

**Manitoba.** The key objective of the Department of Industry and Commerce is to attract and establish industry throughout the province, particularly in rural areas. It has established various branches and agencies that provide industry specialization combined with comprehensive program support.

The Trade and Industry Group consists of four branches with specific commodity interests: Food Industries, Machinery and Equipment, Resource Industries and Construction, Project Development, and a fifth, the Manitoba Trading Corporation which promotes the export of goods and services from Manitoba. Each branch encourages economic growth through expansion of existing firms and attraction of new industries; studies trends in its sector; identifies business opportunities; and assists firms through market research, business development and export services.

The Programs and Productivity Group has five branches directly concerned with implementing programs in the areas of science and technology, design improvement, transportation and distribution systems, management productivity and manpower development and regional development. Some 70 professionals plan and carry out all programs, consulting and engineering services and research activities. The Department works closely with other agencies on matters affecting Manitoba's economic development.

Associated private agencies are supported by Department of Industry and Commerce staff. Through the offices of the Trade and Industry Group the Manitoba Trading Corporation assists Manitoba firms in developing export sales. It works closely with each industry branch and is empowered to appoint agents abroad and to handle exports for Manitoba manufacturers. Its services include extensive practical advice on pricing, documentation, export procedures and tariffs, the organization of trade fair participation, incoming and outgoing missions, buying and selling Manitoba merchandise and the export of professional services. The Corporation can assume all the duties of a sales agent and those of an export department for Manitoba companies. The Manitoba Design Institute promotes and encourages the application of industrial design principles in Manitoba companies through a series of seminars, workshops, product evaluation sessions, packaging clinics and direct assistance.

Manitoba Regional Development Corporations are non-profit organizations set up in 1964 to undertake promotion in a wide sphere of regional interests. They were conceived as a response to some of the challenges facing the rural areas of the province — population out-migration, a relatively slow economic growth rate, and the need for action on a regional basis. Through its Regional Development Branch, the Department of Industry and Commerce has encouraged the formation of regional development corporations in Manitoba with the province contributing to their operating costs. Since their initial inception, seven corporations have been established covering all of Manitoba outside the city of Winnipeg.

Manitoba offers a number of programs to assist companies engaged in production/processing, distribution or specialized construction. The Feasibility Studies Incentive Program facilitates companies in commissioning studies to develop plans for establishing or expanding manufacturing facilities in Manitoba, and in applying for grant assistance from the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion. The Research and Development Assistance Program enables eligible Manitoba companies to develop innovative products, processes or methods for utilization of the natural resources of the province and allows educational institutions to undertake research and development of significant and direct economic benefit. The Productivity Improvement Program provides productivity audit analyses of individual firms and industry groups by specialists who identify problem areas, obstacles to growth and opportunities for improvement in the marketing, production, technology, manpower, organizational effectiveness and financial areas of the firm, and make recommendations suited to the needs and capabilities of the firm, and assist in implementation. The Manpower Development Program assists Manitoba companies in analyzing their manpower needs and designing human resource development programs to meet specific company requirements. The Design Improvement Assistance Program makes funds available to assist companies in improving the design and quality of their products. The Manitoba Export Assistance Program gives financial support to Manitoba manufacturers who wish to sell goods or services in markets outside the province. The program provides assistance by exhibiting products at trade fairs, bringing potential buyers to Manitoba and organizing sales missions, and by promoting the export of professional services.