



Infommat

A Weekly Review

Friday, October 27, 2000

OVERVIEW

◆ **Automotive products lift both exports and imports**

Automotive products drove both exports and imports higher in August. Exports rebounded 1.0%, while imports rose 0.8%. The resulting merchandise trade surplus was just under \$4.0 billion.

◆ **High-tech products lead shipments higher**

In August, manufacturing firms shipped \$45.4 billion worth of goods, up 2.0% from July. Demand for high-tech electrical and electronic products led the way.

◆ **Retail sales growth pauses after three robust months**

After three robust months, retail sales growth paused in August. However, ongoing sales strength among motor and recreational vehicle dealers helped to offset weakness in several retail sectors.

◆ **Wholesale sales fall after three advances**

After three consecutive advances, wholesale sales fell 0.8% in August. Wholesalers of apparel and dry goods and of computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery reported the most significant declines.

◆ **Gasoline still a major inflationary factor**

In September, consumers paid 2.7% more for the goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index than they did in September 1999. Almost half the increase was due to higher energy prices, especially gasoline. Mortgage interest costs and food purchased from restaurants also contributed.

◆ **More and more fruit and vegetables on Canadian tables**

Canadians increased their consumption of fruit, vegetables, oils, fats and fish during the 1990s.

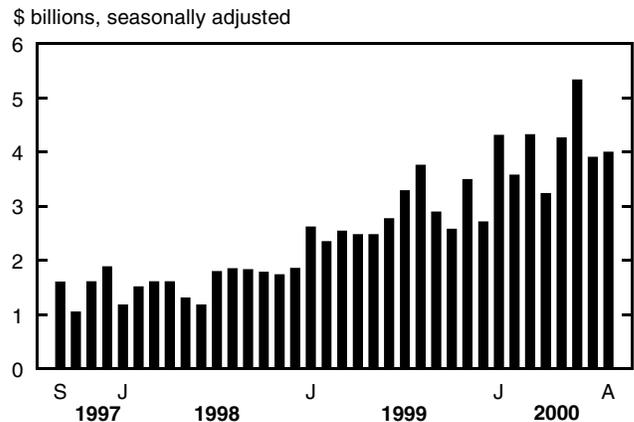
Automotive products lift both exports and imports

Merchandise exports rebounded in August by 1.0%, rising to \$34.8 billion as they recovered from July's substantial decline of \$1.4 billion. At the same time, imports increased 0.8% to \$30.8 billion. The resulting trade surplus of just under \$4.0 billion was \$96 million higher than the surplus in July.

Automotive products were the driving force behind exports in August (+4.6% to \$8.1 billion). A \$490-million, or 12.8%, surge in exports of cars provided the push. However, this rise was partly offset by a 7.7% decline in truck exports and a 0.4% decline in parts.

Energy exports rose 2.6% in August to \$4.1 billion, owing entirely to the impact of higher prices for crude oil, natural gas and electricity. Electricity exports alone were 153.5% higher than in August 1999, largely because of demand from California. Canada also imports energy products, but those imports declined 5.2% in August. Between January and August, Canadian companies exported \$31.2 billion worth of energy products, up 72.6% compared with the first eight months of 1999. Meanwhile, the value of imported energy products climbed 84.8% over the same

Merchandise trade balance



(continued on page 2)



... Automotive products lift both exports and imports

period. For the first eight months of 2000, the trade surplus in energy stood at almost \$20 billion.

Forestry product exports dropped for a third consecutive month. Fewer housing starts in the United States since April lowered demand for lumber and dragged lumber exports 21.3% lower between April and August. Exports of other wood products (such as fibreboard and plywood) were also down in August. And wood pulp exports declined 7.5%, though they were still 26.2% higher than in August 1999. However, strong demand for paper in the United States maintained paper export volume and prices, pushing newsprint exports up 0.7% over July.

In other exports, higher shipments of aircraft and telecommunications products (mainly semi-conductors) lifted exports from the machinery and equipment sector by \$346 million, or 4.0%. Recent labour disputes at nickel mines caused exports to plunge \$115-million (-67.3%). Exports of fertilisers fell 16.7% because of lower potash exports to Asia and the United States. Synthetic rubber and plastic exports declined 5.2%.

On the import side, automotive product imports advanced in August by 4.6% to \$6.7 billion. Higher motor vehicle production

lifted parts imports by 7.4%. Truck imports recovered from July losses with a jump of 15.3%. However, following a record high in July, car imports dropped 5.1%. Machinery and equipment imports rose 1.0%, as computers and parts imports climbed for a sixth consecutive month—up 3.7% to a record high of \$1.8 billion; imports of machinery to manufacture communications equipment also contributed, as did automotive industry equipment.

Industrial goods imports fell \$143 million or 2.4% on lower imports of metals, metallic minerals and basic metal fabricated products. The value reflects lower volumes, since imported metal prices perked up in August. Volume was down in August partly because some importers took advantage of extra ships that were available to increase their supplies in July.

*The August 2000 issue of **Canadian international merchandise trade** (print: 65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188; online at www.statcan.ca: 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141) includes tables by commodity and country. Current account data are available quarterly in **Canada's balance of international payments** (print: 67-001-XPB, \$38/\$124; online at www.statcan.ca: 67-001-XIB, \$29/\$93). For further information, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647 or 1 800 294-5583), International Trade Division. See also "Current trends" on page 9.*

High-tech products lead shipments higher

In August, manufacturing firms shipped \$45.4 billion worth of goods, up 2.0% from July. Demand for high-tech electrical and electronic products led the way, as shipments increased in 14 of 22 major manufacturing groups (representing 66.2% of total shipments).

Shipments have grown 4.6% since the beginning of the year, and were 8.0% higher than August 1999. The trend has been rising since the summer of 1998, and August marked the third increase in four months. The electrical and electronic products industry accounted for half of August's increase in dollar terms and about one-tenth of the month's total value shipped.

Manufacturers' shipments, August 2000
Seasonally adjusted

	\$ millions	% change, previous month
Canada	45,372	2.0
Newfoundland	169	-13.6
Prince Edward Island	81	7.1
Nova Scotia	745	9.5
New Brunswick	884	-1.9
Quebec	11,271	4.5
Ontario	24,164	1.4
Manitoba	882	-1.8
Saskatchewan	590	3.5
Alberta	3,508	1.7
British Columbia	3,077	-0.6
Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut	3	-24.4

Companies in the electrical and electronic products industry shipped product worth \$4.5 billion in August, up 10.7% from July. This rise was concentrated in communication and electronic parts/components. Shipments from the electrical and electronic products industry have climbed considerably over the past few years. In 1997, the industry was the fifth largest source of manufactured goods in Canada. A year later, it had advanced to third place. And since then, shipments of electrical and electronic products have been growing rapidly. If current trends persist, the electrical and electronic products industry will soon surpass the food industry as the second largest manufacturing sector.

Shipment gains were also recorded in August in the motor vehicle (+2.4%), machinery (+7.7%) and aircraft and parts (+8.1%) industries. The major offsetting decline occurred in the wood industry (-2.5%), as prices of lumber, sawmill and other wood products dropped 1.6% in August.

Manufacturers' inventories rose 1.1% in August to \$59.9 billion. Inventories have been growing steadily since February 1999, with the exception of a negligible decline in June of this year. The upsurge in August stemmed largely from goods-in-process inventories (+3.2%). Modest gains occurred in raw material inventories (+0.5%) and in finished-product inventories (+0.2%).

The industry that contributed the most in August was aircraft and parts (+4.1%), where the inventory growth was mostly owing to goods-in-process. Also significant were inventory increases in the motor vehicle industry (+10.2%)—primarily goods-in-process—and in the electrical and electronic products industry (+1.8%)—primarily in raw materials. The main offsetting decrease occurred in the refined petroleum and coal industry (-2.2%). Inventory declines were concentrated in finished-product inventories. The inventory-to-shipments ratio dropped slightly, from 1.33 in July to 1.32.

(continued on page 3)

... High-tech products lead shipments higher

The backlog of unfilled orders among manufacturers remained steady at \$56.0 billion in August. A decline in unfilled orders in the motor vehicle industry (-9.1%) resulted from slow demand for heavy trucks. It was offset by an increase in unfilled orders in the aircraft and parts industry (+0.5%) and in a number of other industries. New orders failed to sustain the record level set in July (-3.6%). New orders in the aircraft and parts industry fell in August (-55.4%) after increasing dramatically in July (+52.8%).

Excluding that industry, new orders rose 0.5% in August, owing primarily to the electrical and electronic products industry (+4.6%).

*The August 2000 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; kuncrai@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. See also "Current trends" on page 9.*

Retail sales growth pauses after three robust months

After three robust months, retail sales growth paused at \$23.4 billion (+0.1%) in August. Ongoing strength among motor and recreational vehicle dealers helped to offset weakness at furniture stores, general merchandise stores, clothing stores and drugstores. Excluding vehicle dealers, retail sales declined 0.5%.

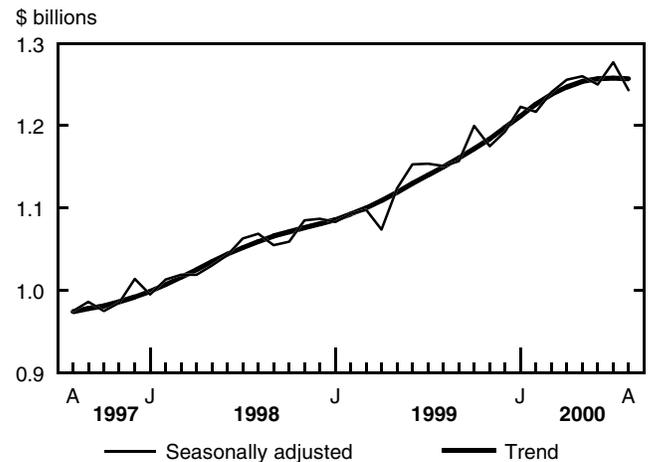
Despite August's pause, overall spending at retail stores was 5.7% higher than in August 1999. As well, in the first eight months of this year, sales were up from a year earlier by 6.4%, better than the January-to-August 1999 growth of 5.0%.

In August, retailers in the auto sector posted their fourth consecutive monthly gain (+0.8%), as sales advanced for motor and recreational vehicle dealers (+1.7%) and at auto parts, accessories and services stores (+0.8%). Gasoline service stations reported lower sales (-2.1%). Low financing rates and large cash rebates helped dealers post their fourth straight monthly increase. Sales at automotive parts, accessories and services stores, which picked up in the summer months, have generally been rising since the fall of 1997. The decline at gasoline service stations reflected lower prices at the pump (-3.5%); still, sales remained at historic highs (+38% over February 1999), mostly because of the higher gasoline prices.

Retail sales, August 2000 Seasonally adjusted

	\$ millions	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	23,428	0.1	5.7
Newfoundland	381	0.6	8.4
Prince Edward Island	105	-0.1	7.1
Nova Scotia	713	-1.8	4.1
New Brunswick	584	1.6	2.8
Quebec	5,366	-0.6	5.3
Ontario	9,014	0.3	5.1
Manitoba	799	0.1	3.8
Saskatchewan	688	0.1	4.5
Alberta	2,707	0.2	9.0
British Columbia	2,993	0.5	6.9
Yukon	28	0.8	2.4
Northwest Territories	33	1.0	4.6
Nunavut	15	3.7	6.1

Sales in furniture stores



Sales also advanced in August at "other retail" stores (+0.6%) and at food stores (+0.3%). This was the fourth consecutive monthly gain for the "other retail" category and the third for food stores. "Other retail" includes liquor stores, sporting goods stores, hardware stores and bookstores. Sales in this category have generally been growing since the summer of 1996, while food store sales have been on the rise since the spring of the same year.

Consumers reduced spending in August at furniture stores (-2.7%), completely offsetting July's 2.2% gain. Following a four-year climb, furniture store sales are essentially unchanged since April 2000. The weaker sales might be reflecting housing starts, which have declined 13.8% from the February 2000 peak.

At general merchandise stores, sales fell 1.7%. That followed four consecutive monthly increases. Department store sales were off 3.8%, wiping out three-quarters of the cumulative sales gains reported in June and July. Sales of "other general merchandise" stores, which advanced for a fourth straight month in August (+1.1%), have been rising since early 1997.

In clothing stores, after three months of increase, consumer spending fell 0.9%. However, sales in clothing stores have been generally growing since the start of 1996. About 60% of all clothing is purchased from these specialty clothing stores; the rest is mostly purchased from general merchandise stores and sporting goods stores. Reduced sales were also reported by drugstores in August (-0.6%), partly offsetting the 0.9% gain in July. Drugstore sales have been rising slowly since the end of 1998.

(continued on page 4)

... Retail sales growth pauses after three robust months

August's strongest retail sales growth occurred in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and British Columbia. Mostly, these reflected higher sales in the automotive sector. All three territories also posted strong gains in August. The only significant declines were in Nova Scotia and Quebec. These were broad-based, except for rising sales in the automotive sector in Quebec. For the most part, retail sales in Nova Scotia have been growing since the spring of 1997, while those in Quebec have been advancing since the summer of 1998.

The August 2000 issue of *Retail trade* (print: 63-005-XPB, \$21/\$206; online at www.statcan.ca: 63-005-XIB, \$16/\$155) presents the full report. To order data, or for general information, contact Client Services (1 877 421-3067 or 613-951-3549, retailinfo@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Paul Gratton (613-951-3541; gratpau@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

Wholesale sales fall after three advances

After three consecutive monthly advances, wholesale sales fell 0.8% in August to \$32.0 billion. Despite this drop, wholesale sales have been on an upward trend since mid-1998.

Wholesalers of apparel and dry goods posted a significant sales decline (-6.4%), following a decrease of 1.5% in July. Sales in this sector have been generally declining since the fall of 1999. Sales also dropped significantly for wholesalers of computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery (-3.0%). This drop was the first after four consecutive monthly increases. In 2000, this sector's growth has been limited by lower demand for personal computers, as well as by a shortage of electronic components, two factors that might have contributed to the sales decline in August.

"Other products" wholesalers also reported a notable fall in sales in August (-4.4%), which nearly wiped out July's 5.9% gain. This sales decline can largely be attributed to weaker sales of agricultural and other farm supplies, such as fertilisers, seeds and feed.

Increased sales were reported in August by wholesalers of farm machinery, equipment and supplies (+5.2%), especially by those on the Prairies. Wholesale sales in this sector have been rising gradually since the start of 2000. A healthy monthly sales increase was also reported by wholesalers of beverages, drug, and tobacco products (+2.7%). Sales in this sector have been on the rise since mid-1998, buoyed by strong demand.

Weaker wholesale sales were seen in August in Alberta, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec. The significant decline in Alberta (-5.4%) can largely be ascribed to weaker sales of food products, industrial chemicals and household chemicals. In Ontario, three sectors—industrial and other machinery, equipment/supplies; computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery; and apparel and dry goods—have been the main contributors to the sales slowdown in 2000. In British Columbia, wholesale sales were unchanged for a second consecutive month, after having declined for three months.

Wholesalers' inventory values increased in August by 0.4% to \$42.8 billion. All sectors saw their inventories increase, except for motor vehicles, parts and accessories (-2.2%), other products (-1.6%), and farm machinery, equipment/supplies (-0.7). For wholesalers of farm machinery, equipment/supplies, this marked the sixth consecutive monthly decline in inventory value. They have been reluctant to increase their inventories in the face of the adversities that gripped the sector in 1998 and 1999. Their wholesale inventories have been mostly decreasing since the fall of 1998. The inventory-to-sales ratio rose from 1.32 in July to 1.34; it has levelled off since late 1999.

The August 2000 issue of *Wholesale trade* (online at www.statcan.ca: 63-008-XIB, \$14/\$140) presents the full report. To order data, or for general information, contact Client Services (1 877 421-3067 or 613-951-3549; wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Alexander Hays (613-951-3552; haysale@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

Wholesale trade, August 2000 Seasonally adjusted

	\$ millions	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	32,013	-0.8	5.6
Newfoundland	227	1.0	-0.7
Prince Edward Island	55	2.1	2.5
Nova Scotia	581	0.6	4.0
New Brunswick	410	-0.8	6.2
Quebec	6,607	-0.6	6.3
Ontario	15,999	-0.7	5.4
Manitoba	910	4.9	2.4
Saskatchewan	916	0.1	8.7
Alberta	3,049	-5.4	12.3
British Columbia	3,233	0.0	0.2
Yukon	11	4.6	19.7
Northwest Territories	13	-4.0	2.1
Nunavut	2	-6.3	-17.0

Gasoline still a major inflationary factor

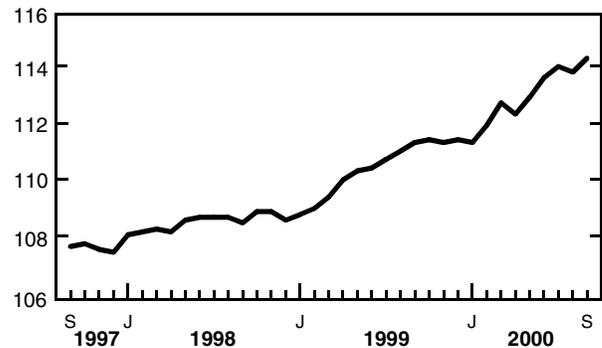
In September, consumers paid 2.7% more for the goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) than they did in September 1999. Almost half of this increase in prices was due to higher energy costs. The annual rise in the CPI excluding energy was 1.5%, within the range of between 1.0% and 1.7% that index has shown since January 1998. Also contributing to the CPI's annual increase in September were mortgage interest costs and food purchased from restaurants. These were somewhat counterbalanced by price decreases for motor vehicles, computer equipment/supplies and childcare.

Among the energy commodities, gasoline had the largest impact on the annual inflation rate in September. Gasoline prices climbed an average 17.7%, marking the 14th consecutive month where the annual increase has been in the double digits. The higher overall energy costs were also due to price hikes for natural gas (+24.5%) and fuel oil (+44.5%). Fuel oil prices showed some significant provincial variations, however. September's lowest annual increase in fuel oil prices was recorded in Manitoba (+28.8%), whereas the highest was in Quebec (+57.4%). The increases posted in the remaining provinces, in Whitehorse and in Yellowknife ranged from 35.5% to 42.6%.

This September, tuition fees had little effect on the annual inflation rate. Compared with September 1999, tuition fees were up an average 3.2%—the slowest rate of increase since 1978. The increase this year was slower than in previous years, since more provincial governments have frozen tuition fees. Increases ranged from 0.3% for residents of British Columbia and Quebec to 8.6% for those of Nova Scotia. Manitobans were the only ones to

Consumer Price Index

Index (1992=100), unadjusted data



benefit from a decrease (-4.1%) because the last provincial government budget reduced tuition fees.

On a monthly basis, after decreasing 0.2% in August, the CPI rose 0.4% in September. Rising energy prices were the main factor, as the CPI excluding energy remained unchanged from August to September. Among the energy components, almost all of the lift came from higher prices for gasoline (+6.0%) and fuel oil (+16.0%). For gasoline, the price increases ranged from 1.4% in Yellowknife to 11.5% in Manitoba. Only in Prince Edward Island, where gasoline prices are provincially regulated, did gasoline prices decrease (-1.9%). As for fuel oil, the smallest monthly price increase was in Prince Edward Island (+2.8%), whereas the highest was in Quebec (+20.1%).

Upward pressure on the monthly CPI also came from women's clothing and tuition fees. Prices for women's clothing rose 3.3%, due in part to higher prices for new fall clothing items.

Exerting downward price pressure in September, fresh vegetables fell an average 10.8%, while those of fresh fruit were down 4.4%. These decreases were due mostly to the continued availability of local crops. Traveller accommodation prices dropped 2.4% with the end of the peak summer tourism season. Nationally, childcare prices were down 2.8%. In Quebec, childcare prices were down 10.8%, owing to extension of a \$5-per-day provincial subsidy program to the last age group of eligible children. This decrease was only slightly offset by increases in Manitoba (+1.3%) and Saskatchewan (+1.2%).

*The September 2000 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 9.*

Consumer Price Index, September 2000

% change, previous year, not seasonally adjusted

	All items	Food	Shelter	Transportation	Energy
Canada	2.7	2.2	3.8	3.9	15.1
Newfoundland	2.9	0.7	6.0	6.3	16.6
Prince Edward Island	4.3	2.8	7.6	7.4	25.3
Nova Scotia	3.0	2.1	6.5	4.5	17.2
New Brunswick	2.9	2.0	4.7	4.6	13.5
Quebec	2.5	2.8	3.5	4.0	12.7
Ontario	2.8	2.8	3.3	3.5	14.4
Manitoba	2.4	3.3	3.7	2.4	10.6
Saskatchewan	2.7	1.6	4.2	3.2	10.1
Alberta	3.7	2.7	7.6	3.5	21.7
British Columbia	1.9	-0.8	2.1	4.7	18.7
Whitehorse	2.4	0.1	5.1	3.9	18.5
Yellowknife	1.5	0.8	3.5	-0.2	12.4

More and more fruit and vegetables on Canadian tables

Canadians increased their consumption of fruit, vegetables, oils, fats and fish during the 1990s. As for fruit, each Canadian ate on average just over 124 kg of fruit in 1999, compared with 110.7 kg at the beginning of the decade. Consumers clearly preferred fresh fruit, especially bananas, apples and oranges. More and more, they also turned to melons, such as watermelons and cantaloupes. As well, tropical fruits such as guavas, mangoes, kiwis and papayas have become increasingly popular.

Fruit juices continued to play an important role in the diet of Canadians. Consumption of traditional products such as orange, apple and grape juices reached just over 25 litres per person in 1999, up more than 27% from 1990. Stronger demand for traditional/tropical blended juice products explains part to this growth.

As for vegetables (including potatoes), each person consumed an average of 190.5 kg last year, compared with 169.9 kg a decade earlier. Potatoes remained the vegetable of choice for consumers. In 1999, each individual ate on average 77.0 kg of potatoes, either in fresh form or as processed products, a sharp 18.5% jump from 1990. In large part, this was due to the growing popularity of french fries.

Excluding potatoes, consumption of fresh vegetables closed the decade at 69.5 kg per person, an increase of more than 7% from 1990. Lettuce, carrots, onions, tomatoes and cabbage all remained popular choices. Major factors that contributed to this increase were the expanding use of fresh-cut products, pre-packaged salads and other processed products (both in the food service industry and in grocery stores), as well as access to a wider variety of imported produce throughout the year.

By the end of the 1990s, each Canadian was consuming just over 45% more oils and fats than at the beginning of the decade.

Note to readers

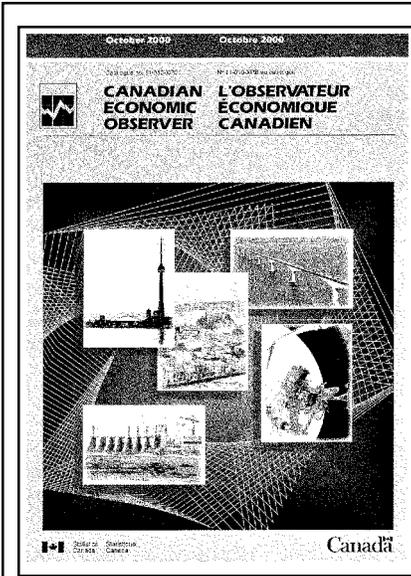
These data represent food that is available for consumption, not the actual quantities of food consumed in Canada. This is because the data do not allow for losses in stores, households, private institutions or restaurants.

Much of this can be attributed to the widening use of canola, soybean, olive and other specialty oils by households and/or food service outlets in salad dressings, deep-fried products and commercially-prepared baked goods.

Fish consumption rebounded in recent years, after dropping to below 8 kg per person in 1995. By the end of the decade, each Canadian was consuming 10 kg per person of fish on average, compared with 9 kg in 1990. The increases of recent years were due to demand for other sources of protein, marketing and promotional campaigns, availability of convenient and easy-to-prepare products for busy consumers and dietary preferences of a growing Asiatic population in Canada.

*Historical data from 1985 to 1999 on the consumption fruits, vegetables, oils, fats and fish, plus detailed information on production, stocks, international trade and supplies used by manufacturers, will be available in November in **Food consumption in Canada, part II** (print: 32-230-XPB, \$35; online at www.statcan.ca: 32-230-XIB, \$26). A look at consumption patterns for other food commodities, such as dairy products, beef, pork, poultry and cereal products, appeared in the **Infomat** of June 23, 2000. For more information, contact Debbie Dupuis (1 800 465-1991; 613-951-2553; fax: 613-951-3868) or Patricia Chandler (613-951-2506); Agriculture Division.*

New from Statistics Canada



Canadian economic observer October 2000

The October issue of Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, *Canadian economic observer*, analyses current economic conditions and summarizes the major economic events that occurred in September.

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

The October 2000 issue of Canadian economic observer (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$27) is now available. For more information, contact Cyndi Bloskie (613-951-3634; ceo@statcan.ca), Current Economic Analysis Group.

Travel-log: Bird and wildlife viewing Autumn 2000

The Autumn 2000 issue of *Travel-log*, Statistics Canada's quarterly tourism newsletter, features an article titled "Characteristics associated with bird and wildlife viewers in Canada". This study aims to help tourism destination planners understand the characteristics of domestic markets for bird and wildlife viewing, so that they are better prepared to meet the demands of such travellers.

Each quarter, *Travel-log* also examines the trends in the Travel Price Index, profiles the latest travel indicators, looks at travellers' characteristics and updates the international travel account.

The Autumn 2000 issue of Travel-log (online at www.statcan.ca: 87-003-XIE, \$5/\$16; print: 87-003-XPB, \$13/\$42) is now available. For further information, contact Monique Beyrouti (613-951-1673, fax: 613-951-2909, monique.beyrouti@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.



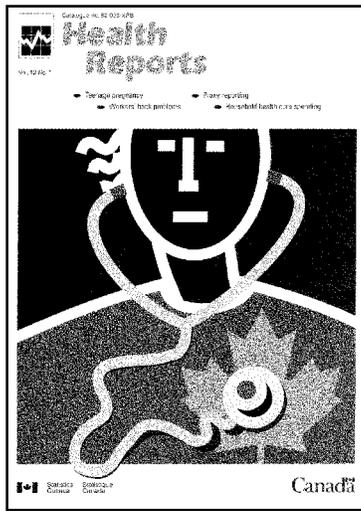
Federal electoral district profile 1996 Census

Beginning this week, Canadians can obtain free of charge a wealth of information about federal electoral districts on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). Statistical profiles of all 301 federal electoral districts are available in an easy-to-use format in both English and French. The *Federal electoral district profile* includes data from the 1996 Census of Population and a mapping feature.

Each profile contains data on four major components: population and demographic characteristics; education; income and work; and families and dwellings. Visitors to the Web site can quickly compare data for their federal electoral district with the provincial and national data.

For more information about the Federal electoral district profile, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre.

New from Statistics Canada



Health reports Vol. 12, no. 1

The latest issue of *Health reports* contains the following articles: “Teenage pregnancy”, “Proxy reporting in the National Population Health Survey”, “Chronic back problems among workers” and “Household spending on health care”.

Health reports provides comprehensive and timely analysis of national and provincial health information and vital statistics derived from surveys or administrative databases. It is designed to reach a broad audience that includes health professionals, researchers, policy-makers, educators and students.

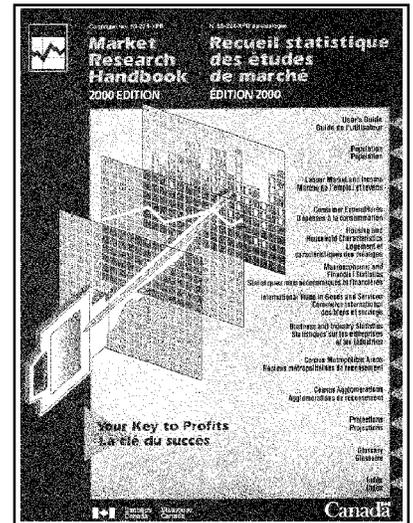
The vol. 12, no. 1 issue of **Health reports** (online at www.statcan.ca: 82-003-XIE, \$26/\$87; print: 82-003-XPB, \$35/\$116) is now available. For more information, contact Marie Beaudet (613-951-7025; beaumar@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division.

Market research handbook 2000 Edition

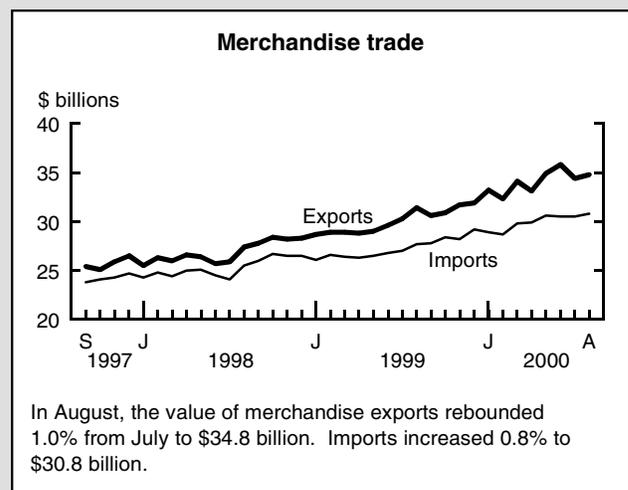
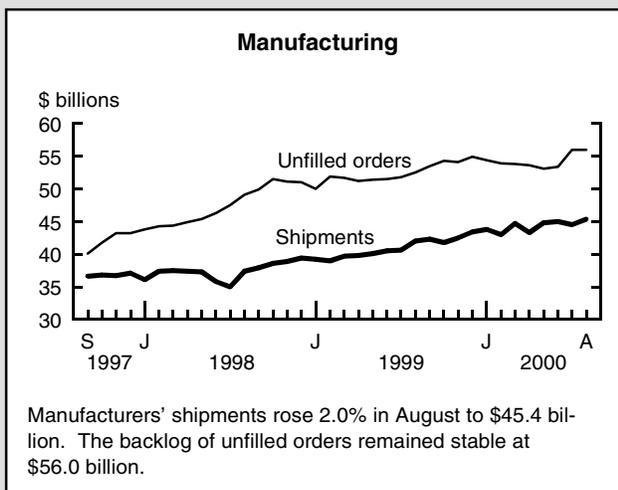
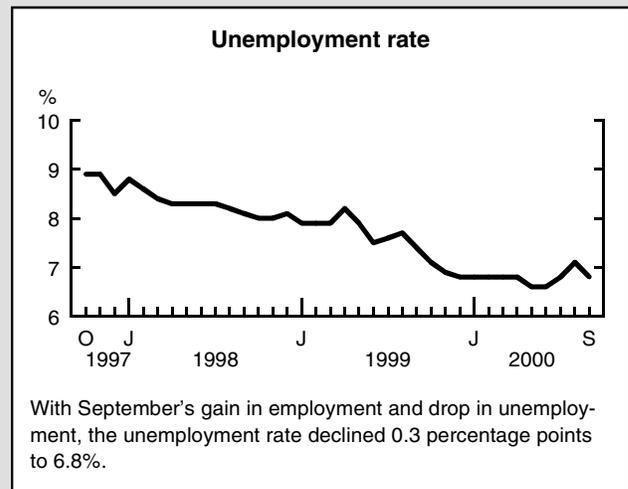
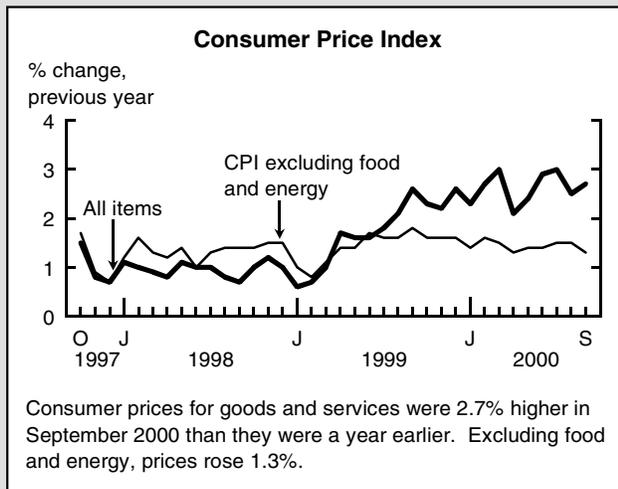
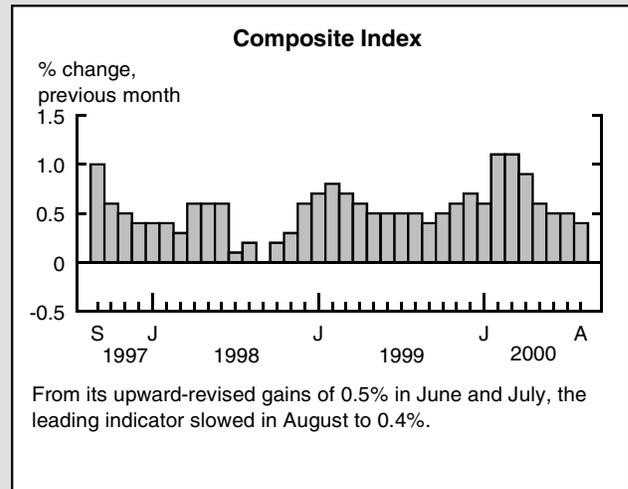
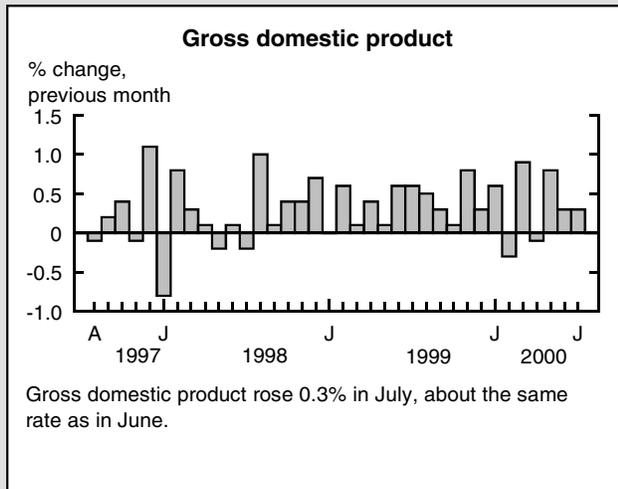
The 2000 edition of the *Market research handbook* provides accurate and timely statistics on the changing demographics, standards of living and economic characteristics of Canadian society. It is designed to help businesses locate target markets, track their market share and assess their competitive position. Since 1975, the *Market research handbook* has been an authoritative source of socio-economic information, reflecting key characteristics of local and national markets.

This year's edition contains the latest data from the 1996 Census and a wide range of surveys. It also incorporates a number of features designed to make it more user-friendly: a user's guide, annotated charts to reveal salient trends, help lines for each of the data sources, and references to CANSIM (Statistics Canada's Canadian Socio-economic Information Management System).

The 2000 edition of **Market research handbook** (63-224-XPB, \$125) is now available. For further information, contact Serge Bourret (613-951-0821), Small Business and Special Surveys 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)	July	789.6	0.3%	4.6%
Composite Index (1992=100)	September*	166.0	0.6%	8.5%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q2 2000	51.9	1.7%	21.6%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q2 2000	87.9	0.4†	4.1†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	August*	23.4	0.1%	5.7%
Department store sales (\$ billions)	August	1.51	-3.8%	-4.4%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	August*	139.3	5.1%	6.1%
Wholesale trade (\$ billion)	August	32.0	-0.8%	5.6%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	September	14.96	0.4%	2.5%
Unemployment rate (%)	September	6.8	-0.3†	-0.6†
Participation rate (%)	September	65.9	0.0†	0.3†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	August*	630.37	0.6%	3.0%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	September	174	2.4%	7.4%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	August	34.8	1.0%	10.7%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	August	30.8	0.8%	11.3%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	August	4.0	0.1	0.2
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	August	45.4	2.0%	8.0%
New orders (\$ billion)	August	45.4	-3.6%	6.2%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	August	56.0	0.0%	6.6%
Inventory/shipments ratio	August	1.32	-0.01	0.05
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	September*	114.4	0.4%	2.7%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	September*	128.4	0.5%	4.0%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	September*	149.1	3.0%	18.1%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	August	103.5	0.3%	2.4%

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

* new this week

† percentage point

Infomat

A weekly review

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Travel-log	Autumn 2000	87-003-XPB	13/42
CURRENT ECONOMIC ANALYSIS			
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Health reports, vol. 12, no. 1		82-003-XPB	35/116
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