



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Friday, May 14, 1999
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- **New motor vehicle sales, March 1999** 2
Buoyed by strong truck sales, total sales of new motor vehicles rose 6.3% in March. However, sales in the first quarter of 1999 were still lower than in the second and third quarters of 1998.
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The growth of the leading index continued to improve, with a gain of 0.7% in April after advances in March and February.

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MAJOR RELEASES

New motor vehicle sales

March 1999

Buoyed by strong truck sales, total sales of new motor vehicles rose 6.3% in March to 125,209 units. This increase followed a 3.9% drop in February.

New motor vehicle sales were 5.3% higher in March than in the same month a year earlier. With March's robust sales, the number of new motor vehicles sold continues an upward trend that started in the fall of 1998, following the downward trend that began in the spring of 1998. Before that, sales had generally advanced since the spring of 1996 (all figures are seasonally adjusted unless otherwise indicated).

Strong sales of new trucks in March boosted first-quarter sales of new motor vehicles. Overall, sales of new motor vehicles in the first quarter of 1999 reached 365,565 units, a gain of 4.2% over the previous quarter and 8.9% over the first quarter of 1998.

Truck sales surge while car sales rise moderately

New truck sales jumped 11.1% in March to 61,193 units. This increase followed a substantial 6.9% decline in sales in the previous month. Overall, new truck sales have recovered since the start of 1999, after following a downward trend in 1998.

Sales of passenger cars grew 2.1% to 64,015 units in March. This marked a turnaround in sales after three straight declines in December (-0.9%), January (-1.0%) and February (-1.2). New car sales rose steadily from the spring of 1996 to the spring of 1998 but have since stabilized.

More cars built in North America

Vehicles built in North America accounted for 86.9% (data unadjusted for seasonality) of all new motor vehicles sold in March, up from 85.1% in March 1998.

Between March 1998 and March 1999, the share of sales represented by North American built cars rose from 78.5% to 80.9%. This share had fallen below 80% for most of 1998. Previously, North American built cars had generally held over four-fifths of the new car market since the start of 1995. For cars manufactured

Note to readers

Passenger cars include those 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.

North American built new motor vehicles are those manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico. All other new motor vehicles are considered imports (manufactured overseas).

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

overseas, their market share declined from 21.5% in March 1998 to 19.1% in March 1999.

During the same one-year period, the market share of North American built trucks rose from 92.3% to 93.1%. Since 1994, North American built trucks have generally had over 90% of the new truck market.

Sales advance in almost all provinces

In March, all provinces except Saskatchewan (-2.0%) posted an increase in new motor vehicle sales compared with March 1998 (data unadjusted for seasonality). For the second time in a row, Newfoundland (+25.6%) posted the strongest year-over-year advance in new motor vehicle sales. Ontario (+18.2%), Manitoba (+12.7%) and Prince Edward Island (+10.4%) also showed strong growth over the same period.

During the first quarter of 1999, Newfoundland posted the greatest sales gains, both for new cars (+20.6%) and for new trucks (+19.1%). In contrast, only Saskatchewan showed a decline (-4.5%) in new motor vehicle sales for the first quarter of 1999.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 64.

The March 1999 issue of *New motor vehicle sales* (63-007-XIB, \$13/\$124) will be available at a later date. See *How to order publications*.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3549; 1-877-421-3067; retailinfo@statcan.ca), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Cl rance Kimanyi (613-951-3592; kimacle@statcan.ca). □

New motor vehicle sales

	March 1998	Feb. 1999 ^r	March 1999 ^p	March 1998 to March 1999	Feb. to March 1999
seasonally adjusted					
				% change	
New motor vehicles	118,936	117,785	125,209	5.3	6.3
Passenger cars	63,374	62,682	64,015	1.0	2.1
North American ¹	50,626	50,569	52,021	2.8	2.9
Overseas	12,748	12,113	11,994	-5.9	-1.0
Trucks, vans and buses	55,562	55,103	61,193	10.1	11.1
	March 1998	March 1999 ^p	March 1998 to March 1999	Market share March 1998	March 1999
unadjusted					
			% change	%	
New motor vehicles	131,463	144,533	9.9		
Passenger cars	68,280	72,492	6.2		
North American ¹	53,587	58,627	9.4	78.5	80.9
Overseas	14,693	13,865	-5.6	21.5	19.1
Trucks, vans and buses	63,183	72,041	14.0		
North American ¹	58,333	67,042	14.9	92.3	93.1
Overseas	4,850	4,999	3.1	7.7	6.9

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

^p Preliminary figures.

^r Revised figures.

■

Composite Index

April 1999

The growth of the leading index continued to improve, with a gain of 0.7% in April after advances of 0.5% in March and 0.4% in February. This upturn is largely explained by the rebound in financial markets; excluding them would have left growth steady at about 0.5% since the start of the year.

For the second straight month, the improvement in the stock market was led by natural resources. Their turnaround reflected improved prices on global commodity markets. Rising stock market prices were also one of the leading factors in the recent upturn of the U.S. leading indicator.

Manufacturers in recent months have used inventories to make shipments, boosting the ratio of shipments to stocks for the fourth straight month. New orders posted the largest of seven consecutive increases, although growth was led by aircraft where

production is spread out over long periods of time. The average workweek was stable for the third month in a row.

Household demand remained uneven. A slowdown in services employment reflected the slack consumer demand in this sector. Conversely, spending on goods continued to improve across the board. The housing index rose for the second straight month, as starts of single-family homes rose following the upturn in the market for existing homes earlier this year.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 191.

The May issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) will be available next week. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality for this release, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group.

Composite Index

	Nov. 1998	Dec. 1998	Jan. 1999	Feb. 1999	March 1999	April 1999	Last month of data available
							% change
Composite leading indicator (1981=100)	208.0	208.7	209.4	210.3	211.4	212.9	0.7
Housing index (1981=100) ¹	126.0	125.4	124.6	124.4	125.1	125.8	0.6
Business and personal services employment ('000)	2,289	2,299	2,316	2,332	2,341	2,347	0.3
TSE 300 stock price index (1975=1,000)	6,318	6,231	6,247	6,265	6,321	6,446	2.0
Money supply, M1 (\$ millions, 1981) ²	41,641	41,552	41,288	40,995	40,991	41,167	0.4
U.S. composite leading indicator (1967=100) ³	225.7	225.9	226.3	226.8	227.4	228.0	0.3
Manufacturing							
Average workweek (hours)	38.6	38.7	38.8	38.8	38.8	38.8	0.0
New orders, durables (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	15,630	15,851	16,057	16,239	16,425	16,717	1.8
Shipments/inventories of finished goods ⁴	1.59	1.59	1.60	1.61	1.63	1.64	0.01 ⁵
Retail trade							
Furniture and appliance sales (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	1,383.9	1,385.6	1,390.1	1,396.9	1,408.1	1,417.2	0.6
Other durable goods sales (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	4,605.3	4,605.9	4,610.9	4,619.9	4,645.4	4,679.1	0.7
Unsmoothed composite	208.0	211.8	211.6	212.3	215.4	217.4	0.9

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

Travel between Canada and other countries

March 1999

Americans continued to visit Canada in record numbers in March, driving the number of foreign visitors to Canada to a record high. Meanwhile, Canadians generally took fewer trips to the United States and abroad, with only air trips south of the border showing a slight increase.

In March, foreigners made more than 1.7 million overnight trips (one or more nights) to Canada, surpassing the previous record in February by 0.8%. Canadians took 1.4 million international overnight trips in March, down 2.2% from February. (Unless otherwise specified, the data are seasonally adjusted.)

Most of the increase in the number of trips by foreigners is attributable to Americans, who travelled for at least one night to Canada in record numbers for the second consecutive month, up 1.3% from February to 1.4 million. The number of overnight trips by Americans reached its most recent low in March 1993, at 941,000, then fluctuated around 1.1 million between mid-1994 and September 1996. Since then, the number of these trips has generally been rising.

Meanwhile, Canadians made 1.1 million overnight trips to the United States in March, down 2.8% from February. The number of these trips had fluctuated between 1.2 million and 1.3 million from mid-1994 to February 1998, and has since varied from 1.0 million to 1.2 million. Canadian overnight trips peaked at 1.8 million in December 1991 when the Canadian dollar was worth US\$0.87 and reached a low of 986,000 in August 1998 when the Canadian dollar was valued at US\$0.65.

While cars remained the most popular mode of transportation for overnight trips between Canada and the United States, it was air travel between the two countries that recorded the largest gains in March. Americans made a record 338,000 overnight air

trips to Canada, up 2.3% from February. After three consecutive monthly decreases, the number of air trips by Canadians to the United States increased 0.4% from February to 380,000.

Canadians travelled for at least one night to overseas destinations on 364,000 occasions in March, down 0.4% from February; the number of such trips by overseas residents to Canada decreased 0.9% to 355,000. However, the numbers of overnight trips among Canada's ten most important overseas markets were still higher than those recorded for the same period last year. Of these, tourists from Mexico (+64.2%), South Korea (+34.0%) and Taiwan (+30.6%) made substantially more overnight trips to Canada than in March 1998 (unadjusted data).

Same-day cross-border car trips by Americans increased 0.8% in March to 2.3 million, while the number of such trips by Canadians decreased 2.4% from February to 2.2 million.

Note: Month-to-month comparisons use seasonally adjusted data. Year-over-year comparisons use unadjusted data.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2661-2697, 5780-6048 and 8200-8329.

The March 1999 issue of *International travel, advance information* (66-001-PPB, \$8/\$73) 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 Johanne Plante (613-951-1910; fax: 613-951-2909; planjoh@statcan.ca), International Travel Section, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. For data requests, contact Carol Moskaluk (613-951-9169; fax: 613-951-2909; moskcar@statcan.ca). □

Travel between Canada and other countries

	Feb. 1999 ^r	March 1999 ^p	Feb. to March 1999	March 1999 ^p	March 1998 to March 1999
	seasonally adjusted			unadjusted	
	'000	% change		'000	% change
Canadian trips abroad					
Same-day car trips to the United States	2,215		-2.4	2,086	-14.3
Total trips, one or more nights	1,478		-2.2	1,733	-1.5
United States ¹	1,113		-2.8	1,210	-4.7
Car	633		-4.8	606	-8.5
Plane	378		0.4	540	0.4
Other modes of transportation	102		-1.9	63	-7.5
Other countries ²	365		-0.4	523	6.8
Travel to Canada					
Same-day car trips from the United States	2,255		0.8	1,944	5.3
Total trips, one or more nights	1,698		0.8	961	14.8
United States ¹	1,339		1.3	748	14.7
Car	838		1.8	431	13.7
Plane	331		2.3	253	17.6
Other modes of transportation	171		-2.9	65	10.4
Other countries ²	359		-0.9	213	15.3

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

¹ Estimates for the United States include counts of cars and buses, and estimated numbers for planes, trains, boats and other methods.

² Figures for other countries exclude same-day entries by land only, via the United States.

Consumption and production of eggs and poultry meat

1998

Canadians ate more eggs and poultry in 1998 compared with the previous year. Each Canadian consumed on average 15.2 dozen eggs, up 1.2% from 1997. Egg production has steadily increased over the last eight years. In 1998, Canadian farmers produced 499 million dozen eggs, up from 466 million dozen in 1990.

Each Canadian consumed 32.5 kilograms of poultry meat in 1998, compared with 31.6 kilograms the year before. Chicken led the way and accounted for three-quarters of the total poultry meat consumption. Chicken consumption has risen 2.8% from 1997.

Canadians are shifting to processed chicken and chicken away from home.

Overall, Canadian farmers produced 962,658 tonnes of poultry meat in 1998, up 5.0 % from 1997. Chicken farmers produced 798,507 tonnes of meat, a 6.4% increase over 1997. Turkey production dropped from the year earlier to 139,160 tonnes in 1998.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 1136, 1137, 1139-1141 and 1144.

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

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Infomat - A weekly review, May 14, 1999
Catalogue number 11-002-XIE
(Canada: \$3/\$109; outside Canada: US\$3/US\$109).

Infomat - A weekly review, May 14, 1999
Catalogue number 11-002-XPE
(Canada: \$4/\$145; outside Canada: US\$4/US\$145).

Gross domestic product by industry, February 1999
Catalogue number 15-001-XPB
(Canada: \$15/\$145; outside Canada: US\$15/US\$145).

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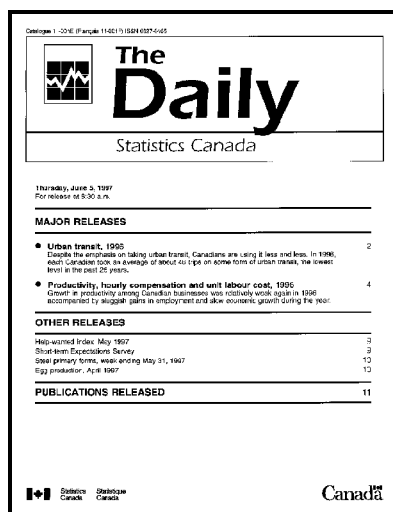
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RELEASE DATES: MAY 17 TO 21

May 17 to 21

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
18	Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	March 1999
18	Divorces	1997
19	Wholesale trade	March 1999
20	Canadian international merchandise trade	March 1999
21	Consumer Price Index	April 1999
21	Retail trade	March 1999
