



Infommat

A Weekly Review

Friday, October 12, 2001

OVERVIEW

◆ Unemployment rate unchanged

Employment rose slightly in September after three consecutive months of small declines. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 7.2%.

◆ Building permits fall after four months of gains

The value of building permits issued by municipalities declined 4.4% in August to \$3.3 billion. The year-to-date value, at \$26.8 billion, was the highest since 1989.

◆ Value of employer-sponsored pension plans continues to decline

The market value of the assets of employer-sponsored pension plans continued to decline over the first quarter, down 2.5% from the fourth quarter of 2000. For the first time since 1991, private sector fund managers reported a negative cash flow.

◆ Expansion of aquaculture industry slows

The aquaculture industry continued to grow in 2000, but at less than half the rate of the previous two years.

◆ Advanced information and communication technology key to growth in the manufacturing sector

The adoption of advanced information and communication technologies by manufacturing plants leads to growth in productivity, which in turn leads to growth in market share.

Unemployment rate unchanged

Employment rose slightly (+20,000) in September after three consecutive months of small declines. However, the unemployment rate was unchanged at 7.2%. Certain sectors reported gains in employment, while others reported losses.

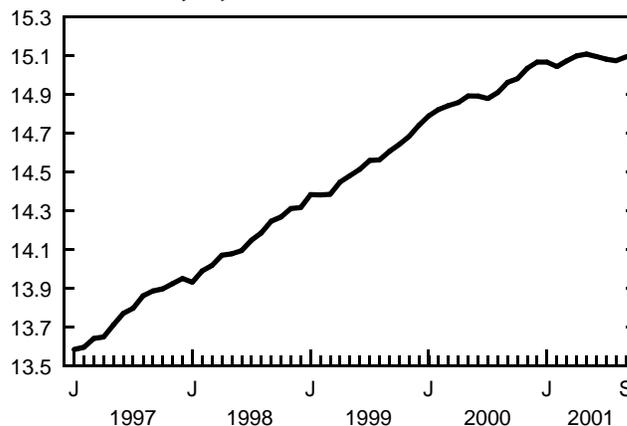
In September, employment in trade increased by 16,000, all in Ontario. Employment also rose in "other services" (+26,000), professional, scientific and technical services (+13,000), education services (+11,000) and construction (+8,000). The slight employment advance in professional, scientific and technical services in September followed losses of 53,000 in the previous four months.

Employment in accommodation and food services fell by 31,000; information, culture and recreation fell by 20,000; and transportation and warehousing fell by 14,000. Employment in agriculture continued its downward trend (-5,000). Employment in manufacturing, however, was little changed for the third consecutive month, following losses of 53,000 jobs in the first half of 2001.

The number of private sector employees edged up 17,000 in September. This followed declines totalling 36,000 in the previous

Employment

Millions, seasonally adjusted



(continued on page 2)



... Unemployment rate unchanged

three months. In the first nine months of 2001, the number of private sector employees rose by 96,000. Conversely, the number of public sector employees was little changed in September, down 14,000 since the start of 2001. The number of self-employed was unchanged in September, leaving losses in the first nine months of the year at 55,000.

Employment increased among adult women, and their unemployment rate fell 0.2 percentage points to 6.0%. Employment fell among youths, and their unemployment rate rose 0.4 percentage points to 13.1%. Employment among adult men was little changed in September, but their unemployment rate edged down 0.1 percentage points to 6.0%.

At the provincial level, employment in Quebec rose by 24,000 in September. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 8.4%, as job growth was accompanied by a similar increase in labour force participation. Employment edged down slightly in Ontario (-9,000); the unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.6%. Employment advanced by 6,000 in Manitoba, but an increase in labour force participation left the unemployment rate at 5.3%, up 0.1 percentage points. Employment rose slightly in Alberta (+5,000), thanks to the oil and gas sector; the unemployment rate fell to 4.0% (-0.3 percentage points), the lowest since 1981. In Saskatchewan, employment fell by 8,000 in September, primarily in agriculture; the unemployment rate rose 0.6 percentage points to 5.8%.

A more detailed summary, *Labour force information, for the week ending September 15, 2001* (Internet: 71-001-PIB, \$8/\$78;

Note to readers

The September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington occurred during the reference week (September 9 to 15) of the Labour Force Survey. According to the definitions of the survey, people who worked at any time during the reference week were considered employed, even if they were laid off at some point during the week. As a result, the impact of the attacks on employment and unemployment is not reflected in the September estimates.

The effect of the terrorist activities was more evident in a sharp increase in days lost, particularly in certain industries. During the week of September 11th, more than 136,000 people missed part of the work week for "other" reasons, about 83,000 more than average. The industries where the most time was lost tended to be concentrated in downtown locations (e.g., banking) or near airports (air transportation). For more information on how the terrorist attacks affected the labour market, contact Geoff Bowlby (613-951-3325; geoff.bowlby@statcan.ca).

paper: 71-001-PPB, \$11/\$103), is now available. To order data, or for general information, contact Client Services (1-866-873-8788; 613-951-4090; labour@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Vincent Ferrao (613-951-4750), Labour Statistics Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 6.)

Labour Force Survey, September 2001

Seasonally adjusted¹

	Labour force		Employment		Unemployment	
	'000	% change, previous month	'000	% change, previous month	'000	rate (%)
Canada	16,256.7	0.1	15,093.6	0.1	1,163.2	7.2
Newfoundland	250.6	-1.1	212.0	-0.6	38.7	15.4
Prince Edward Island	74.8	0.3	66.0	0.8	8.8	11.8
Nova Scotia	470.6	0.4	425.6	0.6	45.0	9.6
New Brunswick	376.5	0.4	333.8	0.2	42.6	11.3
Quebec	3,817.4	0.7	3,497.1	0.7	320.3	8.4
Ontario	6,377.7	-0.2	5,958.6	-0.1	419.1	6.6
Manitoba	589.8	1.1	558.7	1.0	31.1	5.3
Saskatchewan	497.9	-1.0	468.9	-1.7	28.9	5.8
Alberta	1,706.6	-0.1	1,638.9	0.3	67.7	4.0
British Columbia	2,094.9	-0.3	1,934.1	0.0	160.9	7.7

¹ Data are for both sexes aged 15 and over.

Building permits fall after four months of gains

The value of building permits issued by municipalities declined 4.4% in August to \$3.3 billion, halting a series of four straight monthly increases. On a year-to-date basis, municipalities issued building permits worth \$26.8 billion during the first eight months of 2001, up 11.2% from the same period in 2000. This was the highest cumulative level for any January-to-August period since 1989. Among the regions, the most significant growth (in dollars) was in the Montréal area (+45.5%), followed by Vancouver (+16.3%) and Toronto (+5.2%). However, Halifax showed the biggest decline (-38.8%).

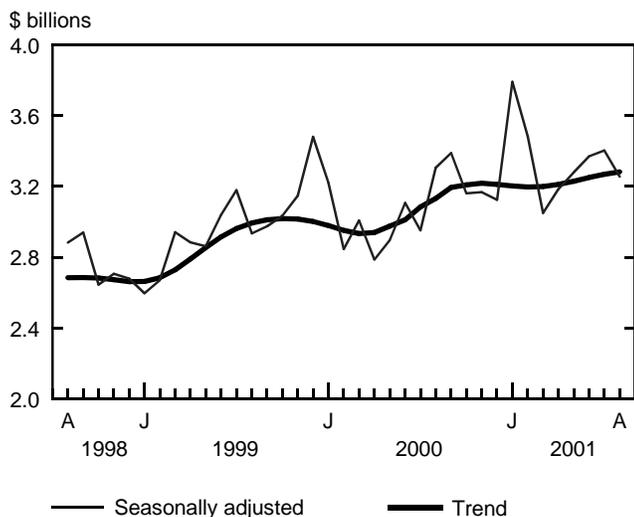
As for residential permits, both single- (+1.3%) and multi-family (+6.0%) dwelling construction intentions rose, lifting the value of housing permits 2.5% to \$1.8 billion. Housing starts were up 11.6%. Among the provinces, the largest dollar gains in the residential sector occurred in Ontario (+4.6%) and in Alberta (+11.6%). Both single- and multi-family dwellings contributed to the advances. The largest decline in residential permits was in British Columbia (-14.5%).

The value of housing permits for the first eight months of 2001 reached a record \$14.6 billion, up 8.0% from the same period of 2000. Among the provinces, residential construction intentions in Ontario showed (in dollars) the strongest growth (+6.0%); Nova Scotia showed the largest decline (-17.3%).

The value of building permits in the non-residential sector slid 11.9% in August, after a strong 15.3% advance in July. Alberta recorded the largest gain in dollar terms in the non-residential sector (+28.4%). In contrast, Ontario recorded the largest decrease (-17.7%) following robust gains in both June and July.

Industrial construction intentions climbed 18.7% in August, after two monthly declines. The utility and transportation category showed the most significant rise. The greatest growth (in dollar terms) for industrial intentions was in Alberta, which increased

Total value of building permits



Value of building permits by census metropolitan area Seasonally adjusted

	August 2001	July to August 2001	January to August 2001	January-August 2000 to January-August 2001
	\$ millions	% change	\$ millions	% change
St. John's	22.9	48.4	127.7	12.8
Halifax	23.6	-37.4	233.6	-38.8
Saint John	11.3	70.5	56.0	-15.6
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	14.4	62.6	121.2	27.9
Québec	62.3	32.7	456.6	22.4
Sherbrooke	7.5	-58.5	92.4	17.7
Trois-Rivières	10.7	10.6	78.4	-0.9
Montréal	306.4	-1.0	2,909.6	45.5
Hull	29.4	-3.9	263.9	47.9
Ottawa	110.3	-16.1	993.8	9.2
Oshawa	50.7	-2.2	376.8	-20.1
Toronto	674.2	-2.5	5,750.7	5.2
Hamilton	97.3	46.9	593.0	24.0
St. Catharines-Niagara	35.7	2.3	257.4	-1.8
Kitchener	78.3	-36.2	628.3	27.4
London	33.5	4.4	480.8	49.4
Windsor	64.9	-0.5	373.2	7.8
Sudbury	9.4	100.7	49.8	9.8
Thunder Bay	15.7	60.9	74.8	1.5
Winnipeg	31.2	-29.5	299.5	-15.1
Regina	8.9	-49.9	148.6	44.7
Saskatoon	21.6	17.8	175.5	-7.6
Calgary	199.7	2.1	1,495.6	-0.2
Edmonton	131.2	50.6	857.0	5.5
Vancouver	195.3	-29.8	2,128.5	16.3
Victoria	21.2	-40.4	224.9	13.9

146.9% from July to \$105 million, reaching its highest value since October 1999. Offsetting this increase in industrial permits, the value of commercial permits fell 16.7%, following a 25.5% jump in July. Institutional building intentions fell for the first time in six months (-18.3%). The hospital and medical category showed the greatest loss. Following a strong July, British Columbia recorded the most significant decrease in August, due to a decline in the hospital and medical category in the Vancouver area.

On a year-to-date basis, non-residential building intentions rose 15.2% to \$12.2 billion, their best showing for the first eight months of any year since 1989. The largest advance was posted by the institutional component (+36.6% to \$3.2 billion). Permits for commercial projects reached \$6.6 billion, up 14.0%, but the industrial component fell 1.6% to \$2.5 billion. Among the provinces, Quebec posted the largest year-to-date dollar increase in the non-residential sector (+40.7% to \$2.8 billion) on the strength of the office buildings and trade and services categories in the Montréal area. The largest declines were in Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

The August 2001 issue of *Building permits* (Internet: 64-001-XIE, \$14/\$145) is now available. To obtain data, contact Vere Clarke (613-951-6556; clarver@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-2025; saineti@statcan.ca), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

Value of employer-sponsored pension plans continues to decline

The market value of the assets of employer-sponsored pension plans continued to decline over the first quarter to \$580.2 billion, down 2.5% from the fourth quarter of 2000. This is a total reduction of 4.9% from the third-quarter peak of \$610.0 billion, a result of falling stock prices. The TSE 300 Composite Index lost 26.7% between September 2000 and March 2001.

For the first time since data by sector became available (in 1991), private sector fund managers reported a negative cash flow. Overall, however, total net income for all trustee pension funds was \$3.6 billion, down 80.6% from the fourth quarter of

2000. Revenues were \$12.8 billion and expenditures were \$9.3 billion.

Net income was very high throughout 2000. These high net income levels were the direct result of large profits made from the sale of stocks at a time when the market value of stocks was much higher than the price the funds originally paid for them. The greatly reduced net income registered in the first quarter is primarily the result of reduced profits on the sale of stocks. These reduced profits are likely the result of a switch from a profit-taking strategy to one of buy and hold.

*The first quarter 2001 issue of **Quarterly estimates of trustee pension funds** (Internet: 74-001-XIB, \$14/\$47; paper: 74-001-XPB, \$19/\$62) is now available. For more information, contact Client Services (1-888-297-7355; 613-951-7355; fax: 613 951-3012; income@statcan.ca), Income Statistics Division.*

Expansion of aquaculture industry slows

The aquaculture industry continued to grow in 2000, but at less than half the rate of the previous two years. Industry sales revenues rose 8.5% to \$674.1 million in 2000, a rate far slower than in 1999. That year, sales revenues increased 19.5% to \$621.4 million. British Columbia and New Brunswick alone accounted for 83.2% of aquaculture revenues in 2000.

Finfish (mostly salmon), which accounted for 90.9% of total sales in 2000, increased 7.4% to \$612.5 million. Sales of molluscs, making up 8.0% of total sales, increased 21.1%, to \$54.2 million.

After having undergone some restructuring, company amalgamations and continued restrictions that limited expansion, British Columbia, the largest aquaculture producer, saw its production of finfish decreased slightly. In addition, fish prices fell during the last half of 2000 in British Columbia. As a result, sales revenue dropped 3.2% to \$289.8 million

The decline in sales in British Columbia was more than offset by increases in Atlantic Canada. In New Brunswick, where prices

were stronger than on the West Coast, sales reached \$271.2 million, up 18.8% from 1999. In Nova Scotia, revenues grew 48.0% to \$43.5 million. Prince Edward Island fish farmers generated \$27.8 million in mollusc sales in 2000, about half the national revenue from molluscs. This represented a 24.7% increase from 1999.

At the national level, product expenses, that is, the cost of products and services purchased from other businesses, excluding capital and labour costs, totalled \$448.5 million in 2000, up about 3.5% over 1999. Feed costs rose a modest 0.6% to \$178.4 million, accounting for about 40% of total product expenses.

Strong exports continue to fuel industry expansion and its contribution to the Canadian economy, although aquaculture exports dropped a slight 1.2% to \$380.9 million in 2000. Each year, about 97.0% of finfish exports go to the United States; Japan, Taiwan and other countries take the remainder. Exports expanded substantially during the 1990s, more than doubling from 1992 to 2000, driven by salmon exports to the United States.

*Data will be available soon in **Livestock statistics updates** (paper: 23-603-UPE, \$45/\$149) or in **Agriculture economic statistics** (paper: 21-603-UPE, \$26/\$52). For more information, contact Tony Dupuis (1-800-465-1991; 613-951-2511; tony.dupuis@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.*

Advanced information and communication technology key to growth in the manufacturing sector

According to the study "Impact of the adoption of advanced information and communication technologies on firm performance in the Canadian manufacturing sector," one of the keys to growth for manufacturing plants is the adoption of advanced information and communication technologies (ICTs). Indeed, ICT adoption leads to growth in labour productivity, which in turn leads to growth in market share.

Manufacturing plants that adopted advanced technologies by 1998 had seen higher productivity growth and had gained market share over the previous decade at the expense of firms that did not adopt such technologies. The study shows that economic growth

Note to readers

The study titled "Impact of the adoption of advanced information and communication technologies on firm performance in the Canadian manufacturing sector" investigates the relationship between productivity in the manufacturing sector and the adoption of advanced technologies, specifically advanced information and communication technologies (ICTs).

The study uses data on the adoption of advanced technology from the 1998 Survey of Advanced Technology in Canadian Manufacturing. Economic performance data used in the study came from a longitudinal file developed from the Annual Survey of Manufacturers.

(continued on page 5)

... Advanced information and communication technology key to growth in the manufacturing sector

is accompanied by change at the plant level, as some businesses wrest market share away from others.

Between 1988 and 1997, 47% of market share in an average manufacturing industry changed hands, shifting from losers to gainers. Driving these changes was productivity growth; plants that gained market share became relatively more productive than those that lost it. Plants that achieved higher levels of productivity used it in many ways, such as lowering their prices or producing higher-quality products. Both led to growth in market share.

Some types of technology have a greater impact on growth than others. Network communications technologies, either by themselves or in combination with the other two types of ICTs (software and

hardware) played a key role in firm growth. However, the largest impact came from using jointly or comprehensively all three types of ICTs (software, hardware and network communications).

The study divided manufacturing plants into two groups—those with high productivity growth and those with low productivity growth—based on their performance from 1988 to 1997. It found that high-growth plants were more likely to have used ICTs than low-growth plants. For example, 69% of the high-growth group had implemented advanced network communications technologies by the end of the 1990s, compared with 58% of the low-growth group. Similarly, 66% of high-growth plants had adopted advanced hardware technologies, compared with 54% of plants in the low-growth group.

The greatest differences were found for plants that had adopted all three types of technologies. Of the manufacturing plants that had high growth between 1988 and 1997, 54% had adopted all three types of technology. Of the plants that had low growth, only 39% had done so. In addition to technology use, foreign control significantly increased the likelihood that a firm enjoyed higher productivity growth. Conducting research and development was also found to contribute to higher levels of market share growth.

*The study **Impact of the adoption of advanced information and communication technologies on firm performance in the Canadian manufacturing sector** (Internet: 11F0019MIE01174, free; paper: 11F0019MPE01174, \$5) is now available. For more information, contact John Baldwin (613-951-8588, baldjoh@statcan.ca), or David Sabourin (613-951-3735, sabodav@statcan.ca), Micro-Economic Studies and Analysis Division.*

Productivity growth and use of advanced information and communications technology

	Low productivity growth	High productivity growth
	Percentage of plants using an ICT	
Software	63	73
Hardware	54	66
Network communications	58	69
All three	39	54

New from Statistics Canada

Canadian business patterns

June 2001

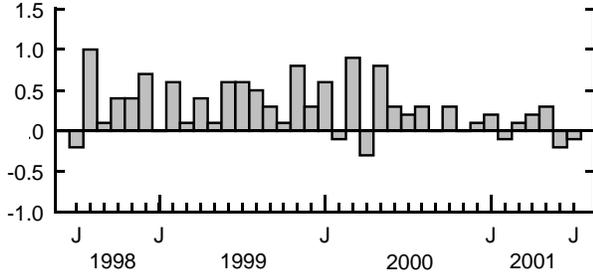
In June, Canada had more than 2 million recorded active business establishments. Data from the June 2001 version of the Canadian business patterns product are now available, and are presented by the 1996 Standard Geographical Classification, by both the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification and the North American Industry Classification System, and by employment categories. A concordance table showing the relationships between both industry classification systems is included with the product.

Canadian business patterns (CD-ROM: 61F0040XCB) is now available. The cost of data varies between \$150 and \$2,000, depending on the complexity of the request. For more information, contact France Couture (613-951-0389) or Beau Cinnamon (613-951-9021; brdinofodre@statcan.ca), Business Register Division.

Current trends

Gross domestic product

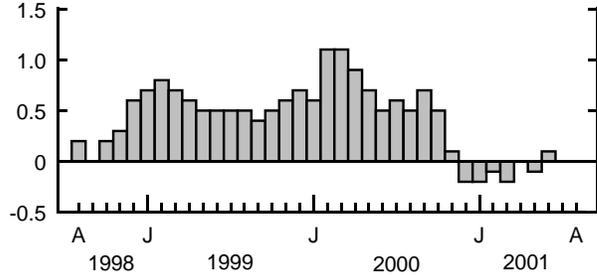
% change,
previous month



Total economic activity declined 0.1% in July, after a 0.2% reduction in June.

Composite Index

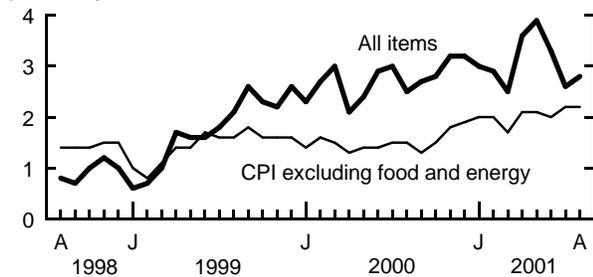
% change,
previous month



The leading indicator was unchanged (0.0%) in August, pulled down by further weakness in the business sector.

Consumer Price Index

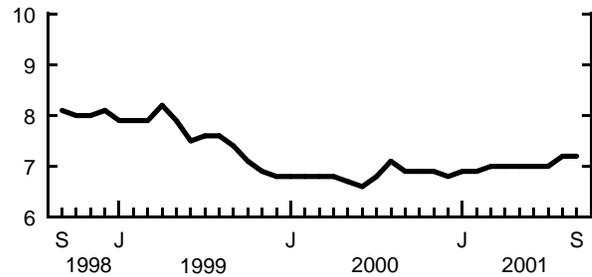
% change,
previous year



Consumer prices for goods and services were 2.8% higher in August than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 2.2%, unchanged from July.

Unemployment rate

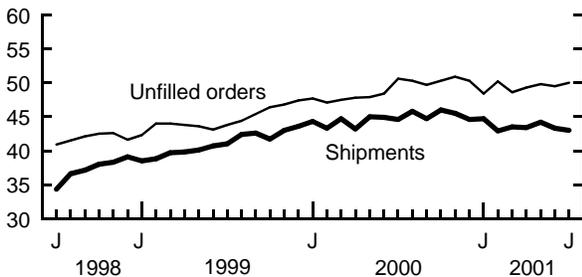
%



In September, the unemployment rate was unchanged at 7.2%.

Manufacturing

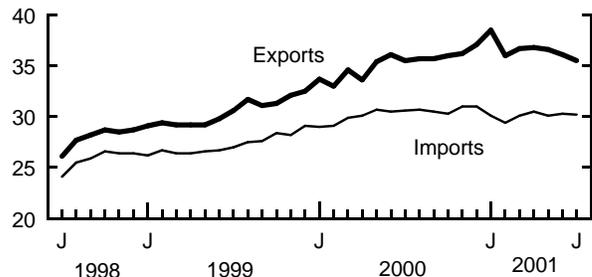
\$ billions



Manufacturers' shipments declined 0.2% in July to \$43.0 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders posted a 1.2% increase to \$50.0 billion.

Merchandise trade

\$ billions



In July, the value of merchandise exports declined 0.4% to \$35.5 billion. Imports were unchanged at \$30.2 billion.

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 (\$ billions, 1997)	July	937.4	-0.1%	0.4%
Composite Index (1992=100)	August	166.1	0.0%	0.5%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billions)	Q2 2001	44.7	0.6%	-11.3%
Capacity utilization rate (%)	Q2 2001	83.2	-0.4†	-2.6†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billions)	July	24.1	-0.5%	3.4%
Department store sales (\$ billions)	August*	1.68	-2.9%	9.9%
New motor vehicle sales (thousands of units)	July	133.0	-0.5%	0.1%
Wholesale trade (\$ billions)	July	32.9	-0.4%	1.5%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	September*	15.1	0.1%	0.9%
Unemployment rate (%)	September*	7.2	0.0†	0.3†
Participation rate (%)	September*	65.8	-0.1†	-0.2†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	July	665.41	0.5%	1.6%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	September	148	-3.3%	-16.4%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billions)	July	35.5	-0.4%	0.2%
Merchandise imports (\$ billions)	July	30.2	0.0%	-1.3%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billions)	July	5.4	-0.1	0.5
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billions)	July	43.0	-0.2%	-3.5%
New orders (\$ billions)	July	43.6	1.7%	-6.8%
Unfilled orders (\$ billions)	July	50.0	1.2%	-1.3%
Inventory/shipments ratio	July	1.52	0.00	0.11
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	August	117.1	0.0%	2.8%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	August	128.8	0.0%	0.9%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	August	138.8	-0.3%	-4.5%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	August*	106.5	0.2%	2.9%

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

* new this week

† percentage point

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SUBJECT AREA Title of product	Period	Catalogue number	Price (\$) (issue/subscription)
AGRICULTURE			
Field crop reporting series: September estimates of production of principal field crops	September 2001	22-002-XIB	11/66
Field crop reporting series: September estimates of production of principal field crops	September 2001	22-002-XPB	15/88
Production of eggs	August 2001	23-003-XPB	110
BUSINESS REGISTER			
Canadian business patterns	June 2001	61F0040XCB	various
HEALTH STATISTICS			
Postal code conversion file plus	October 2001	82F0086XDB	free
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS			
National tourism indicators	Q2 2001	13-009-XIB	free
National tourism indicators	Q2 2001	13-009-XPB	free
National income and expenditure accounts	Q2 2001	13-001-XIB	33/109
National income and expenditure accounts	Q2 2001	13-001-XPB	44/145
INTERNATIONAL TRADE			
Exports by commodity	July 2001	65-004-XMB	37/361
Exports by commodity	July 2001	65-004-XPB	78/773
INVESTMENT AND CAPITAL STOCK			
Building permits	August 2001	64-001-XIE	14/145
LABOUR STATISTICS			
Employment, earnings and hours	July 2001	72-002-XIB	24/240
Labour force information	September 2001	71-001-PIB	8/78
Labour force information	September 2001	71-001-PPB	11/103
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY			
Cement	August 2001	44-001-XIB	5/47
Energy statistics handbook	August 2001	57-601-XCB	284
Energy statistics handbook	August 2001	57-601-UPB	387
Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins	August 2001	46-002-XIB	5/47
Pulpwood and wood residue statistics	July 2001	25-001-XIB	6/55
SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND ELECTRONIC INFORMATION			
Industrial research and development	2001 intentions	88-202-XIB	35

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