US · CANADA · MEXICO CORRIDOR

Triangle Trade Intelligence

Trade Decision Brief.

Should we source this product from Mexico?

Commercial refrigeration equipment, HTS 8418.50.00, about $1,200,000 a year into the United States.

SAMPLE BRIEF

SHORT BRIEF



PREPARED FOR

A buyer of commercial refrigeration equipment (illustrative)

PREPARED BY

Triangle Trade Intelligence

DATE

November 17, 2026

Research, data analysis and report generation by Triangle Trade Intelligence.

Every rate cited to the notice that set it | No AI sets a rate | Sample brief. Illustrative product. Checked 2026-11-17.

01 · THE DECISION

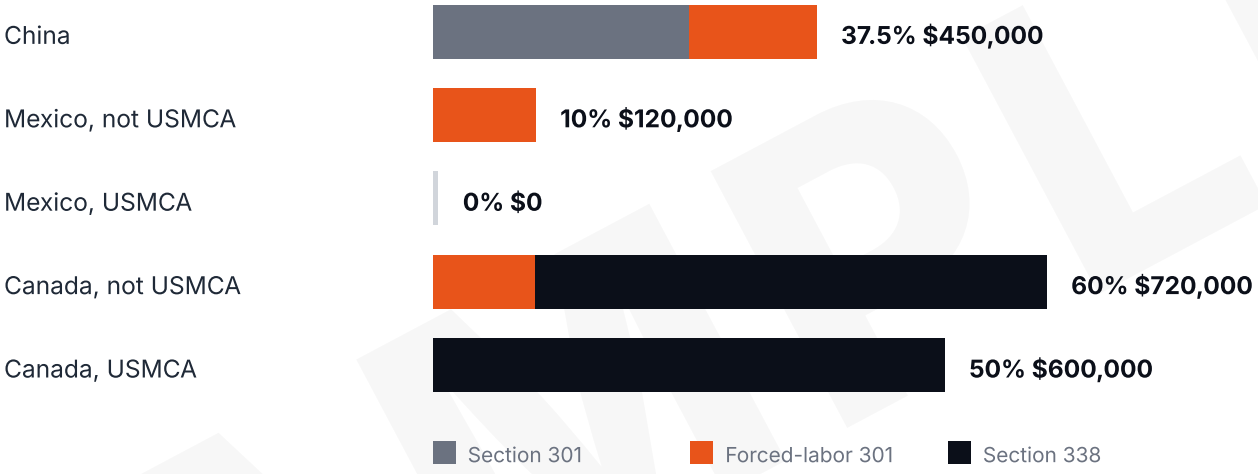
Should we source this product from Mexico?

Commercial refrigeration equipment, HTS 8418.50.00, about $1,200,000 a year into the United States.

SHORT ANSWER

On duty alone, Mexico has the **lowest exposure** of the three origins: **$120,000** if the product does not qualify for USMCA, **$0** if it does, against **$450,000** from China, nearly four times Mexico's $120,000. Canada is the highest, at $720,000 without USMCA and $600,000 with it, because a separate 50% Section 338 duty applies to Canadian goods on the run date.

Duty on $1,200,000 of imports, by origin



Where it ships from	Duty	On $1,200,000
China	37.5%	**$450,000**
Mexico, not USMCA qualified	10%	**$120,000**
Mexico, USMCA qualified	0%	**$0**
Canada, not USMCA qualified	60%	**$720,000**
Canada, USMCA qualified	50%	**$600,000**

Duty figures: run through Triangle's engine on 2026-11-17 for this illustrative product.

01 · THE DECISION, CONTINUED

Before deciding, three questions.

Each could materially change the result.

1. **Does the product qualify for USMCA?** It decides whether Mexico is $120,000 or $0.
2. **Is 8418.50.00 the right code for the exact product?** Duty follows the HTS code, so a different code changes every figure. Classification is for the importer and the broker.
3. **Is any antidumping or countervailing order in scope?** None matched this code in our order directory on the run date. Whether a given product falls inside an order's scope is the importer's to confirm.

BEFORE THE MEETING

Ask the Mexican supplier where each major component comes from, and for the records behind a USMCA claim. Ask your broker to confirm the HTS code against the product's specification. Compare landed cost, not duty alone: freight, entry fees and the supplier's price sit outside this brief.

02 · DUTY COMPARISON

Five scenarios, one set of layers.

Duty on $1,200,000 of imports at HTS 8418.50.00, by country of origin, under the law in force on November 17, 2026. Each column is a separate layer, calculated on the same value.

Scenario	Base (MFN)	Section 301	Forced-labor 301	Section 338	Total	Duty
China	0%	25%	12.5%	n/a	**37.5%**	**$450,000**
Mexico, not USMCA qualified	0%	n/a	10%	n/a	**10%**	**$120,000**
Mexico, USMCA qualified	n/a	n/a	Exempt	n/a	**0%**	**$0**
Canada, not USMCA qualified	0%	n/a	10%	50%	**60%**	**$720,000**
Canada, USMCA qualified	n/a	n/a	Exempt	50%	**50%**	**$600,000**

Exempt means the layer is waived for a good that qualifies for USMCA and enters free of duty under it. n/a means the layer does not apply to that origin. Entry fees, freight and any antidumping or countervailing duty are not in these totals.

Duty figures: run through Triangle's engine on 2026-11-17 for this illustrative product.

SAMPLE

The layers, and where each comes from

Heading	What it is	Instrument	Effective
8418.50.00	Base (MFN) general rate of duty (0%)	HTSUS 8418.50.00, General Rate of Duty (Column 1), HTS 2026	HTS 2026
9903.88.03	Section 301 duty on goods of China (25%)	Federal Register 2018-20610 (September 21, 2018)	2018-07-06
9903.05.31	Section 301 forced-labor duty, China (12.5%)	USTR Section 301 Forced Labor Notice (60-Economy Action), Federal Register 2026-15181 (July 28, 2026)	2026-07-24
9903.05.55	Section 301 forced-labor duty, Mexico (10%)	USTR Section 301 Forced Labor Notice (60-Economy Action), Federal Register 2026-15181 (July 28, 2026)	2026-07-24
9903.05.94	Waives the Mexico forced-labor duty on goods entered free under USMCA	HTSUS U.S. note 52(h)	2026-07-24
9903.05.29	Section 301 forced-labor duty, Canada (10%)	USTR Section 301 Forced Labor Notice (60-Economy Action), Federal Register 2026-15181 (July 28, 2026)	2026-07-24
9903.05.93	Waives the Canada forced-labor duty on goods entered free under USMCA	HTSUS U.S. note 52	2026-07-24
9903.03.14	Section 338 duty on goods of Canada (50%)	CBP CSMS #69606660, Federal Register 2026-14997	2026-08-22

03 · WHAT CHANGES THE OUTCOME

The comparison is a snapshot. These facts would move it.

Question	Why it matters	Who can answer	Effect on this result
USMCA qualification	The forced-labor duty is waived on a qualifying Mexican or Canadian good entered free under USMCA.	Supplier records and your broker	Mexico $120,000 to $0. Canada $720,000 to $600,000.
Component origin	Qualification depends on where the parts and materials come from.	Supplier bill of materials	Decides which USMCA row applies.
Classification	Every duty above follows the HTS code. A different code is a different stack.	Your customs broker	Could change every figure.
Trade remedies	An antidumping or countervailing order adds a duty set per producer.	Commerce case list and your broker	None matched on the run date. A match would raise the total.
Entry date	Duty is set by the law in force on the date of entry.	You	These figures are for November 17, 2026. The forced-labor duties took effect on 2026-07-24 and Section 338 on 2026-08-22.

Duty figures: run through Triangle's engine on 2026-11-17 for this illustrative product.

04 · MARKET SNAPSHOT

How deep is the Mexican supplier base?

612
Establishments registered under the three equipment classes

140
With 11 or more employees

97
Of those, in the five northern states below



What it means for the decision. The base is deep enough to ask for three quotes without leaving the northern corridor, and no single state is a single point of failure. Duty does not change by region. The entry date and the USMCA row decide it.

Illustrative: every name and figure in this market snapshot is invented.

05 · RISKS AND OPEN QUESTIONS

What could go wrong, and what we could not close.

Risks

- **Recent measures can change.** The forced-labor duties and Section 338 are weeks old on the run date. A brief is a dated snapshot, and the entry date decides which law applies.
- **Duty is one input.** Mexico may be cheapest on duty and still lose on freight, lead time or supplier capacity. Those are outside this brief.
- **A USMCA claim must be provable.** The preference only holds if the importer can document origin. Without records, plan on the not-qualified row.

Open items we could not close

OPEN ITEM 1

Annex I, forced-labor notice

Annex I of the USTR forced-labor notice has not been independently confirmed for this code. Your broker should check.

OPEN ITEM 2

Section 338 carve-outs

Section 338 carve-out placement rests on our reading and should be confirmed with the broker.

Duty figures: run through Triangle's engine on 2026-11-17 for this illustrative product.

SAMPLE

Questions to put to the supplier before the meeting

- Which country does each major component come from (compressor, controls, enclosure)?
- Can you provide a USMCA certification of origin for this model, and the records behind it?
- What HTS code do you declare for this product today?
- Is the price quoted in the same terms (Incoterms) as the other quotes we are comparing?

06 · SOURCES AND BASIS

Where every number came from.

Checked 2026-11-17.

Source	Used for	Status
HTSUS, general rate of duty for 8418.50.00 (hts.usitc.gov, HTS 2026)	Base duty rate	Read through the duty engine, 2026-11-17
HTSUS Chapter 99 headings 9903.88.03, 9903.05.31, 9903.05.29, 9903.05.55, 9903.05.93, 9903.05.94, 9903.03.14	Heading text and rate of each layer	Heading text confirmed against the live USITC schedule, 2026-11-17
USTR Section 301 Forced Labor Notice (60-Economy Action), Federal Register 2026-15181 (July 28, 2026)	Mexico and Canada rates, effective date and the USMCA exemption (note 52(h))	Mexico entry, date and exemption clause read in the govinfo copy; annex product tables not read in full
CBP CSMS #69606660; Federal Register 2026-14997	Section 338 duty on goods of Canada	From our records; not re-read for this brief
Section 301 action on China, Federal Register 2018-20610 (September 21, 2018)	China Section 301 duty	From our records; not re-read for this brief
Triangle antidumping and countervailing order directory	Whether an order matched 8418.50.00 for China, Mexico or Canada	No match on the run date. Scope is the importer's to confirm
Triangle duty engine	All totals and dollar figures	Run 2026-11-17 for five scenarios
Market snapshot counts	Supplier base figures in Section 04	Illustrative: invented for this sample

Duty figures: run through Triangle's engine on 2026-11-17 for this illustrative product.

Basis and limitations

This brief stands on the duty engine and on the public instruments above, each checked on 2026-11-17. It covers duties only. Freight, entry fees, supplier price and lead time are outside it. Section 338 (CBP CSMS #69606660, FR 2026-14997) and the Section 301 China action (FR 2018-20610) are from our records and were not re-read for this brief. Where a statement is our judgment and not a verified fact, it says so.

The USMCA results are shown both ways because qualification is decided per product from supplier records we do not have. A figure is never shown as final where it depends on a fact only the importer or the supplier holds.

What this brief is not

This is research. It is not customs advice, and it does not classify the product, decide whether it qualifies for any preference, or predict future rates. A licensed customs broker confirms classification and qualification before anyone files or commits. This brief is a dated record of what we found and what we could not close.

FULL BRIEF ADDS

Executive summary, your position against the alternatives, the opportunity, where to look, how to approach it, precedent, funding and programs, the next step, priority suppliers, local partners, the ecosystem and the addressable market.

SAMPLE

Duty figures: run through Triangle's engine on 2026-11-17 for this illustrative product.