

# “Traditional” Industries Lead State’s Export Gain

**M**assachusetts merchandise exports compared to the same period last year – Though the state’s top three export continued to surge through the surpassing the national gain (18%). In industries remained instruments, electric first four months of 2008, assisted by the 2007, Massachusetts exporters set a machinery, and industrial machinery, the weaker dollar. Through April, state fourth consecutive annual record for strongest growth was in more “traditional” sectors such as metals, paper exports reached \$9.7 billion, a 20% rise international sales, at nearly \$25.3 billion.

products, vehicles, aircraft parts, and firearms. Sales of pharmaceutical products and of organic chemicals, which led the state’s export gains earlier in the decade, were off slightly. While Massachusetts’s technology and biomedical products often succeed in world markets primarily because they are more advanced than available alternatives, regardless of price, sales by other industries may be more price sensitive, and therefore are more affected by the value of the dollar compared to other currencies.

By geography, similarly, the greatest gains were in long-established North Atlantic markets, with the United Kingdom, Canada, and Italy outstripping China and Mexico in percentage growth. In the four-month period, the top destinations for Massachusetts products were the UK, Canada, the Netherlands, and Germany; Japan, China, Mexico, and Taiwan follow; and France, Korea, Ireland, and Italy rounded out the leading dozen. This represents a significant shift toward the Atlantic, although sales to most Asian markets are strong, and exports to Mexico are up 25%.

The U.S. dollar’s value has fallen sharply compared to European currencies and the Canadian dollar, while holding its value better against Asian and emerging market currencies. The strong performance of a broad range of Massachusetts industries in global markets is particularly important at a time when the U.S. economy is struggling, and perhaps in recession. With some 168,000 Massachusetts jobs related to manufactured exports, according to the federal International Trade Administration (2006), international sales are playing a key part in sustaining the state’s manufacturing sector and our entire economy.

Export figures are prepared by the World Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER) at Holyoke Community College.



International Project Managers Meet with MAIB

Kristen Rupert, executive director of the Massachusetts Alliance for International Business (MAIB), meets with directors of the Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment (MOITI) offices in Latin America. From left to right: Rupert; Audrey Langan, senior project manager of MOITI-Boston; Jose Neto, director of MOITI’s Brazil office; and Caroline Verut, director of MOITI’s Mexico office. MAIB is an AIM affiliate dedicated to helping members expand their international activities.



Global Competitiveness Workshop Held at Savage Arms

Michael Gibbs (far right), director of manufacturing at Savage Arms, leads a plant tour at the company’s Westfield facility following an MAIB/AIM “Innovation for Global Competitiveness” workshop in May. Interested visitors include (from left) Michael Meyer of Swissturn USA, Marty Fagan of TellTool, Larry Buchsbaum of RSM McGladrey, and Bruce Laprade of Photonis USA. A similar workshop was hosted by Raytheon Co. in Andover.