



The Daily

Statistics Canada

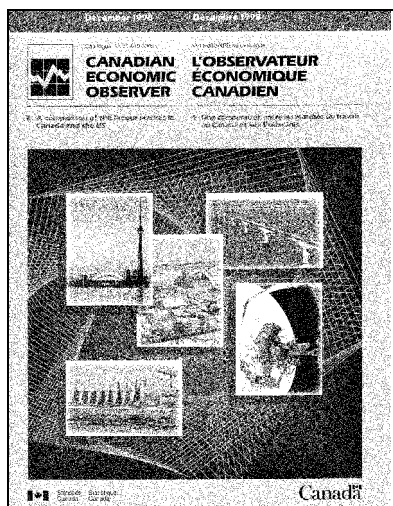
Thursday, December 17, 1998

For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Canadian international merchandise trade, October 1998** 3
Both exports and imports made strong gains in October. Exports jumped 4.2%, with most of the increase coming from exports to the United States. Imports rose for the third consecutive month, increasing by 2.9% in October.
- **Composite index, November 1998** 6
The leading indicator grew by 0.2% in November, a continuation of the marginal gains over the last five months.

(continued on following page)



Canadian economic observer

December 1998

The December issue of Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, *Canadian economic observer*, analyses the current economic conditions, summarizes the major economic events that occurred in November and presents a feature article comparing the labour market in Canada and the United States. 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 December 1998 issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) is now available. See *How to order publications*. For further information, contact Cyndi Bloskie (613-951-3634; ceo@statcan.ca), Current Economic Analysis Group.



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MAJOR RELEASES

Canadian international merchandise trade

October 1998

After a slight decline in September, exports gained 4.2% in October. Gains were mainly due to a sharp rise in automotive product exports and a rebound in exports of machinery and equipment, and forestry products. Increased exports of automotive products contributed to the strong recovery of exports to the United States. Exports to non-OECD countries rose \$230 million, chiefly because of higher exports of electronics and computers. In contrast, exports to Japan continued their downward trend.

Imports continued their upward trend, rising 2.9% in October. Although all sectors except energy grew, October's increase was fuelled mainly by imports of automotive products, industrial goods, and machinery and equipment. Machinery and equipment imports recorded their seventh consecutive increase.

The trade balance rose \$418 million, from a revised \$1.5 billion in September to \$1.9 billion in October.

Note to readers

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

Exports rebound

Automotive exports jumped 9.6% in October, surpassing \$7 billion. Although all sub-sectors posted strong gains, the strongest growth was in passenger car exports (+12.9%), mostly to the United States. A large part of the growth reflects an end to the rail backlog, which resulted in cars that were produced in previous months being exported in October.

After a two-month decline, exports of machinery and equipment rebounded in October. Larger than normal exports of television and telecommunications equipment to South America, electrical hardware to France and aircraft to the United States contributed to the growth in this sector. Computer exports continued their downward trend, in large part due to a restructuring in this sector over the past several months.

Exports of forestry products gained ground in October. Exports of newsprint to South America and the United States rose significantly, both in volume and price, despite the October drop in Canadian production. Lumber exports to the United States rose, although prices fell slightly. Exports of forestry products to Japan continued to fall, as Japanese demand remained low.

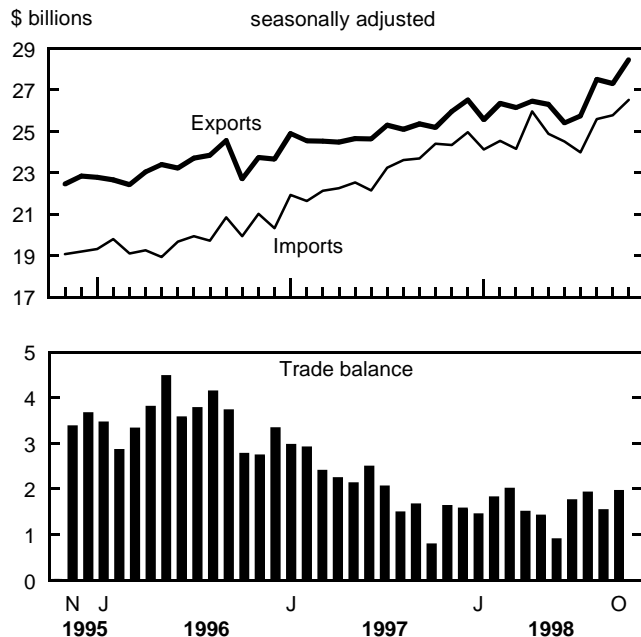
Grain exports remain strong

Agricultural exports rose slightly in October, with increases for wheat being almost entirely offset by declines for canola and other grain. Exports of canola and other grain declined from September's record levels, but still remained very strong. Wheat exports rose sharply, particularly those to South America and Asia, with the increase in volume offsetting low wheat prices. However, in spite of October's growth, wheat exports were 32% lower than in October 1997.

Energy exports pulled down by lower natural gas exports to the United States

Exports of energy products dropped 1.3% in October. The main contributor to this decline was natural gas to the United States, which fell 5.5% between September and October. This drop was mainly due to the unusually mild weather affecting the

Exports, imports and trade balance



northern United States. The decline in total energy product exports was moderated by an increase in the value of crude oil exports used to replenish inventories in the United States.

Auto products push imports up

Automotive imports grew for the third consecutive month, increasing by 9.3% in October. Parts and motor vehicle imports were at their highest levels since May, as automobile manufacturers started producing 1999 models. On the other hand, truck imports, which posted strong gains last month, fell slightly in October.

Imports of industrial goods continued their upward movement. Metals and alloys recorded the highest increase, with most of the growth coming from natural gas pipeline parts, gold and steel bars. Imports of metal products for cars also increased significantly. Imports of chemical and plastic products remained almost unchanged.

Overall, machinery and equipment imports showed some weakness in October, with increased imports of electrical equipment, lamps and other industrial machines almost completely offset by the drop in imports of aircraft and other transportation equipment and computers. Imports of aircraft and aircraft parts dropped sharply, mainly because contract deliveries of new aircraft are complete for 1998. After recording slight gains in September, office equipment imports fell again in October, despite a significant increase in prices.

After declining in September, imports of agricultural and fishing products almost returned to August levels. Higher beef cattle and seafood imports offset the drop in tobacco imports, which have followed a downward trend since March 1998.

Energy product imports remained almost unchanged in October, following two consecutive increases. The sharp rise in coal and related product imports was completely offset by the drop in coal and petroleum products, and crude oil imports. The drop in

imports was price-driven, with crude oil prices falling and volumes remaining almost unchanged.

Revisions

In general, merchandise trade data are revised on a continuing basis for every month of the current year. Factors that create the need for revisions include the late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs documents, replacement of estimated figures with actual figures (once available), changes in classification of merchandise based on more current information, and updated seasonal adjustments. Revised data can be obtained by consulting the appropriate CANSIM matrices.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3713, 3718-3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

This release contains a summary of the merchandise trade data to be published shortly in *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188 or 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141). The publication will include tables by commodity and country on a customs basis. Current account data (which incorporate merchandise trade statistics, service transactions, investment income and transfers) are available quarterly in Canada's balance of international payments (67-001-XPB, \$38/\$124). See *How to order publications*.

Readers wishing to receive merchandise trade data on a more timely basis may obtain them by fax on the morning of release.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, or data quality of this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647; 1 800-294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division. □

Merchandise trade of Canada

	Aug. 1998	Sept. 1998	Oct. 1998	Aug. to Sept. 1998	Sept. to Oct. 1998	Jan. to Oct. 1997	Jan. to Oct. 1998	Jan.-Oct. 1997 to Jan.-Oct. 1998	Oct. 1997 to Oct. 1998
seasonally adjusted, \$ current									
	\$ millions			% change		\$ millions		% change	
Principal trading partners									
Exports									
United States	23,423	23,214	24,077	-0.9	3.7	200,362	221,597	10.6	17.3
Japan	758	743	723	-2.0	-2.7	10,293	7,634	-25.8	-21.2
European Union	1,558	1,450	1,572	-6.9	8.4	13,810	14,925	8.1	17.9
Other OECD countries ¹	474	693	655	46.2	-5.5	6,624	6,143	-7.3	-5.0
All other countries	1,290	1,203	1,432	-6.7	19.0	17,535	14,897	-15.0	-16.6
Total	27,503	27,304	28,459	-0.7	4.2	248,623	265,196	6.7	13.0
Imports									
United States	19,696	19,815	20,471	0.6	3.3	173,093	191,205	10.5	10.8
Japan	836	812	796	-2.9	-2.0	7,072	8,115	14.7	0.3
European Union	2,138	2,118	2,214	-0.9	4.5	19,960	21,020	5.3	1.2
Other OECD countries ¹	908	1,070	1,029	17.8	-3.8	9,419	9,394	-0.3	3.9
All other countries	2,009	1,954	1,996	-2.7	2.1	18,009	19,264	7.0	1.7
Total	25,587	25,770	26,507	0.7	2.9	227,553	248,998	9.4	8.6
Balance									
United States	3,727	3,399	3,606	...	...	27,269	30,392	...	...
Japan	-78	-69	-73	...	...	3,221	-481	...	...
European Union	-580	-668	-642	...	...	-6,150	-6,095	...	...
Other OECD countries ¹	-434	-377	-374	...	...	-2,795	-3,251	...	...
All other countries	-719	-751	-564	...	...	-474	-4,367	...	...
Total	1,916	1,534	1,952	...	...	21,070	16,198	...	...
Principal commodity groupings									
Exports									
Agricultural and fishing products	1,968	2,163	2,206	9.9	2.0	20,354	20,631	1.4	2.4
Energy products	2,165	2,180	2,152	0.7	-1.3	22,438	20,439	-8.9	1.6
Forestry products	2,973	2,917	3,028	-1.9	3.8	29,017	29,222	0.7	7.0
Industrial goods and materials	4,876	4,717	4,737	-3.3	0.4	45,870	47,895	4.4	3.7
Machinery and equipment	6,842	6,616	6,741	-3.3	1.9	55,993	65,306	16.6	13.2
Automotive products	6,542	6,771	7,421	3.5	9.6	57,570	62,105	7.9	28.2
Other consumer goods	1,066	1,094	1,094	2.6	0.0	8,788	10,272	16.9	19.4
Special transactions trade ²	525	350	538	-33.3	53.7	3,365	4,170	23.9	54.8
Other BOP adjustments	545	497	543	-8.8	9.3	5,227	5,156	-1.4	7.1
Imports									
Agricultural and fishing products	1,476	1,412	1,472	-4.3	4.2	12,841	14,232	10.8	10.6
Energy products	738	738	737	0.0	-0.1	8,827	7,414	-16.0	-20.5
Forestry products	205	206	212	0.5	2.9	1,955	2,053	5.0	6.8
Industrial goods and materials	5,067	5,077	5,178	0.2	2.0	44,553	49,768	11.7	9.5
Machinery and equipment	8,674	8,772	8,853	1.1	0.9	75,102	83,639	11.4	8.5
Automotive products	5,418	5,618	6,142	3.7	9.3	49,716	53,507	7.6	12.7
Other consumer goods	2,947	2,903	2,932	-1.5	1.0	24,218	28,102	16.0	13.0
Special transactions trade ²	549	528	445	-3.8	-15.7	5,739	5,228	-8.9	-15.9
Other BOP adjustments	513	516	535	0.6	3.7	4,601	5,056	9.9	10.6

... Figures not appropriate or not applicable.

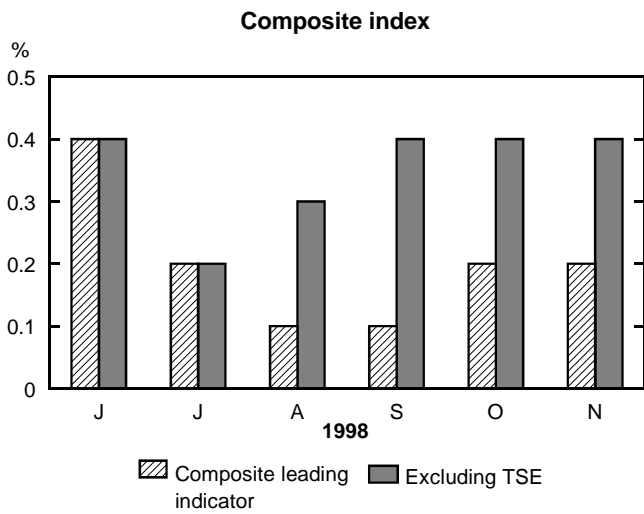
¹ Includes Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

² These are mainly low valued transactions, value of repairs to equipment, and goods returned to country of origin.

Composite index

November 1998

The leading indicator grew by 0.2% in November, a continuation of the marginal gains over the last five months. However, excluding the negative impact of the stock market, growth in the other components has risen at a steady clip of 0.4% since June. Manufacturing and business services were important sources of growth.



New orders accelerated to a 1.4% gain as export demand picked up, especially for autos. The average workweek increased for the second straight month, partly as labour disputes subsided. The ratio of shipments to inventories fell for the fifth straight month, as firms rebuilt inventories depleted during strikes.

Household demand remained choppy. Demand for personal services hit its highest level of the year, underpinning the gain in services employment. Spending on durable goods also continued to advance as labour market conditions improved. Conversely, the housing market index shrank by 0.3%, which in turn dampened furniture and appliance sales. The U.S. leading index also leveled off as a result of shaky consumer confidence.

Financial markets continued to recover from their late summer swoon. Still, the stock market remained about 20% below its peak earlier this year.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 191.

The December issue of *Canadian Economic Observer* (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group. □

Composite index

	June 1998	July 1998	Aug. 1998	Sept. 1998	Oct. 1998	Nov. 1998	Last month of data available
							% change
Composite leading indicator (1981=100)	206.7	207.2	207.4	207.6	208.1	208.6	0.2
Housing index (1981=100) ¹	127.4	126.7	126.5	126.4	126.7	126.3	-0.3
Business and personal services employment ('000)	2,261	2,265	2,269	2,278	2,287	2,300	0.6
TSE 300 stock price index (1975=1,000)	7,383	7,385	7,138	6,788	6,505	6,318	-2.9
Money supply, M1 (\$ millions, 1981) ²	40,194	40,547	40,987	41,559	41,869	42,010	0.3
U.S. composite leading indicator (1967=100) ³	224.9	225.0	225.2	225.4	225.6	225.7	0.0
Manufacturing							
Average workweek (hours)	38.4	38.3	38.3	38.3	38.4	38.5	0.3
New orders, durables (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	15,460	15,469	15,450	15,445	15,619	15,833	1.4
Shipments/inventories of finished goods ⁴	1.65	1.64	1.63	1.61	1.60	1.59	-0.01 ⁵
Retail trade							
Furniture and appliance sales (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	1,354.4	1,363.3	1,369.1	1,377.0	1,383.5	1,387.3	0.3
Other durable goods sales (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	4,538.9	4,557.3	4,565.8	4,574.2	4,589.6	4,617.2	0.6
Unsmoothed composite	207.7	206.4	206.4	208.2	210.1	210.2	0.0

¹ Composite index of housing starts (units) and house sales (multiple listing service).

² Deflated by the Consumer Price Index for all items.

³ The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for the month immediately preceding.

⁴ The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for two preceding months.

⁵ Difference from previous month.



OTHER RELEASES

Export and import price indexes

October 1998

Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes (1992=100) on a balance of payments basis are now available. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to October 1998 for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups (62 exports and 61 imports).

Current- and fixed-weighted U.S. price indexes (1992=100) are also available on a customs basis. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to October 1998. Included with the U.S. commodity indexes are the 10-all-countries and U.S.-only standard international trade classification (SITC) section indexes.

Indexes for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups are also now available on a customs basis.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685, 8430-8435, 8438-8443 and 8444-8447.

The October 1998 issue of *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188 or 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647; 1 800-294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division. ■

Demographic statistics

July-September 1998 (preliminary)

Preliminary postcensal estimates as of October 1, 1998 are now available for Canada, the provinces and the territories.

Canada's population

	Oct. 1 1996 ^r	Oct. 1 1997 ^r	Oct. 1 1998 ^p	Annual growth rate	
				1996- 1997	1997- 1998
	%				
Canada	29,773,144	30,105,602	30,381,109	1.1	0.9
Newfoundland	558,395	550,067	541,582	-1.5	-1.6
Prince Edward Island	136,455	136,661	136,295	0.2	-0.3
Nova Scotia	933,157	936,576	937,000	0.4	0.0
New Brunswick	753,009	753,233	752,486	0.0	-0.1
Quebec	7,286,231	7,318,126	7,343,030	0.4	0.3
Ontario	11,146,901	11,308,408	11,448,253	1.4	1.2
Manitoba	1,135,402	1,138,433	1,141,972	0.3	0.3
Saskatchewan	1,021,302	1,023,466	1,027,917	0.2	0.4
Alberta	2,794,076	2,855,844	2,932,148	2.2	2.6
British Columbia	3,908,447	3,984,707	4,021,317	1.9	0.9
Yukon	32,084	31,964	31,092	-0.4	-2.8
Northwest Territories	67,685	68,117	68,017	0.6	-0.1

^r Revised postcensal estimates.

^p Preliminary postcensal estimates.

Available on CANSIM: Matrices 1-6, 397, 5731, 6470, 6471, 6516 and 6981 and tables 00010102, 00020104 and 00040102.

These estimates will appear in *Quarterly demographic statistics* (printed version; 91-002-XPB \$10 / \$33; Internet version; 91-002-XIB \$8 / \$25) which will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

To obtain estimates, contact your nearest Regional Reference Centre or Lise Champagne (613-951-2320; fax: 613-951-2307; chamlis@statcan.ca), Demography Division. For information on the concepts, methods or quality of data, contact Daniel Larrivée (613-951-0694; fax: 613-951-2307; lardani@statcan.ca). ■

Adult criminal court statistics

1997-98

In 1997-98, adult criminal courts in nine reporting jurisdictions disposed of 411,576 cases. This total is down 1.4% from the previous year and down 7.7% from the level four years earlier. These nine jurisdictions account for about 80% of the national adult criminal court caseload.

Just over 6 in every 10 cases that appeared in adult criminal courts involved adults between the ages of 18 and 34. While adults in this age group comprised 63% of those accused, they make up only 33% of the adult population as a whole. Of the cases heard in adult criminal courts in 1997-98, 85% were against men.

Generally speaking, crimes against the person accounted for 20% of the caseload in adult courts. Other cases involved property crimes (26%), other Criminal Code offences (27%), traffic (17%), drug-related offences (4%), and other federal statute offences (7%).

Within the general offence categories, two stand out. The most frequently occurring offence in adult criminal court was impaired driving, which comprised 15% of all offences and nearly 90% of all traffic cases. The second was common assault, which represented 12% of all cases and 58% of all crimes against persons.

Six of every 10 cases resulted in a finding of guilt for at least one charge in the case, a proportion that has remained relatively stable for the past four years. This proportion jumped to 76% for cases involving Criminal Code traffic offences, the highest of all conviction rates.

In 1997-98, 19% of all cases were dealt with in a single appearance, which is consistent with the levels during the previous three years. The proportion of cases requiring six or more appearances, however, has risen slightly from 23% to 29% in the same period. Most cases (57%) were completed within 16 weeks of the first court appearance.

The Vol. 18 no. 14 issue of Juristat, *Adult Criminal Court Statistics, 1997-98* (printed version; 85-002-XPE, \$10/\$93; Internet version; 85-002-XIE, \$8) is now available. See *How to Order Publications*.

For more information, or to inquire about the concepts, methods and quality of data for this release, contact Information and Client Services (613-951-9023; 1 800-387-2231), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. ■

Steel primary forms

week ending December 12, 1998 (Preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending December 12, 1998 totalled 287 001 tonnes, down

4.6% from the week-earlier 300 834 tonnes and down 0.04% from the year-earlier 287 117 tonnes. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 15 044 623 tonnes, a 2.8% increase compared to 14 631 925 tonnes for the same period in 1997.

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

Crushing statistics

November 1998

Canadian oilseed processors crushed 287 124 metric tonnes of canola in November, according to Statistics Canada's monthly survey of crushing plants. Oil production totalled 119 847 tonnes while meal production amounted to 183 015 tonnes.

In the first four months of the 1998/99 crop year, the canola crush volume increased 10.9% from the August-November 1997 crush quantity of 1 021 839 metric tonnes.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 5687

The November 1998 issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XPB, \$15/\$149) will be released in early February 1999. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to inquire about the concepts, methods and quality of data for this release, contact Rick Burroughs (613-951-2890; burrirc@statcan.ca) or Les Macartney (613-951-8714; macades@statcan.ca), Grain Marketing Unit, Agriculture Division. ■

For-hire motor carriers of freight (top carriers)

Third quarter 1998

The top 74 for-hire motor carriers based in Canada (those earning \$25 million or more annually) generated \$1.36 billion in operating revenues and incurred \$1.27 billion in operating expenses during the third quarter of 1998. The operating ratio (operating expenses divided by operating revenues) for all top for-hire carriers of freight was stable at 0.94 compared with the third quarter of 1997 (any ratio greater than 1.00 represents an operating loss).

Third quarter 1998 data on the top for-hire carriers, taken from the Quarterly Motor Carriers of Freight

Survey, provided results from 57 general freight carriers and 17 specialized freight carriers.

For further information or to inquire about the concepts, methods and quality of data for this release, contact Gilles Paré (613-951-2517; fax: 613-951-0579; paregil@statcan.ca), Transportation Division. ■

National Private Vehicle Use Survey 1995-1996

Quarterly data are now available from the 1995 and 1996 National Private Vehicle Use Survey. Information in these microdata files refers to the personal-use vehicles operated during 1995 and the first nine months of 1996.

The purpose of the survey is to provide measures of vehicle-fuel use and the determinants of fuel use. The microdata files provide information on the size of the personal-use vehicle fleet, the amount of fuel used, the number of kilometres driven and other related information.

To order the microdata file (53M0003XDB, \$2,000), contact Anne-Marie Lodge (613-951-4598; 1 800-461-9050), Special Surveys Division.

For more information, or to inquire about the concepts, methods and quality of data for this release, contact Stephen Arrowsmith (613-951-0566), Special Surveys Division. ■

Telecommunications Plant Price Index 1997

Overall capital costs for the telecommunications sector increased by 0.7% in 1997, the first annual increase

since 1990. This was largely due to costs of outside plants, which were up 4.3% from the previous year.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9920.

The third quarter issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$23 / \$76) will be available in December 1998.

For more information, or to inquire about the concepts, methods and quality of data for this release, contact Louise Chaîné (613-951-3350; fax 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Client Services Unit, Prices Division. ■

Stocks of frozen poultry meat December 1, 1998

Preliminary December 1, 1998 stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage are now available.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 5675-5677.

For more information, or to inquire about the concepts, methods and quality of data for this release, contact Sandra Giefeldt (613-951-2505), Livestock and Animal Products Section, Agriculture Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Canadian economic observer, December 1998
Catalogue number 11-010-XPB
(Canada: \$23/\$227; outside Canada: US\$23/US\$227).

Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard, October 1998
Catalogue number 36-003-XPB
(Canada: \$7/\$62; outside Canada: US\$7/US\$62).

Consumer price index, November 1998
Catalogue number 62-001-XPB
(Canada: \$11/\$103; outside Canada: US\$11/US\$103).
Released at 7:00 a.m., Dec. 18

Juristat, Adult criminal court statistics, 1997-98,
Vol. 18 no. 14
Catalogue number 85-002-XIE
(Canada: \$8; outside Canada: US\$8).

Juristat, Adult criminal court statistics, 1997-98,
Vol. 18 no. 14
Catalogue number 85-002-XPE
(Canada: \$10/\$93; outside Canada: US\$10/US\$93).

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Thursday, June 9, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1995, each Canadian took an average of about 65 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was notably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow nominal growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **High-wire index, May 1997** 3
- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 3
- **Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997** 10
- **EGG predictor, April 1997** 12

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

Published each working day by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10-H, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

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