



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Friday, January 22, 1999

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Retail trade, November 1998** 2
Retail sales advanced 1.1% in November to \$20.8 billion, following a 1.7% decline in October.

OTHER RELEASES

Women in full-time trade and vocational programs, 1995/96	6
Steel primary forms, November 1998	7
Shipments of rolled steel, November 1998	7
Canadian potato production, 1997 and 1998	7
Deliveries of major grains, December 1998	8

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

9

RELEASE DATES: January 25 to January 29, 1999 11



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MAJOR RELEASES

Retail trade

November 1998

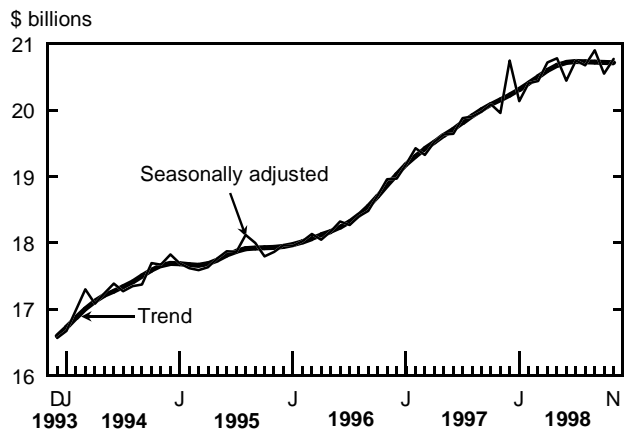
Retail sales advanced 1.1% in November to \$20.8 billion, following a 1.7% decline in October. The largest increase in November came from motor and recreational vehicle dealers. Total retail sales, excluding sales by motor vehicle and recreational dealers, remained weak in November for a second consecutive month. Total sales were 4.1% higher than in November 1997.

The dampening of sales in most sectors has slowed down total retail sales since the spring of 1998. Employment has made considerable gains in 1998 but the high level of consumer debt may have reduced the amount of money available to households for spending in stores. Prior to the spring of 1998, retail sales had generally been increasing since early 1996.

In contrast to other retail sectors, sales in furniture stores continued to increase in 1998, registering the highest year-to-date annual increase (+8.3%) for the first 11 months of the year. This compares with a year-to-date annual increase of 4.6% for overall retail sales. The activity level on the resale housing market may have helped to sustain retail sales of furniture in 1998.

In November, the largest increases in retail sales occurred in the auto sector (+2.1%) and in clothing stores (+1.6%). Furniture (+1.2%) and food (+0.9%) retailers also reported higher sales in November. The only two sectors with diminishing sales were general merchandise stores (-1.0%) and drug stores (-0.6%).

Despite November's increase, sales generally flat



Rebound in auto sector pushed up total retail sales

November's increase in the auto sector came entirely from higher sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers. After a drop of 6.5% in October, motor and recreational vehicle dealers reported a 3.4% increase in sales during November. This was their largest monthly increase since December 1997, when generous dealer incentives pushed up retail sales of new motor vehicles.

Sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers remained stable from April to July 1998, then picked up in August and September coincident with incentives offered to consumers. These incentives were substantially reduced in October resulting in a large decline in sales. In November, sales returned to the same level (\$5.5 billion) observed between April and July 1998. Before April 1998, sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers had generally been increasing since mid-1996.

In November, retail sales by gasoline service stations declined 0.8% from October and were 7.4% below the level reported in November 1997. Depressed prices continued to have a significant impact on gasoline sales. Consumers paid 1.0% less for gasoline in November compared with October. On a year-to-year basis, gasoline prices in November were 7.1% lower than in November 1997. Retail sales by gasoline service stations had generally been declining since the end of 1997.

Lower prices stimulated demand for clothing

Milder fall weather and the late arrival of winter pushed clothing retailers to lower prices of specific items in order to liquidate high levels of stocks. Consumers spent 1.6% more in clothing stores during November than they did in October. Retail sales increased 4.1% in women's clothing stores, following three consecutive months of diminishing sales. Sales in men's clothing stores also increased in November (+1.0%), after two months of declines. Sales in other clothing stores continued to rise in November (+0.8%), marking the fifth consecutive monthly increase.

Prices of clothing and footwear fell 1.5% in November compared with October, led by price reductions in women's clothing such as coats (-6.1%) and dresses (-6.3%). Overall, sales in clothing stores have weakened since the spring of 1998 after two years of general increases.

Furniture stores also experienced increasing sales in November (+1.2%), continuing the upward trend that started in the spring of 1996. Compared with November 1997, furniture stores had the highest annual increase of all sectors in November (+8.3%). Both household furniture and appliance stores (+1.1%) and household furnishings stores (+1.7%) had higher sales in November compared with October. Considerable increases in sales from household furnishings stores since August helped sustain the upward trend observed in furniture stores. Despite November's increase, sales from household furniture and appliance stores have generally been stable since July.

Food store sales were up in November (+0.9%), despite a period of weakening sales that began in June. Before June 1998, food store sales had generally been increasing since early 1996.

In November, sales in general merchandise stores were down 1.0% for a second consecutive monthly decline. Sales by general merchandise stores have been following a downward trend since the spring of 1998 after a period of general increases in the previous two years. Retail sales in department stores were practically unchanged in November (-0.1%), while sales in other general merchandise stores dropped 2.3%.

Drug store sales were down 0.6% in November, after increasing 1.0% in October. Consumer spending in drug stores has generally been declining since the summer of 1998.

Higher sales in most provinces

Sales increased in all provinces in November, except in British Columbia (-0.2%) and Prince Edward Island (unchanged).

New Brunswick (+2.8%) and Alberta (+1.7%) posted the strongest gains in November. However, sales in these two provinces have been weak during the last few months. In November, rising sales by motor vehicle dealers helped push up total retail sales in New Brunswick, while the increase in Alberta was spread across sectors. Following more than a year of increases, retail sales in New Brunswick have generally been declining since the spring of 1998

due to weaker sales in the automotive sector and in general merchandise stores. Retail sales in Alberta have been flat since the summer of 1998 after more than two years of general increases. During the last few months, most sectors contributed to the weakening of retail sales in Alberta.

A strong increase in the automotive sector during November moved up total retail sales in Quebec by 1.4%. This advance follows a decline of 1.0% in October. Overall, retail sales in Quebec have been relatively flat since March 1998 after a short period of general increases that began in the fall of 1997.

Ontario retailers posted a 1.2% advance in November after reporting a 1.4% decline in October. November's gain in retail sales was broadly based, as sales increased in most sectors. In general, Ontario retailers have enjoyed increasing sales since mid-1996.

For a fourth consecutive month, retail sales were down in British Columbia, with the automotive sector pushing down sales by 0.2%. Retail sales in British Columbia have generally been falling since the end of 1997.

Related indicators

In December, employment rose slightly (+0.2%), while housing starts jumped 9.6% and the number of houses sold on the resale market were up 1.0%.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2299, 2398-2417 and 2420.

The November 1998 issue of *Retail trade* (63-005-XPB, \$21/\$206) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3549; 1-877-421-3067; retailinfo@statcan.ca). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Paul Gratton (613-951-3541, gratpau@statcan.ca), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. □

Retail sales

	Nov.1997	Aug.1998 ^r	Sept.1998 ^r	Oct.1998 ^r	Nov.1998 ^p	Oct. to Nov. 1998	Nov. 1997 to Nov. 1998
	seasonally adjusted						
	\$ millions					% change	
Food	4,699	4,779	4,833	4,828	4,872	0.9	3.7
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,337	4,420	4,477	4,457	4,510	1.2	4.0
All other food stores	362	360	356	371	361	-2.6	-0.1
Drug and patent medicine stores	1,035	1,099	1,080	1,091	1,085	-0.6	4.8
Clothing	1,118	1,175	1,170	1,173	1,192	1.6	6.6
Shoe stores	133	137	136	135	133	-1.0	0.5
Men's clothing stores	130	133	131	129	131	1.0	0.6
Women's clothing stores	365	371	367	365	380	4.1	4.2
Other clothing stores	491	534	536	543	547	0.8	11.6
Furniture	988	1,057	1,064	1,057	1,070	1.2	8.3
Household furniture and appliance stores	797	855	860	852	862	1.1	8.1
Household furnishings stores	191	202	203	205	209	1.7	9.4
Automotive	7,726	8,021	8,107	7,764	7,931	2.1	2.7
Motor and recreational vehicle dealers	5,323	5,567	5,648	5,284	5,464	3.4	2.6
Gasoline service stations	1,351	1,272	1,260	1,261	1,251	-0.8	-7.4
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,051	1,182	1,199	1,220	1,216	-0.3	15.7
General merchandise stores	2,265	2,303	2,365	2,355	2,331	-1.0	2.9
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	2,125	2,241	2,281	2,281	2,292	0.5	7.9
Other semi-durable goods stores	680	689	705	716	723	1.0	6.4
Other durable goods stores	520	574	583	580	573	-1.2	10.2
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	925	977	993	985	996	1.1	7.6
Total, retail sales	19,956	20,675	20,900	20,550	20,772	1.1	4.1
Total excluding motor and recreational vehicle dealers	14,633	15,108	15,253	15,267	15,308	0.3	4.6
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland	307	312	325	325	327	0.8	6.7
Prince Edward Island	81	88	87	86	86	0.0	5.5
Nova Scotia	596	635	633	637	639	0.4	7.3
New Brunswick	473	495	496	480	494	2.8	4.4
Quebec	4,584	4,759	4,794	4,748	4,816	1.4	5.1
Ontario	7,389	7,849	7,928	7,815	7,907	1.2	7.0
Manitoba	717	728	754	726	731	0.7	1.9
Saskatchewan	630	633	654	626	631	0.7	0.1
Alberta	2,301	2,359	2,417	2,309	2,347	1.7	2.0
British Columbia	2,808	2,748	2,743	2,730	2,724	-0.2	-3.0
Yukon	25	27	26	26	26	0.9	2.6
Northwest Territories	43	42	43	43	43	1.3	1.5

^p Preliminary figures.

^r Revised figures.

Retail sales

	Nov. 1997	Oct. 1998 ^r	Nov. 1998 ^p	Nov. 1997 to Nov. 1998
	unadjusted			
	\$ millions			% change
Food	4,568	5,055	4,539	-0.6
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,217	4,684	4,196	-0.5
All other food stores	351	370	343	-2.3
Drug and patent medicine stores	1,014	1,106	1,062	4.7
Clothing	1,266	1,266	1,309	3.4
Shoe stores	159	155	150	-5.5
Men's clothing stores	158	138	154	-2.3
Women's clothing stores	396	384	398	0.5
Other clothing stores	553	589	607	9.6
Furniture	1,081	1,126	1,167	7.9
Household furniture and appliance stores	875	909	942	7.6
Household furnishings stores	206	218	224	9.2
Automotive	7,284	7,849	7,550	3.7
Motor and recreational vehicle dealers	4,823	5,270	5,005	3.8
Gasoline service stations	1,318	1,312	1,231	-6.6
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,144	1,267	1,315	15.0
General merchandise stores	2,813	2,504	2,848	1.3
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	2,118	2,221	2,232	5.4
Other semi-durable goods stores	708	691	751	6.1
Other durable goods stores	519	521	554	6.7
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	891	1,008	928	4.1
Total, retail sales	20,143	21,126	20,707	2.8
Total excluding motor and recreational vehicle dealers	15,320	15,856	15,702	2.5
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland	320	334	336	4.9
Prince Edward Island	81	87	83	2.6
Nova Scotia	607	655	649	6.9
New Brunswick	487	505	499	2.3
Quebec	4,561	4,931	4,703	3.1
Ontario	7,566	7,950	8,022	6.0
Manitoba	730	767	736	0.8
Saskatchewan	648	669	637	-1.7
Alberta	2,317	2,395	2,337	0.9
British Columbia	2,762	2,765	2,643	-4.3
Yukon	23	26	23	2.5
Northwest Territories	40	43	40	0.4

^p Preliminary figures.

^r Revised figures.



OTHER RELEASES

Women in full-time trade and vocational programs

1995/96

The proportion of women in trade and vocational programs in community colleges taking courses in the engineering and applied sciences field rose moderately between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s. However, their gains have been more significant within certain trade and vocational programs in this field.

In the 1995/96 academic year, women occupied only 8.4% of all enrolments in the engineering and applied sciences field at the community college level, moderately higher than 6.2% in 1983/84. (This compares with a proportion of almost 85% in health sciences for 1995/96, a more traditional field for women.)

However, their gains in specific trade and vocational programs within the engineering and applied sciences field have varied widely. For example, the proportion of women enrolled in the electrical/electronic technology programs almost quadrupled from 2.7% in 1983/84 to 10.5% in 1995/96. Similarly, women occupied 10.0% of enrolments in woodworking and carpentry in 1995/96, double the proportion 12 years earlier.

In contrast, women accounted for only 3.0% of all students in marine mechanics programs in 1995/96. Yet even this level was an improvement over the proportion of 0.4% in 1983/84.

Beginning in the early 1980s, the federal and provincial governments, as well as certain interest groups, sponsored a series of programs to help women enrol in postsecondary programs that traditionally did not have a large percentage of females. Many of these programs were introduced at community colleges and similar institutions to assist women into trade and technical training.

One of the major areas within community colleges where funding was being channelled to promote women was in the pre-employment/pre-apprenticeship and special training programs designed to provide entry-level knowledge for employment or further training. The largest field of study within this group was engineering and applied sciences, where the proportion of women had always been small.

The funding policy included reserving seats in trade and technical programs to guarantee that an adequate number of women were being trained. The proportion of women in many of these trade and vocational programs reached its peak in the 1987/88 academic year, coinciding with the period of government funding. At the beginning of the 1990s, however, these programs were reduced and the policy of reserving seats was dropped. Government initiatives shifted to supporting interest groups directly involved in the promotion and encouragement of women into trades and technical training.

For example, in the entire engineering and applied sciences field, women occupied almost 11% of all positions in 1987/88. This proportion fell to 8.2% in 1991/92, coincident with the decline in funding, and recovered slightly to 8.4% in 1995/96.

A full database on enrolments in full-time trade and vocational programs is now available. To order this database, contact Sharon-Anne Gibbs (613 951-1503; fax: 613-951-9040; sharon-anne.gibbs@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. For further information or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Karl Skof (613-951-1529; fax: 613-951-6765; skofkar@statcan.ca) or Bernard Bourgoin (613-951-1506; fax: 613-951-6765; bourber@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. □

**Gender distribution in full-time trade and vocational pre-employment/pre-apprenticeship and special training programs
1983/84 to 1995/96**

	1983/84		1987/88		1991/92		1995/96	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
	%							
Arts	27.5	72.5	33.5	66.5	35.6	64.4	29.9	70.1
Business and commerce	28.0	72.0	22.4	77.6	27.9	72.1	26.5	73.5
Engineering and applied sciences	93.8	6.2	89.1	10.9	91.8	8.2	91.6	8.4
Selected programs ¹								
Aircraft mechanics	98.8	1.2	97.6	2.4	97.6	2.4	95.9	4.1
Automotive technology	99.2	0.8	97.4	2.6	96.7	3.3	96.3	3.7
Electrical/electronic technology	97.3	2.7	91.4	8.6	95.0	5.0	89.5	10.5
Heavy equipment mechanics	97.7	2.3	95.2	4.8	96.3	3.7	96.8	3.2
Machinist	97.3	2.7	91.9	8.1	93.9	6.1	94.1	5.9
Marine mechanics	99.6	0.4	97.9	2.1	97.3	2.7	97.0	3.0
Small engine mechanics	93.7	6.3	94.3	5.7	92.0	8.0	92.8	7.2
Welding technology	98.7	1.3	95.7	4.3	96.4	3.6	95.4	4.6
Woodworking and carpentry ⁴	94.9	5.1	86.3	13.7	87.7	12.3	90.0	10.0
Health sciences and related	21.9	78.1	14.6	85.4	16.1	83.9	15.3	84.7
Natural sciences and related industries	89.0	11.0	77.0	23.0	85.9	14.1	78.7	21.3
Social sciences and services	44.5	55.5	26.0	74.0	37.6	62.4	26.8	73.2
Total	64.9	35.1	57.5	42.5	62.3	37.7	56.4	43.6

¹ These are only a few selected programs within the engineering and applied sciences field of study.

Steel primary forms

November 1998

Steel primary forms production for November 1998 totalled 1 226 203 tonnes, a 3.5% decrease from 1 270 867 tonnes in November 1997.

Year-to-date production reached 14 593 944 tonnes, up 3.3% from 14 129 369 tonnes for the corresponding period in 1997.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 58 (level 2, series 3).

The November 1998 issue of *Primary iron and steel* (41-001-XIB, \$5/\$47) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact Andy Shinnan (613-951-3515; shinand@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Shipments of rolled steel

November 1998

Rolled steel shipments for November 1998 totalled 1 159 056 tonnes, up 1.3% from 1 144 009 tonnes in October 1998 and down 3.4% from 1 199 872 tonnes in November 1997.

Year-to-date shipments at the end of November 1998 totalled 13 009 064 tonnes, down 2.4% from 13 322 710 tonnes for the corresponding period in 1997.

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

The November 1998 issue of *Primary iron and steel* (41-001-XIB, \$5/\$47) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact Andy Shinnan (613-951-3515; shinand@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Canadian potato production

1997 and 1998 (revised)

Revised 1998 data and minor revisions to 1997 data are now available on the area harvested, yield and production of potatoes. Data are tabulated by province.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1044.

Data are available in *Canadian potato production*, (22-008-UPB, \$21). See *How to order publications*.

Data are also available free on the Internet at *www.statcan.ca*, under "Products and Services, Downloadable Publications (free), Canadian Potato Production" (22-008-UIB).

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact Barb McLaughlin, (902-893-7251), Agriculture Division. ■

Deliveries of major grains

December 1998

Data on December grain deliveries are now available.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 976-981.

Delivery data are contained in the December issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XPB, \$15/\$149), which will be available in March. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact Rick Burroughs (613-951-2890) or Susan Anderson (613-951-3859), Grain Marketing Unit, Agriculture Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Infomat - A weekly review

Catalogue number 11-002-XIE

(Canada: \$3/\$109; outside Canada: US\$3/US\$109).

Infomat - A weekly review

Catalogue number 11-002-XPE

(Canada: \$4/\$145; outside Canada: US\$4/US\$145).

Canadian potato production, updates, January 1999

Catalogue number 22-008-UPB

(Canada: \$21; outside Canada: US\$21).

Canadian potato production, updates, January 1999

Catalogue number 22-008-UIB

(Canada: \$Free; outside Canada: US\$Free).

Crude petroleum and natural gas production,

September 1998

Catalogue number 26-006-XPB

(Canada: \$19/\$186; outside Canada: US\$19/US\$186).

Primary iron and steel, November 1998

Catalogue number 41-001-XIB

(Canada: \$5/\$47; outside Canada: US\$5/US\$47).

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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 modest growth during the year.	4
OTHER RELEASES	
Help-wanted index, May 1997	3
Short-term Expectations Survey	2
Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997	12
Egg production, April 1997	12
PUBLICATIONS RELEASED	11
 	

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RELEASE DATES

January 25 to January 29, 1999
(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
25	Canada's international transactions in securities	November 1998
26	Employment insurance	November 1998
27	Labour Force Update	1998
28	Industrial product price index	December 1998
28	Raw materials price index	December 1998
28	Employment, earnings and hours	November 1998
29	Real gross domestic product at factor cost by industry	November 1998
29	Television viewing	1997