



Infomat

A Weekly Review

Friday, June 25, 1999

OVERVIEW

◆ **Exports and imports both decline**

Exports declined back to February levels in April, primarily due to a sharp drop in auto exports to the United States. Imports, meanwhile, continued their downward trend that began last November.

◆ **Transportation costs lift CPI again**

In May, as in April, increased transportation costs were the primary cause of an annual inflation rate in consumer prices of 1.6%.

◆ **Capacity use up another notch**

Industries increased their use of production capacity in the first quarter. This second consecutive quarterly rise came on the heels of strong export demand and increased consumer confidence.

◆ **Shipments fall for third time in four months**

After growing strongly in March, manufacturers' shipments fell in April by 0.8%. The drop was concentrated in the motor vehicle, railway rolling stock and food industries.

◆ **Cars push new vehicle sales higher**

In April, new motor vehicle sales rose 1.5%. This followed a brisk advance in March. Heavy sales of cars, especially imports, pushed sales higher in April.

◆ **Trend toward healthier eating continues**

Canadians are eating more according to the 1998 data on the amount of food available for consumption. At the same time, they continue the trend toward healthier eating, choosing lower-fat products.

Exports and imports both decline

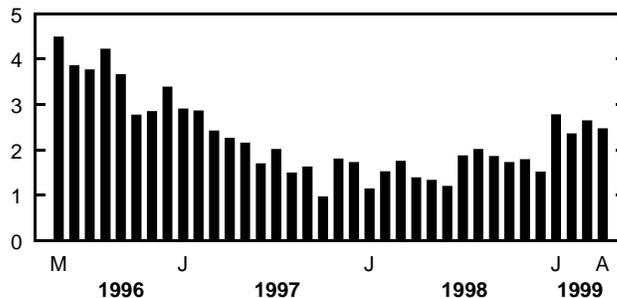
Exports declined in April by 0.9%, offsetting the increase in March and dropping exports back to February levels. This decline resulted primarily from a sharp drop in automobile exports to the United States, which occurred despite record sales in both the United States and Canada. Imports, meanwhile, continued the downward trend that began last November by slipping 0.3% in April. This occurred despite a sharp increase in crude oil imports, which rose for a third straight month. The merchandise trade balance fell almost \$200 million in April, from a revised \$2.6 billion in March down to \$2.4 billion.

In April, exports of cars tumbled 13.3%. Both export prices and volumes were down. However, auto exports were still 22.4% higher than in April 1998, due to the addition of new assembly lines in Canada. Truck exports also fell slightly, with volume dropping 3.3%. However, April saw record sales of certain truck models to the United States.

Energy product exports climbed significantly between November 1998 and April 1999, more than offsetting a decline that occurred from August to November 1998. Chiefly, these trading fluctuations are attributable to changes in prices, which are sensitive to OPEC supply quotas. Quotas also affected the flow of forestry product exports in April, because the year's new lumber quotas came into effect. Exports of lumber to the United States jumped, driving up the entire forestry sector. This was a pure volume effect (+20.5%) as prices declined slightly (-1.8%).

Merchandise trade balance

\$ billions, seasonally adjusted



(continued on page 2)



... Exports and imports both decline

Although not as important as exports of lumber, exports of other wood products (such as pre-notched wood and oriented strandboard) rose sharply, gaining 11.7% since January. This was chiefly due to the continuing construction boom on the West Coast of the United States.

Agricultural and fishing product exports fell for a second consecutive month in April. Sharp drops in canola exports to China and more competitive pricing by European canola exporters may have been factors. Unusual decreases in exports of herring and other prepared fish products to the United States also contributed to the decline.

Among Canada's trading partners, exports to the United States fell sharply in April after reaching record levels in March. The lower exports of cars were to blame, as were lower exports of uranium and fertilisers, but this was mitigated by the recovery in forestry product exports and by strong crude oil exports. Exports to Japan seemed to recover slightly, rising for a third straight month. On the import side, imports from the United States edged down, as gold and auto parts imports dropped. Imports from the European Union declined because of lower imports of autos from Germany, computers from Great Britain and crude oil from Spain.

Overall, imports of industrial goods dropped in April. This decline, which followed a slight recovery in March, was primarily due to lower imports of gold, hydraulic valves, auto components and organic gardening products. Tariffs on steel imports from several countries appeared to be affecting commercial trade. For example, steel imports from Russia, which accounted for 32.0%

Note to readers

Merchandise trade is one component of the current account of Canada's balance of payments, which also includes trade in services.

of total imports of sheet metal, plummeted from \$37 million last November to \$5.3 million this April (not revised for seasonal variations), a plunge of 86.1%.

Imports of "other consumer goods" fell 2.6% in April, mainly because of lower imports of highly variable trading commodities, such as pharmaceuticals and works of art. April's lower imports of auto products were partly offset by a third consecutive increase in truck imports, reflecting extremely high sales in Canada of certain models for personal use. The higher imports of crude oil lately (+27.8% since January) are more a result of higher prices than volumes. Aircraft imports rebounded from March's steep 55.0% drop, recovering to almost the same level as in February.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3699, 3701-3711, 3713, 3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

The April 1999 issue of Canadian international merchandise trade (paper: 65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188; Internet: 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141) includes tables by commodity and country. Current account data are available quarterly in Canada's balance of international payments (67-001-XPB, \$38/\$124). For further information, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647 or 1-800-294-5583), International Trade Division. See also "Current trends" on page 8.

Transportation costs lift CPI again

Consumers paid 1.6% more in May than they did a year earlier for the goods and services contained in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket. As in April, this latest upward movement in the annual rate was primarily due to higher transportation costs. Specifically, it reflected higher prices for gasoline and air transport. However, the overall increase in the CPI was mitigated by lower prices for computer equipment and telephone services. May's annual inflation rate was slightly lower than the 1.7% recorded in April.

Generally, tighter supplies of crude oil on world markets pushed the price of gasoline up 5.0% compared with the price in May 1998. Prices for air transport jumped 16.7%, mainly due to price increases for flights in North America.

The CPI rose from April to May by 0.3%. Higher prices for traveller accommodation and gasoline also contributed to the monthly increase. The seasonal nature of tourism in Canada is reflected in May's price hike for traveller accommodation (+11.3%). Strong demand in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia led to higher room rates for hotels and motels. Gasoline prices advanced 1.2%, a slowdown compared with the 8.5% monthly jump seen in April.

From April to May, a 2.9% drop in prices for women's clothing, a 2.5% reduction in prices for homeowners' repairs and maintenance, and a 2.8% decline in prices for bakery products all exerted downward pressure on the overall inflation rate.

Consumer Price Index, May 1999

% change from previous year, not seasonally adjusted

	All-items	Food	Shelter	Transportation	Energy
Canada	1.6	1.6	1.1	2.8	3.0
Newfoundland	1.7	1.5	1.3	2.1	1.5
Prince Edward Island	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	-2.9
Nova Scotia	1.3	1.4	0.6	2.3	0.4
New Brunswick	1.7	2.4	0.7	2.8	2.2
Quebec	1.3	0.6	0.9	2.9	2.7
Ontario	1.8	2.7	1.5	2.5	2.8
Manitoba	1.9	1.2	2.2	3.6	4.6
Saskatchewan	1.6	0.0	2.3	2.7	4.7
Alberta	2.2	1.2	2.4	3.2	4.9
British Columbia	0.7	1.2	-1.0	3.3	3.7
Whitehorse	0.9	-0.9	-1.4	4.2	-5.4
Yellowknife	0.6	-0.7	-0.4	4.4	-1.1

Among the provinces, the highest annual inflation rate occurred in Alberta (+2.2%). The lowest rate was in British Columbia (+0.7%). From April to May, Alberta also led the provinces with a CPI increase of 0.7%. No province registered an overall decline in its consumer price level on a monthly basis. However, the CPI for Prince Edward Island was unchanged from April to May.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 9940-9970.

The May 1999 issue of The Consumer Price Index (62-001-XPB, \$11/\$103) is now available. For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Prices Division. See also "Current trends" on page 8.

Capacity use up another notch

In the first quarter, industries increased their use of production capacity for a second consecutive quarter. The latest increase came on the heels of strong export demand and higher consumer confidence. In the first quarter, firms operated at 83.1% of capacity, up half a percentage point from the last quarter of 1998. Signs of inflation still appear to be in abeyance, for the most part, despite high rates of capacity use.

Manufacturers posted a second consecutive increase in their rate of capacity use with a rise of 1.0 percentage points in the first quarter, increasing the rate to 85.7%. This brings the rate for manufacturing to less than half a percentage point below the most recent peak of 86.1% in the first quarter of 1995. Fourteen of the 22 industry groups in manufacturing raised their rates of capacity use.

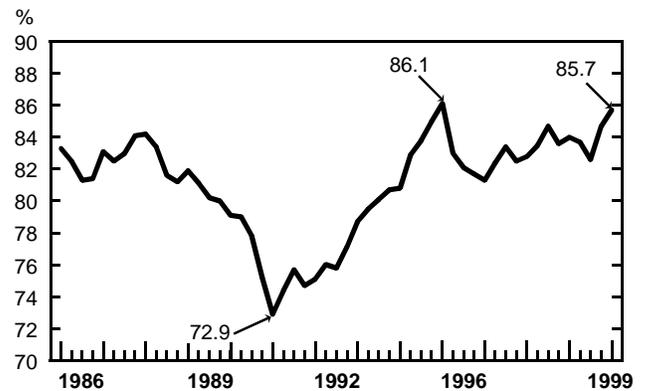
Responding to strong demand from the United States, producers of telecommunications equipment boosted their output in the first quarter. This raised the rate of capacity use in the electrical and electronic products group of industries. Steel mills were mainly responsible for the first quarter's surge of output in the primary metals industries, where the rate of capacity use grew 6.1 percentage points. Refineries continued to escalate their use of capacity in the first quarter, and so the industry group operated at 97.9% of capacity—a historic peak. The wood industries held their rate of capacity use steady at 86.4%. Quota restrictions on exports of softwood lumber to the United States forced many sawmills to shut down in the quarter.

The machinery industries' rate of capacity use fell in the first quarter to 71.9%. This was 19.5 percentage points below the

Note to readers

An industry's capacity use is the ratio of its actual output to its estimated potential output. Statistics Canada derives estimates of an industry's potential output from measures of its capital stock. Since 1987, Statistics Canada has surveyed companies for their estimates of annual capacity use, in order to produce survey-based industry measures. A company's measure of its level of operation, as a percentage of potential, takes into account changes in the obsolescence of facilities, capital-to-labour ratios and other characteristics of production techniques. The surveyed rates anchor the calculated quarterly series and ensure that the data series reflect such changes. The rates of capacity use have been revised back to the first quarter of 1997.

Manufacturing industries' capacity use



Industrial capacity utilization rates, first quarter 1999

	%	% point change, previous quarter	% point change, previous year
Total, non-farm goods-producing industries	83.1	0.5	-0.3
Logging and forestry	84.4	-1.9	-0.6
Mining (including milling) and quarrying	77.2	3.5	-7.8
Crude oil and natural gas	69.9	-3.4	-8.5
Manufacturing	85.7	1.0	1.7
Wood	86.4	0.0	3.5
Furniture and fixtures	86.4	-0.7	-6.9
Primary metals	92.1	6.1	0.0
Machinery	71.9	-2.8	-17.6
Electrical and electronic products	88.2	5.6	9.0
Non-metallic mineral products	93.6	3.9	7.2
Beverages	91.1	1.8	4.4
Textile products	79.9	3.0	5.5
Paper and allied products	90.6	3.0	3.2
Refined petroleum and coal products	97.9	1.3	4.6
Chemical and chemical products	82.0	-1.1	-3.5
Construction	83.2	0.5	-1.1
Gas distribution	74.1	3.6	2.2

most recent peak of 91.4% in the third quarter of 1997. The drop reflects a succession of quarterly declines in the output of this group of industries, a result of slumping domestic and foreign demand.

In non-manufacturing industries, the first-quarter changes in capacity use rates were mixed. Residential building activity drove capacity use in the construction industry up 0.5 percentage points. Buoyed by activity in mining services and growing diamond production, the mining and quarrying industries increased their rate of capacity use. However, producers of crude oil and natural gas cut production and capacity use. After two successive quarterly increases, the logging and forestry industry cut its rate of capacity use due to reduced demand, sawmill shutdowns and record snowfalls in British Columbia.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 3140.

For further information, contact Susanna Wood (613-951-0655) or Richard Landry (613-951-2579), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

Shipments decline for third time in four months

Manufacturers' shipments fell 0.8% in April to \$39.5 billion. This third decline in four months followed a strong increase in March. April's drop was concentrated in the motor vehicle, railway rolling stock and food industries. However, despite the slower pace of growth, the trend of manufacturers' shipments remains positive. Shipments in April were above the April 1998 level by 5.9%. Unfilled orders slipped in April, whereas inventories edged upward. Employment in the manufacturing sector edged up in May, but it has changed only slightly since February. In the April Business Conditions Survey, 84% of manufacturers' reported that they expect production to remain the same or to increase during the second quarter.

In April, manufacturers' shipments fell in 8 provinces and territories and in 13 of the 22 major industries, representing 74.4% of the total value of shipments. Shipments in the motor vehicle industry declined 3.6%. They have levelled off lately, after increasing strongly throughout last fall. The railway rolling stock industry's shipments dropped 42.4%, returning to more normal levels after stronger than normal shipments in February and March. The industry experienced some labour difficulties in April. The decline in the food industry (-2.4%) was primarily a result of less demand from China for canola oil.

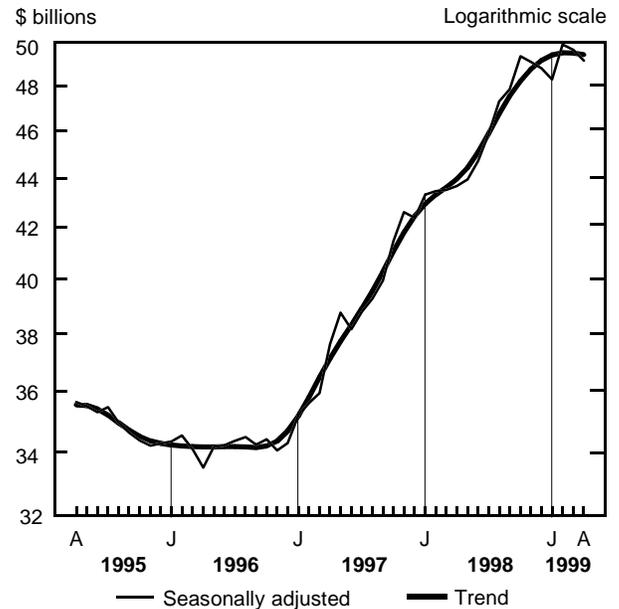
Shipment growth occurred in the refined petroleum and coal (+9.8%), aircraft and parts (+8.8%) and wood (+2.6%) industries. The price of refined petroleum products jumped 9.1% in April following an increase in March of 7.8%.

The backlog of unfilled orders fell for the fifth time in six months, down 1.0% in April to \$49.2 billion. The growth trend in unfilled orders has levelled off in recent months after rising strongly since the start of 1997. In April, 79% of manufacturers

Note to readers

For the first time, separate non-seasonally adjusted data on shipments from Nunavut are available.

Backlog of unfilled orders



thought their current level of unfilled orders was about normal. The backlog of unfilled orders shrank in the transportation equipment (-2.3%) and machinery (-2.5%) industries. The largest increase was seen in the fabricated metal products (+5.1%) industry. Unfilled orders also rose in the electrical and electronic products (+1.1%) and clothing (+7.0%) industries.

Inventories edged up 0.8% from March to \$50.0 billion in April. Gains were observed in all components of inventories, with the largest increase reported in goods-in-process inventories (+1.6%). The largest inventory buildups occurred in the electrical and electronic products (+3.5%) and the refined petroleum and coal (+8.5%) industries. The inventory-to-shipments ratio rose from 1.25 in March to 1.27. The ratio, which has been following a downward trend since July 1998, remains at historically low levels.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 9550-9555, 9558, 9559, 9562-9565, 9568-9579 and 9581-9595.

The April 1999 issue of *Monthly Survey of Manufacturing* (31-001-XPB, \$20/\$196) presents the full report. Detailed data on shipments by province are available on request. For further information, contact Craig Kuntz (613-951-7092; kuncrcrai@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. See also "Current trends" on page 8.

Manufacturers' shipments, April 1999

Seasonally adjusted

	\$ millions	% change, previous month
Canada	39,454	-0.8
Newfoundland	156	-3.4
Prince Edward Island	82	-1.7
Nova Scotia	590	7.0
New Brunswick	674	1.9
Quebec	9,047	-0.1
Ontario	21,822	-1.3
Manitoba	875	-2.7
Saskatchewan	490	-4.4
Alberta	2,756	-0.3
British Columbia	2,961	-1.3
Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut	3	3.0

Cars push new vehicle sales higher

Heavy sales of passenger cars pushed new motor vehicle sales up in April by 1.5% to 128,222 units. April's sales growth, which followed a sharp gain in March (+6.7%), bolstered the upward trend of sales that began last November. Compared with April 1998, sales of new vehicles were up 3.2%.

For a second consecutive month, the makers of new cars posted higher sales (+4.7%). April's sales growth following three months of decline. Sales of imported cars surged from March to April by 20.7%. Imported cars accounted for about one-quarter of total new car sales in April. This surge in imported car sales was preceded by a period of stagnation going back to early 1998. Sales of North American-built cars, which have been stable since the beginning of 1997, rose in April by 0.8%. On a year-over-year basis, sales were up for imported cars (+17.3%) and North American-built cars (+0.9%).

Truck sales fell in April by 1.8% to 60,441 units. This decline followed an 11.3% jump in March. April's decline was not enough, however, to halt the upward trend in truck sales that began in early 1999. This period of higher truck sales was preceded by a downturn in the second half of 1998.

Comparing April 1999 sales with those a year earlier, there was considerable variation by province (data not adjusted for seasonality). Dealers in British Columbia posted the largest year-over-year sales gain for new vehicles (+14.1%) on higher sales of both cars and trucks. Dealers also racked up yearly sales gains for new vehicles in Ontario (+7.7%), Newfoundland (+5.0%), New Brunswick (+1.7%) and Nova Scotia (+1.3%). Sales declined year-over-year, however, in the Prairie provinces (-11.2%), in Prince Edward Island (-6.0%) and in Quebec (-1.3%).

Available on CANSIM: matrix 64.

The April 1999 issue of *New motor vehicle sales* (63-007-XIB, \$13/\$124) can be downloaded from the Internet at www.statcan.ca. To order data, or for general information, contact Client Services (613-951-3549; 1 877 421-3067; retailinfo@statcan.ca).

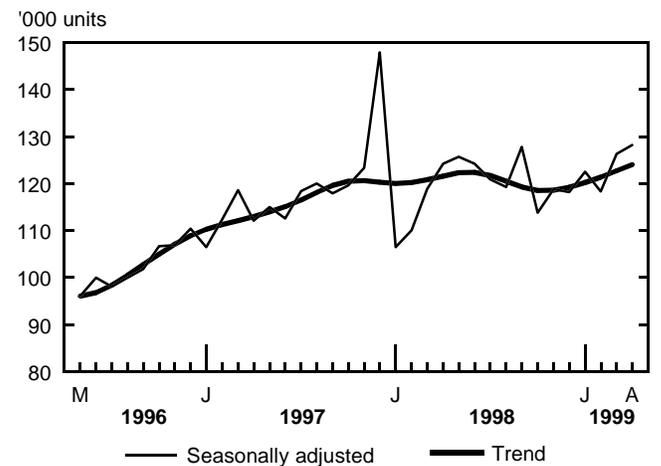
Note to readers

Passenger cars include those used for personal and commercial purposes (such as taxis or rental cars). Trucks include minivans, sport-utility vehicles, light and heavy trucks, vans, coaches and buses.

New vehicles built in North America include those made or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico. All other new motor vehicles are considered imports (manufactured overseas).

For reasons of confidentiality, data for the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are included with the British Columbia data. Unless otherwise noted, all data are seasonally adjusted.

New motor vehicle sales



Distributive Trades Division. For analytical information, contact Clérance Kimanyi (613-951-3592; kimacle@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

Trend toward healthier eating continues

Canadians are eating more according to the 1998 data on the amount of food available for consumption. At the same time, they continue the trend toward healthier eating, choosing lower-fat products.

Canadians also continue to enjoy frozen treats such as milkshakes, ice cream and ice milk. However, ice cream has lost some ground over the last couple of years to its lower fat alternative, ice milk. Moreover, yogurt consumption in 1998 was more than 8% greater than it was in 1997 (3.4 litres per person versus 3.2 litres). Yogurt has shown a 65% increase in consumption since the mid-1980s.

Despite the popularity of frozen milk products, the amount of fluid milk consumed, both as low- and full-fat varieties, continues to drop. In 1998, fluid milk consumption fell to 84.1 litres, down from 1997 by more than 5%. However, consumers concerned

Note to readers

These data represent the food available for consumption, not the actual quantities of food consumed. This is because the data do not include losses in stores, households, private institutions or restaurants.

The 1998 consumption data for fruit and vegetables, oils and fats, and fish will be released in October.

about fat intake are increasingly choosing low fat over standard varieties of milk. The general decrease in milk consumption can be attributed to such factors as an ageing population with fewer children, a growing ethnic population, which traditionally does not drink much milk, and a growing preference for other beverages such as soft drinks and juices. Per capita consumption of soft drinks in 1998 (114 litres) was close to 100% higher than it was in the early seventies.

(continued on page 6)

... Trend toward healthier eating continues

Consumption of eggs, which had been decreasing for several decades has bounced back since 1995. Last year, Canadians ate an average of 15.2 dozen eggs per person, up from 1995 by 5%. Promotions by the egg industry and greater use of eggs in processed foods have helped to raise egg consumption back to the levels seen in the late 1980s.

After declining since the mid-1970s, average per capita consumption of red meat increased in 1998. Much of this increase can be attributed to demand for pork, which climbed last year by 6.5% to 27.0 kilograms per person, as consumers responded to greater supply and lower prices. Per capita consumption of red meat averaged 61.3 kilograms in 1998, up from 1997 by 2.9%. Though stable, beef consumption remains the red meat of choice among Canadian consumers. Nevertheless, consumption of all types of poultry was up in 1998.

Rice consumption has more than doubled over the past 15 years. In 1998, each Canadian ate 7.9 kilograms of rice, up from 1997 by 1.7%. Rice continues to rise in popularity as an alternative to potatoes and other side dishes. The doubling of rice consumption is due partly to the many convenient, packaged selections in stores, as well as to the increasing demand for rice from the growing segment of the population that has Asian roots.

Indeed, Canada's growing population demands a variety of foodstuffs, not all of which can be supplied from domestic sources. This is reflected in the greater proportion of imported foods seen in the net supply of food available for consumption. For example, imports account for 88% of the fresh fruit consumed in Canada and 39% of the fresh vegetables. Imports of red meats, poultry and eggs have also climbed, partly because of freer trade. For example, imports accounted for 9% of Canadians' red meat supply in 1985. That share doubled by 1998 to 18%. Similarly, over the same period, poultry imports as a share of total supply almost tripled from 5% to 14%, while imported eggs rose from a 5% share to 11%.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2260-2267.

*The publication, **Food consumption in Canada, part I** (paper: 32-229-XPB, \$33; Internet: 32-229-XIB, \$25), presents the detailed report. It contains historical data on food consumption (from 1984 to 1998) for dairy products, beverages, eggs, pulses and nuts, sugars and syrups, cereals, meats and poultry. It also provides details on food production, stocks, international trade, and supplies used by manufacturers. For further information, contact Debbie Dupuis (613-951-2553) or Patricia Chandler (613-951-2506; 1 800 465-1991; fax: 613-951-3868), Agriculture Division.*

New from Statistics Canada



Canadian economic observer June 1999

The June issue of Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, *Canadian economic observer*, analyses current economic conditions, summarises the major economic events that occurred in May and presents a feature article on entertainment services.

A separate statistical summary contains a wide range of tables and charts on the principal economic indicators for Canada, the provinces and the major industrial nations.

*The June 1999 issue of **Canadian economic observer** (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) is now available. For further information, contact Cyndi Bloskie (613-951-3634; ceo@statcan.ca), Current Economic Analysis Group.*

New from Statistics Canada

Justice factfinder

1997

The 1997 edition of *Juristat: The justice factfinder* highlights findings from recent surveys and publications produced by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. Most of the data cover the period up to the end of 1997.

The information, presented in a question-and-answer format, is designed to respond in detail to questions concerning crime and the justice system frequently asked by the justice community, the media and the public. For example: Is crime really decreasing? What kinds of motor vehicles are being stolen? How many homes are being broken into?

This 13-page report also contains extensive information on victimization by strangers, victimization of children, Canadians' satisfaction with their police forces, shelters for abused women and children, offences committed by youth, the treatment of young people in courts, the prison population and the parole system.

The publication Juristat: The justice factfinder 1997 (paper: 85-002-XPE, \$10/\$93; Internet at www.statcan.ca: 85-002-XIE, \$8/\$70) is now available. For further information, contact Information and Client Services (1 800 387-2231 or 613-951-9023), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Extraction system of agricultural statistics on CD-ROM

1999

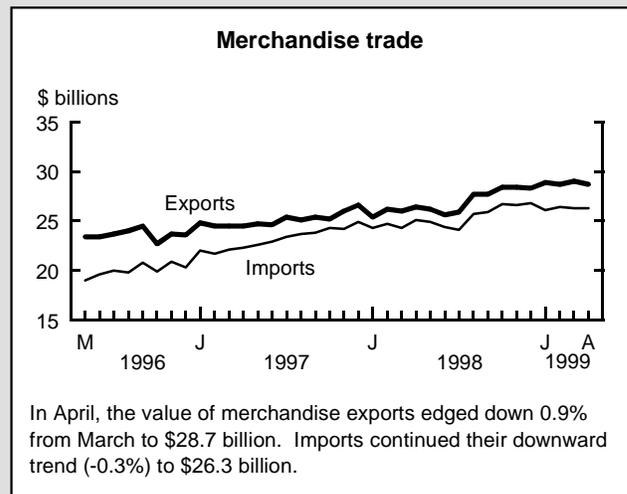
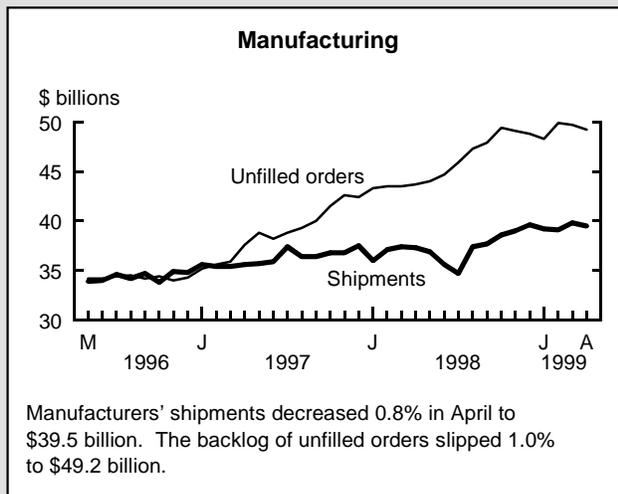
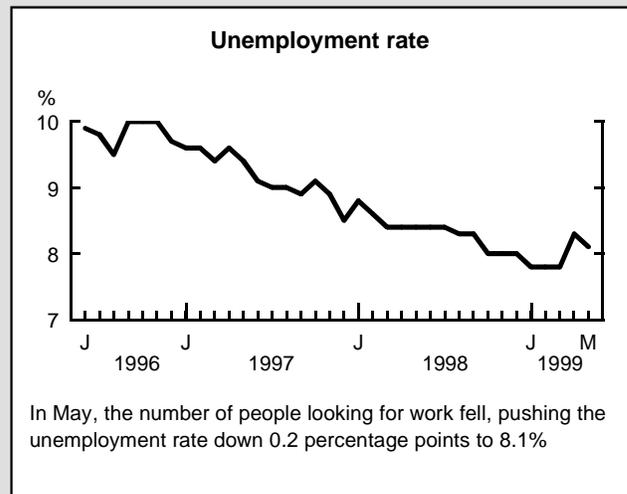
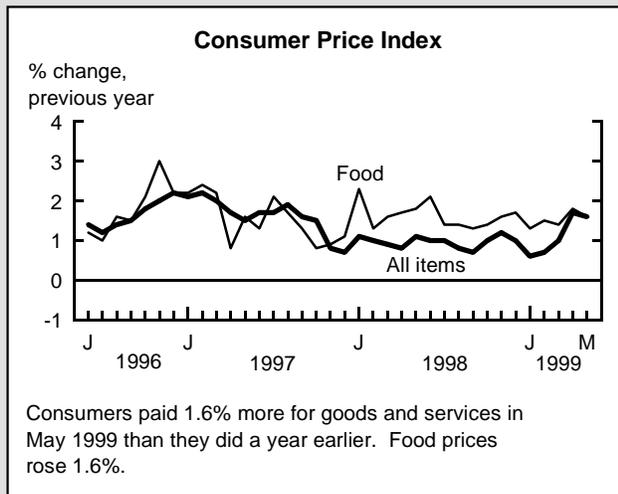
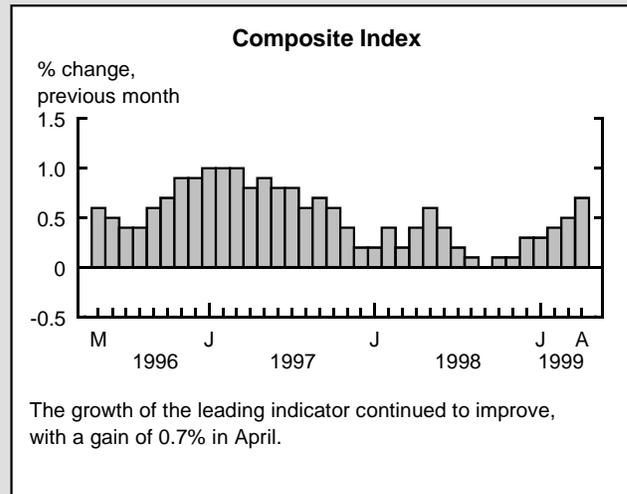
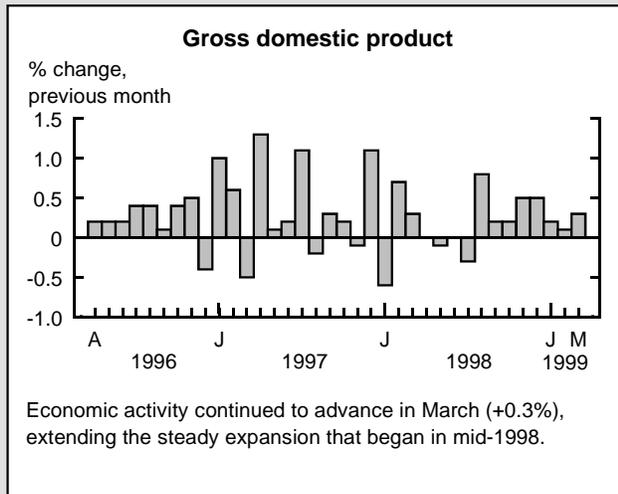
The latest edition of *Extraction system of agricultural statistics on CD-ROM* holds an extensive collection of the most requested physical and financial data on farming. The disc's menu-driven system extracts data by census agricultural region, farm type and revenue class. The 1999 edition contains a full year of new data, as well as an online user's guide and reference manual.

The flexibility of a CD-ROM lets you organize and re-organize your report, perform calculations and create graphs. You can also view selected tables on screen, print them or export them for use in other applications. Whether you are interested in dairy production in Quebec or off-farm income in Saskatchewan, this product lets you access all the data right from your desktop.

The 1999 edition of Extraction system of agricultural statistics on CD-ROM (21F0001XCB, \$625) is now available. An update can be purchased for \$295. A 50% educational discount is also available. To order, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre. For further information, contact Alain Bertrand (613-951-5027; bertala@statcan.ca) or Client Services (1 800 465-1991; agriculture@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.



Current trends



Note: All series are seasonally adjusted except the Consumer Price Index.

Latest statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
GENERAL				
Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1992)	March	733.1	0.3%	2.4%
Composite Index (1981=100)	May*	214.0	0.4%	4.0%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q1 1999	..	3.1%	..
Capacity utilization (%)	Q1 1999	83.1	0.5†	- 0.3†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	April*	21.2	0.4%	2.7%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	April	128.2	1.5%	3.2%
Wholesale trade (\$ billion)	April*	29.3	0.0%	5.1%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	May	14.64	- 0.1%	2.5%
Unemployment rate (%)	May	8.1	- 0.2†	- 0.3†
Participation rate (%)	May	65.7	- 0.3†	0.6†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	March	605.47	0.0%	- 0.3%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	May	157	0.9%	10.0%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	April*	28.7	- 0.9%	8.5%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	April*	26.3	- 0.3%	4.7%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	April*	2.4	- 0.2	1.1
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	April	39.5	- 0.8%	5.9%
New orders (\$ billion)	April	39.0	- 1.5%	4.1%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	April	49.2	- 1.0%	12.6%
Inventory/shipments ratio	April	1.27	- 0.02	- 0.03
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	May*	110.4	0.3%	1.6%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	April	119.9	0.0%	0.8%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	April	112.1	4.9%	0.4%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	April	100.6	0.1%	0.7%

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.

* new this week

† percentage point

.. figures not available yet due to a survey redesign

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