



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, November 16, 1998

For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **New motor vehicle sales, September 1998** 2
New motor vehicle sales rebounded in September, increasing 5.3% to 127,223 units as dealers experienced the best new truck sales this year.

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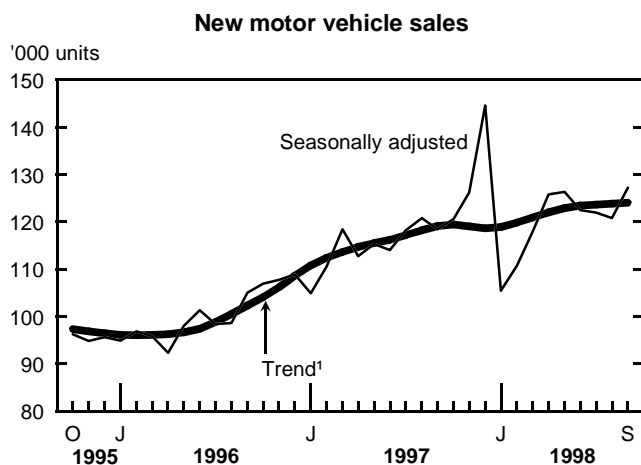
Canada

MAJOR RELEASES

New motor vehicle sales

September 1998

New motor vehicle sales rebounded in September, increasing 5.3% to 127,223 units as dealers experienced the best new truck sales this year. September's increase in new motor vehicle sales followed three months of declines. Industry sources suggest that some of the increase in sales may be due to strong dealer incentives in September, as well as the availability of more new cars at General Motors dealerships in the wake of depleted inventories in August due to the strike in June and July. Sales were 7.5% higher in September compared with the same period a year earlier. Sources in the automotive industry suggest that new motor vehicles sales will decline in October. (All numbers are seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified).



¹ The short-term trend represents a moving average of the data.

Despite September's advances, new motor vehicle sales fell 1.1% in the third quarter of 1998 from the second quarter. This retreat followed an 11.9% advance in the second quarter. Sales in the third quarter of 1998 were 3.5% higher than the same period in 1997.

Despite the recent mixed economic signals that may have dampened consumer confidence, demand for new vehicles essentially remained unchanged since the fall of 1997. Industry sources indicate that several automakers have kept price increases to a minimum or have lowered the price on new vehicle models being

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.

The Big Three manufacturers are General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. The Big Three may sell new motor vehicles manufactured in North America as well as overseas (imported).

For reasons of confidentiality, the Yukon and Northwest Territories are included with British Columbia.

introduced. Automakers have also offered financial incentives such as low-interest financing and cash-back to maintain demand for their products. Prior to the fall of 1997, sales of new motor vehicles advanced steadily from the latest trough of the spring of 1996.

Stronger new car sales in September by The Big Three resulted in an increase in their market share from 50.4% in August 1998 to 55.4% (seasonally adjusted) in September, essentially back to the same level before the strike at General Motors.

New car sales by the Big Three advanced 11.2% in September — their biggest increase since March 1997. Although the Big Three sold more cars in September than any other month in 1998, sales were 4.5% below the same month a year earlier. New cars sales by manufacturers other than the Big Three declined 8.9% in September, but remained 16.8% higher than the same month a year earlier.

Best month for new truck sales this year

New truck sales in September surpassed new car sales for the first time since January 1998. Sales of new trucks increased 9.7% in September to 64,013 units, following a decline of 3.0% in August. New cars sales advanced 1.3% in September to 63,210 units, the second monthly advance after four months of declines. From the fall of 1996 to the end of 1997, stronger advances in new truck sales helped them catch up to new car sales. Increasing new car sales and flat new truck sales reversed this trend in the spring of 1998. Since then, sales of new cars and trucks have continued to converge.

September sales up in all provinces

Compared with September 1997, sales of new motor vehicles (unadjusted for seasonality) increased in all provinces. Newfoundland (+15.1%), Ontario

(+14.7%), Quebec (+12.8%), Nova Scotia (+12.3%) and Manitoba (+12.1%) led the way with double digit advances.

All provinces, with the exception of New Brunswick (+9.5%) and British Columbia (+4.5%) posted double-digit advances in new truck sales compared with the same period a year earlier. Only Newfoundland (+10.2%) and Quebec (+10.2%) posted double-digit sales advances in new car sales in September compared with the same period last year. British Columbia (-1.6%) and Saskatchewan (-1.5%) were the only provinces to post declines in year-over-year sales of new cars.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 64.

The September 1998 issue of *New motor vehicle sales* (Internet version: 63-007-XIB, \$13/\$124) will be available shortly. See *How to order to publications*.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3549; logener@statcan.ca). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Jeff Fritzsche (613-951-2812; fritjef@statcan.ca), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. ■

New motor vehicle sales

| | Sept. 1997 | Aug. 1998 ^r | Sept. 1998 ^p | Sept. 1997 to Sept. 1998 | Aug. to Sept. 1998 |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| seasonally adjusted | | | | | |
| | | | | % change | |
| New motor vehicles | 118,364 | 120,801 | 127,223 | 7.5 | 5.3 |
| Passenger cars | 60,782 | 62,429 | 63,210 | 4.0 | 1.3 |
| North | | | | | |
| American ¹ | 51,269 | 49,547 | 50,807 | -0.9 | 2.5 |
| Overseas | 9,513 | 12,883 | 12,403 | 30.4 | -3.7 |
| Big Three automakers | 36,630 | 31,463 | 34,995 | -4.5 | 11.2 |
| Other automakers | 24,152 | 30,966 | 28,215 | 16.8 | -8.9 |
| Trucks, vans and buses | 57,582 | 58,371 | 64,013 | 11.2 | 9.7 |
| | Sept. 1997 | Sept. 1998 ^p | Sept. 1997 to Sept. 1998 | Market share | |
| | | | | Sept. 1997 | Sept. 1998 |
| unadjusted | | | | | |
| | | | | % change | |
| New motor vehicles | 113,716 | 126,953 | 11.6 | | |
| Passenger cars | 59,527 | 63,903 | 7.4 | | |
| North | | | | | |
| American ¹ | 49,235 | 50,757 | 3.1 | 82.7 | 79.4 |
| Overseas | 10,292 | 13,146 | 27.7 | 17.3 | 20.6 |
| Big Three automakers | 35,451 | 35,105 | -1.0 | 59.6 | 54.9 |
| Other automakers | 24,076 | 28,798 | 19.6 | 40.4 | 45.1 |
| Trucks, vans and buses | 54,189 | 63,050 | 16.4 | | |
| North | | | | | |
| American ¹ | 48,721 | 56,617 | 16.2 | 89.9 | 89.8 |
| Overseas | 5,468 | 6,433 | 17.6 | 10.1 | 10.2 |

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

¹ Manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico.

OTHER RELEASES

Railway carloadings

10-day period ending October 31, 1998

Carloadings of freight (excluding intermodal traffic) during the 10-day period ending October 31, 1998, decreased 13.0% to 6.8 million tonnes from the same period of last year. The number of cars loaded also decreased 11.4%.

Intermodal traffic (piggyback) tonnage totalled 584 000 tonnes, a 0.3% decrease from the same period of last year. The year-to-date figures are down 1.9%.

Total traffic (carloadings of freight and intermodal traffic) decreased 12.1% during the period. This brought the year-to-date total to 214.4 million tonnes, a decrease of 2.7% from the previous year.

All year-to-date figures have been revised.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; fax: 613-951-0009; laroque@statcan.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Shipments of rolled steel

September 1998

Rolled steel shipments for September totalled 1 196 673 tonnes, up 6.0% from 1 128 593 tonnes in August and down 5.9% from 1 271 524 tonnes in September 1997.

Year-to-date shipments at the end of September totalled 10 705 999 tonnes, down 1.4% from 10 858 460 (revised) tonnes the previous year.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 58 and 122 (series 22-25).

The September 1998 issue of *Primary iron and steel* (41-001-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Greg Milsom (613-951-7093; milsomg@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard

September 1998


Oriented strandboard production in September totalled 560 412 cubic metres, an increase of 18.4% from 473 309 (revised) cubic metres in September 1997. Particleboard production reached 198 739 cubic metres, an increase of 0.8% from 197 240 cubic metres in September 1997. Fibreboard production in September was 63 419 cubic metres, up 11.7% from 56 784 cubic metres in September 1997.



From January to September 1998, oriented strandboard production totalled 4 640 921 cubic metres, an 11.1% increase from 4 178 948 (revised) cubic metres compared with the same period last year. Particleboard production reached 1 738 750 cubic metres, up 2.7% from 1 692 884 cubic metres in 1997. Year-to-date fibreboard production reached 615 498 cubic metres, up 29.5% from 475 132 cubic metres during the same period in 1997.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 31 (series 2, 3, 5) and 122 (series 8).

The September 1998 issue of *Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard* (36-003-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Gilles Simard (613-951-3516; simales@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

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| MAJOR RELEASES | |
| • Urban transit, 1995 Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1995, each Canadian took an average of about 40 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years. | 2 |
| • Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995 Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was notably weak again in 1995 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow nominal growth during the year. | 4 |
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