes and amendments to the food safety and inspection requirements, visit the EUROPA - European Commission Food & Safety: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/index_en.htm for more information.

4) Is your intellectual property (IP) protected?

Whether you have a patent, trade-mark, copyright, industrial design, integrated circuit topographies or plant breeder's rights, you need to know what is protected, where it is protected and for how long. In Europe, there are two government bodies responsible for intellectual property. The Trade Marks and Designs Registrations Office of the European Union (OHIM) is the agency responsible for the registration of trademarks and design valid in all 27 EU countries while The European Patent Office is responsible for patent protection in up to 38 European countries. It would be wise to contact one or both of these Intellectual Property to begin the process of protecting your IP prior to entry. To learn more, visit the OHIM website at <http://oami.europa.eu/ows/rw/pages/index.en.do> or The European Patent Office website: <http://www.epo.org/about-us.html>.