



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Friday, April 28, 2000

For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Gross domestic product at factor cost by industry, February 2000** 2
 Economic activity receded for the first time in 19 months in February, as gross domestic product fell 0.4%. The decline followed three months of particularly strong growth. Moreover, the level of activity in February was still greater than that of December 1999, and 3.8% higher than in February 1999.
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MAJOR RELEASES

Gross domestic product at factor cost by industry

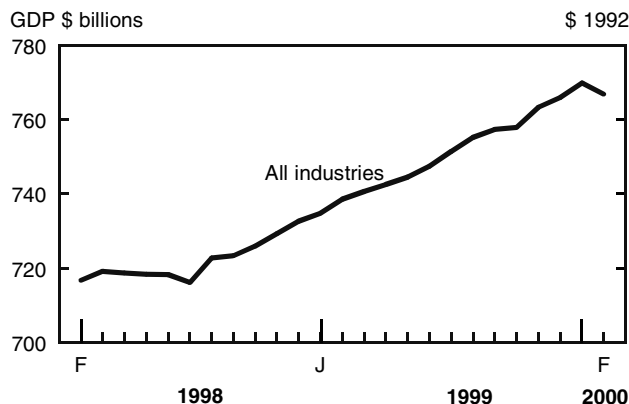
February 2000

Economic activity receded for the first time in 19 months in February, as gross domestic product fell 0.4%. This decline followed three months of particularly strong growth. Moreover, the level of activity in February was still greater than that of December 1999, and 3.8% higher than in February 1999.

Led by a decline in automotive production, February saw a pronounced and broad-based drop in manufacturing output after three months of robust growth. Lower auto sales were chiefly responsible for sizable decreases in retailing and wholesaling activity. Construction output also ebbed after six months of gains.

These declines were partly offset by stock market-related growth in the finance industries, and by a surge in utilities' output because of cold weather. Mining output edged up, buoyed by higher natural gas and metal mining production.

Economic activity contracted in February



Drop in auto production led manufacturing lower

After three months of robust growth, manufacturing output tumbled 1.9% in February, the largest monthly decline in more than a year and a half. A significant drop in automotive production led this broad-based decline; output in the fabricated metal, printing and publishing, pulp and newsprint, and furniture and wood products

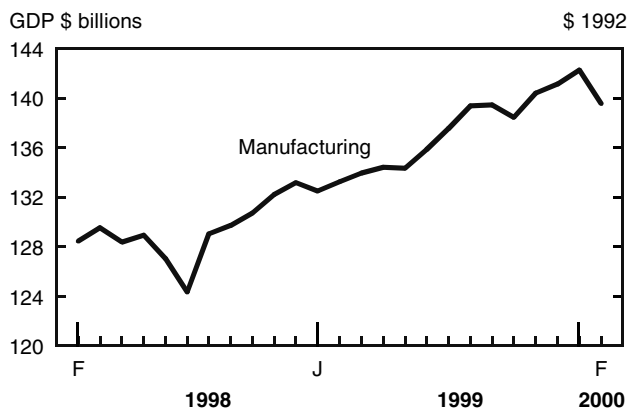
Note to users

The gross domestic product (GDP) of an industry is the value added by labour and capital in transforming inputs purchased from other producers into outputs. Monthly GDP by industry is valued at 1992 prices. The estimates presented here are seasonally adjusted at annual rates.

industries was lower. Overall, 17 of 22 major industry groups, accounting for about 70% of total manufacturing production, retreated in February.

Car and truck production slumped 6.5% in February, erasing the gains of the previous three months. Curtailed activity at auto assembly plants led to a drop in production (-2.7%) and imports (-7.2%) of automotive parts; exports of automobiles plummeted 17.3%, after surging 19.2% in the previous month.

Broad-based decline in manufacturing activity



Nevertheless, strong consumer demand in the United States, where more than 90% of Canadian-built automobiles are shipped, showed no sign of abating. U.S. auto sales soared to record levels in February, depleting dealer inventories there in the process.

After advancing firmly in January, production of fabricated metal products dropped 4.2% in February. About one-half of the decline was caused by lower output of stamped, pressed and coated metal products; producers of hardware and machine parts and equipment also slowed output. The printing and publishing industry also suffered a setback after a healthy gain in the previous month; production fell 3.3%

in February. The decline affected both printing and publishing plants.

Pulp and paper production dropped 2.3% in February, the second consecutive decline. Output of pulp, newsprint and other papers all decreased, leaving the sector 3.8% below its September 1999 peak. In addition, exports of pulp and paper fell 3.5% in February.

Production of both wood products (-2.0%) and furniture (-4.2%) fell in February. Sawmills' output slowed 1.4% after a 1.6% hike in January, leaving the industry 2.8% below the peak it reached in August 1999. Residential construction dropped 3.0% in February, and lumber exports fell 3.2% as many producers took down time, having reached their annual production quotas under the Canada-U.S. Softwood Lumber Agreement. Production of most other types of wood products also slowed during the month, particularly for sash, door and other millwork, and other wood products. Among furniture manufacturers, makers of household furniture saw the largest decline.

Output of machinery rose 2.4% in February; this was the largest offsetting increase. Within this industry, production of construction and other machinery increased sharply.

Wholesaling showed more weakness in February

Wholesale trade, which has been weak since last November, fell 1.3% in February. It was the second decline in three months and, given generally lacklustre performances in prior months, brought the industry back to spring 1999 levels.

Distribution of automotive products fell sharply, paralleling the January spikes and February drops in production and exports. Declines were also seen in lumber, building products, hardware, and furniture, all coming down from January peaks. Farm machinery, which appeared to have bottomed out in the latter half of 1999 after a two-year descent, hit a new low in February; business was particularly slow for Ontario dealers.

These declines were partly offset by increased computer and software distribution. However, despite the latest gain, the wholesale sector continued to show the same lack of sustained upward momentum that has been apparent since mid-1999. As well, sales of food partly recovered in February after falling sharply in January following a Y2K-induced surge in late 1999.

Retailing, wholesaling both weaker



Lower auto sales put brakes on retailing

Retail sales activity fell 1.6% in February, following three consecutive gains. Auto dealers felt the brunt of consumer reticence; the number of cars and trucks sold fell 4.4%. Department store sales also edged back, albeit in the wake of a dramatic surge in January sales that was sparked by an industry restructuring last fall.

Higher sales by grocery and liquor stores partly made up for these declines, as both store types recovered to an extent from a post-Y2K slump in demand in January.

Construction activity fell back

The construction industry, which had been gaining momentum since mid-1999, saw output fall 0.7% in February. This followed a 1.9% increase in the previous month. A decline in home-building more than offset continued growth in the construction of commercial and industrial buildings and large engineering projects. The decline in residential construction was centred on single dwellings, as work on apartments and other multiple-unit dwellings was up. Despite the February decline, residential construction activity was nevertheless 7.0% higher than in the same month of 1999.

Vibrant stock markets boosted finance industries

The finance sector, led by the banking industry, posted a 1.4% increase in activity in February. Canadian stock markets, where the volume of stocks traded soared to record levels, were the main force behind the outsized monthly advance. The surge in stock market activity, which began in the final quarter of 1999, has had a significant effect on the industry since that time.

Colder weather boosted utilities

Electric power utilities raised output 1.1% in February. This was attributable to colder-than-usual temperatures across the country and higher exports of electricity. Gas distribution expanded 2.6% in February, the third consecutive rise. Most of the growth in demand came from commercial and residential customers, where use is generally heating-related.

Transportation services edged up despite slower economy

Firms providing transportation services were modestly busier in February, as output rose 0.2%. Air transportation services soared, after plummeting in December and January. However, trucking firms saw a setback, mostly a reflection of lower production of goods during the month. A strike by truckers in the latter half of February contributed only marginally to the decline; moreover, the strike had little discernible impact on other industries.

Business services picked up

The pace of business service activity rose 0.7% in February, in light of strong gains at computer consulting and architectural, engineering and scientific firms. The overall gain was mitigated by a significant decline at accounting and legal services firms, the result of lower new housing sales in the wake of a very strong January.

Mining output continued to rise

Increased output in the oil and gas and metal mine industries helped push up mining output by 0.3%. New flows from eastern Canada helped push up natural gas output by 2.2%. However, this increase was partly offset by a drop in the output of crude petroleum.

Metal mine output recovered somewhat from January's plunge, as nickel production increased substantially after the resolution of labour strife. However, production problems continued to keep uranium and copper output levels low. Gold output fell for the fifth time in six months, as low gold prices kept high-cost mines closed.

Non-metal mine output dropped in February, reflecting reduced outputs of sodium sulphate and potash. Salt mine output rose substantially, regaining most of January's loss.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4677-4681.

The February 2000 issue of *Gross domestic product by industry* (15-001-XIE, \$10/\$110) is scheduled for release in May. A print-on-demand version is available at a different price. See *How to order publications*.

To purchase data, contact Yolande Chantigny (1-800-887-IMAD; IMAD@statcan.ca). For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Richard Evans (613-951-9145; evanric@statcan.ca), Industry Measures and Analysis Division. □

Gross domestic product at factor cost by industry, at 1992 prices

	Sept. 1999 ^r	Oct. 1999 ^r	Nov. 1999 ^r	Dec. 1999 ^r	Jan. 2000 ^r	Feb. 2000 ^p	Jan. to Feb. 2000	Feb. 2000	Feb. 1999 to Feb. 2000
seasonally adjusted									
	month-to-month % change					\$ change ¹	\$ level ¹	% change	
All Industries	0.3	0.1	0.7	0.4	0.5	-0.4	-2,975	766,805	3.8
Goods-producing industries	0.7	-0.3	0.9	0.7	1.0	-1.1	-2,820	257,409	5.6
Agriculture	0.6	-0.3	-0.1	0.0	-1.3	-0.3	-44	13,581	2.5
Fishing and trapping	-1.6	4.2	6.0	-7.3	7.6	-2.3	-18	774	-3.7
Logging and forestry	1.3	-2.0	1.8	2.9	-3.4	-3.1	-146	4,550	3.3
Mining quarrying and oil wells	2.6	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.9	0.3	95	28,262	6.8
Manufacturing	0.1	-0.7	1.4	0.5	0.8	-1.9	-2,704	139,554	4.7
Construction	0.6	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.9	-0.7	-327	43,836	7.2
Other utilities	2.0	0.1	-2.7	1.6	2.8	1.2	324	26,852	8.7
Services-producing industries	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.0	-155	509,396	3.0
Transportation and storage	0.9	0.5	1.2	-0.5	-0.2	0.2	85	35,777	3.9
Communications	0.4	0.3	1.4	0.2	1.6	0.3	70	27,884	6.8
Wholesale trade	-1.9	1.6	1.2	-1.1	0.0	-1.3	-602	45,970	1.5
Retail trade	0.0	-1.0	0.8	1.7	0.8	-1.6	-766	47,431	3.3
Finance and insurance	-0.2	-0.5	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.4	604	43,298	7.4
Real estate and insurance agent	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.1	107	80,311	2.2
Business services	0.9	0.6	0.7	1.1	0.3	0.7	301	45,612	8.0
Government services	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.0	-0.2	0.2	110	46,016	2.2
Education	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.1	22	40,510	0.3
Health and social services	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	-0.2	-78	47,088	-0.4
Accommodation and food	0.0	1.0	0.8	-1.2	-1.1	0.2	37	19,522	-0.8
Other services	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-45	29,977	1.6
Other aggregations									
Industrial production	0.7	-0.5	0.9	0.6	1.1	-1.2	-2,285	194,668	5.6
Non-durable manufacturing	0.8	-0.8	1.3	0.7	-0.3	-1.7	-986	58,071	1.7
Durable manufacturing	-0.5	-0.7	1.5	0.4	1.6	-2.1	-1,718	81,483	7.0
Business sector	0.3	0.0	0.9	0.4	0.6	-0.5	-3,088	637,164	4.5
Non-business sector	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.1	-0.1	0.1	113	129,641	0.8

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

¹ Millions of dollars at annual rate.

OTHER RELEASES

Employment Insurance

February 2000 (preliminary)

The number of Canadians who received regular Employment Insurance benefits in February rose by 1.7% to 479,720. This marks the first increase since September 1999. Most provinces showed increases; Ontario posted the largest gain (+3.6%), following four consecutive months of decline. However, the number of beneficiaries fell in British Columbia for the sixth consecutive month, and in Alberta for the ninth. At the national level, the number of beneficiaries receiving regular benefits in February was 7.3% lower than in February 1999.

From January to February, regular benefit payments increased by 7.6% to \$645.1 million. The number of claims received rose 10.9% to 223,320.

Number of beneficiaries receiving regular benefits

	Feb. 2000 ^P	Jan. to Feb. 2000	Feb. to Feb. 2000
seasonally adjusted			
		% change	
Canada	479,720	1.7	-7.3
Newfoundland	34,140	-0.8	0.3
Prince Edward Island	8,060	2.9	-2.5
Nova Scotia	28,690	0.8	5.2
New Brunswick	32,440	2.0	-1.9
Quebec	170,830	1.0	-3.2
Ontario	95,890	3.6	-10.8
Manitoba	13,320	1.3	-3.5
Saskatchewan	11,360	1.3	-9.5
Alberta	26,800	-2.7	-28.4
British Columbia	53,210	-1.1	-18.3
Yukon Territory	860	-3.4	-14.9
Northwest Territories and Nunavut	1,110	-4.3	-6.7
unadjusted			
Northwest Territories	940	-8.7	..
Nunavut	290	0.0	..

^P Preliminary figures.

.. Figures not available.

Note: The number of beneficiaries is a measure of all persons who received EI benefits for the week containing the 15th of the month. The regular benefit payments series measures the total of all monies received by individuals for the entire month. These different reference periods must be considered when

comparing the series. The *Employment Insurance Act* allows each province or administrative region of Human Resources Development Canada certain autonomy in applying administrative procedures regarding renewal claims. Data users must take into consideration that movements in levels from month to month may be affected by different administrative procedures for renewal claims from one province or region to another.

Employment Insurance statistics

	Feb. 1999	Jan. 2000	Feb. 2000	Jan. to Feb. 2000	Feb. to Feb. 2000
seasonally adjusted					
				% change	
Regular beneficiaries	517,300	471,690 ^P	479,720 ^P	1.7	-7.3
Regular benefits paid (\$ millions)	687.5	599.6	645.1	7.6	-6.2
Claims received ('000)	230.8	201.0	223.3	10.9	-3.5
unadjusted					
				% change	
All beneficiaries ('000) (see note to users)	899.5	838.8 ^P	846.8 ^P	1.0	-5.8
Regular beneficiaries ('000)	688.8	646.3 ^P	643.1 ^P	-0.5	-6.7
Claims received ('000)	185.9	301.4	180.4	-40.2	-3.2
Payments (\$ millions)	1,169.9	1,184.3	1,154.1	-2.5	-1.3
Year-to-date (January to February)					
				1999	2000
					to 2000
				% change	
Claims received ('000)			488.7	481.8	-1.4
Payments (\$ millions)			2,339.3	2,338.4	0.0

^P Preliminary figures.**Note:** All beneficiaries includes all claimants receiving regular benefits (e.g., due to layoff) or special benefits (e.g., due to illness).

Available on CANSIM: matrices 26 (series 1.6), 5700-5717, 5735 and 5736.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact Robert Keay (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division. ■

Crude oil and natural gas

February 2000 (preliminary)

Crude oil production totalled 10 149 700 cubic metres in February, up 9.5% from the same month in 1999. Newfoundland and Alberta were the chief contributors to this gain. Exports, which accounted for 61.8% of total production, rose by 24.6% compared with February 1999.

The year-to-date production of crude oil was 7.0% higher than in the same period of 1999. The 20.3% increase in crude oil exports is also attributable to increased production at Hibernia.

Crude oil and natural gas

	Feb. 1999	Feb. 2000	Feb. 1999 to Feb. 2000 % change
thousands of cubic metres			
Crude oil and equivalent hydrocarbons¹			
Production	9 268.2	10 149.7	9.5
Exports	5 030.5	6 268.9	24.6
Imports ²	3 850.5	4 186.6	8.7
Refinery receipts	7 929.0	8 274.6	4.4
millions of cubic metres			
Natural gas³			
Marketable production	12 678.3	13 968.6	10.2
Exports	7 366.9	8 047.0	9.2
Canadian domestic sales ⁴	7 327.5	7 910.2	8.0
Jan. to Feb. 1999 Jan. to Feb. 2000 Jan.-Feb. 1999 to Jan.-Feb. 2000			
thousands of cubic metres			
Crude oil and equivalent hydrocarbons¹			
Production	19 555.6	20 923.7	7.0
Exports	10 946.3	13 172.0	20.3
Imports ²	8 062.8	8 475.2	5.1
Refinery receipts	16 648.3	16 584.4	-0.4
millions of cubic metres			
Natural gas³			
Marketable production	27 282.1	28 669.2	5.1
Exports	15 584.2	16 695.6	7.1
Canadian domestic sales ⁴	15 912.4	16 654.3	4.7

¹ Disposition may differ from production due to inventory change, industry own use, etc.

² Crude oil received by Canadian refineries from foreign countries for processing. Data may differ from International Trade Division (ITD) estimates due to timing differences and the inclusion of crude oil landed in Canada for future re-export.

³ Disposition may differ from production due to inventory change, usage as pipeline fuel, pipeline losses, line-pack fluctuations, etc.

⁴ Includes direct sales.

In February, marketable natural gas production rose by 10.2% from February 1999. Domestic sales increased by 8.0%, the second consecutive monthly year-over-year increase. This increase is due in part to greater demand for natural gas by electric utilities and the chemical industry. Exports continued a long run of increases, gaining 9.2% from February 1999.

Year-to-date marketable production of natural gas increased by 5.1% over the same period in 1999.

Exports of natural gas were up 7.1%, and Canadian domestic sales rose by 4.7%.

Note: The increases in production, exports and domestic sales were due, in part, to the extra trading day in February 2000.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 530 and 539.

The February 2000 issue of *Supply and disposition of crude oil and natural gas* (26-006-XPB, \$19/\$186) will be available in May. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Gerry Desjardins (613-951-4368; desjger@statcan.ca) or Michael Westland (613-951-3060; westmic@statcan.ca), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric power statistics

February 2000

Colder temperatures throughout Canada, improved reservoir levels, and an additional day of production due to a leap year led to a substantial increase in electricity generation in February. Net generation of electricity increased to 52 013 gigawatt hours (GWh), up 13.9% from February 1999. Exports increased 100% to 4 134 GWh, and imports decreased from 1 883 GWh to 609 GWh.

Higher reservoir levels in Quebec, British Columbia and Manitoba were the main reason for the 20.1% increase in generation from hydro sources to 32 898 GWh. February's total was the tenth consecutive month that hydro generation has increased. This increased capability serviced higher domestic demand because of colder temperatures, and enabled a doubling of exports to fill unanticipated additional demand caused by colder temperatures in the United States.

Colder temperatures in Ontario were the main reason for a 2.6% increase in conventional thermal generation to 13 304 GWh. Generation from nuclear sources was up 9.9% to 5 811 GWh because of greater capability in Ontario.

Year-to-date net generation at the end of February was 108 997 GWh, up 10.6% from the previous year. Year-to-date exports were 7 947 GWh, up 87.6%, whereas year-to-date imports were 1 291 GWh, down 62.4% from the previous year.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3985-3999.

The February 2000 issue of *Electric power statistics* (57-001-XIB, \$9/\$85) will be available in May. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact André Lefebvre (613-951-3560; alefeba@statcan.ca), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Coal and coke statistics

February 2000

Coal production in February totalled 5 877 kilotonnes, up 0.2% from February 1999. Year-to-date production was 11 968 kilotonnes, up 0.2%.

Exports in February increased 30% from February 1999 to 2 876 kilotonnes. Exports to Japan (the largest consumer of Canadian coal) rose 51.2% to 1 323 kilotonnes during the same period. January and February figures show exports of 5 257 kilotonnes, 4.7% above the 1999 level.

Coke production in February increased to 258 kilotonnes, up 10.9% from February 1999.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9.

The February 2000 issue of *Coal and coke statistics* (45-002-XIB, \$9/\$85) will be available in May. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact André Lefebvre (613-951-3560; alefeba@statcan.ca), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Steel primary forms

Week ending April 22, 2000 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending April 22 totalled 322 254 tonnes, up by 8.1% from 298 221 tonnes a week earlier and up 0.1% from 321 907 tonnes in the same week of 1999. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 5 223 632 tonnes, an 8.6% increase compared with the 4 808 671 tonnes produced in the same period in 1999.

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

Greenhouse, sod and nursery industries

1999

The greenhouse industry grew in both size and sales in the 1990s. Between 1990 and 1999, the total area under glass and plastic grew by 129% to 3,631 acres, or 158 million square feet.

Total greenhouse sales increased to \$1.45 billion in 1999 from \$1.30 billion in 1998. Thirty percent of revenues, or \$438 million, were derived from greenhouse vegetable production.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1058.

The 1999 issue of *Greenhouse, sod and nursery industries* (22-202-XIE, \$26) is now available. A print-on-demand version is also available for \$47. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Bill Parsons (613-951-8727), Agriculture Division. ■

Cereals and oilseeds review

February 2000

Data from the February issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* are now available. The information includes data on production, stocks, cash and futures prices, domestic processing, exports, farmers' deliveries and supply-disposition analyses.

The March situation report, an overview of current market conditions, both domestic and international, is also included in the February issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XPB, \$15/\$149), which will be available in May. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Les Macartney (613-951-8714; les.macartney@statcan.ca) or Karen Gray (204-983-2856; karen.gray@statcan.ca), Grain Marketing Unit, Agriculture Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Infomat — A weekly review, April 28, 2000
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Infomat — A weekly review, April 28, 2000
Catalogue number 11-002-XPE (\$4/\$145).

Greenhouse, sod and nursery industries, 1999
Catalogue number 22-202-XIB (\$26).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

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MAJOR RELEASES



- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Change the statistics on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 40 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was noticeably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow moderate growth during the year.

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Short-term Expectations Survey
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PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

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Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

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RELEASE DATES: MAY 2000

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
1	Labour productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost	1999
2	Business Conditions Survey: Canadian manufacturing industries	April 2000
3	Industrial Product Price Index	March 2000
3	Raw Materials Price Index	March 2000
5	Labour Force Survey	April 2000
5	Building permits	March 2000
5	Help-wanted Index	April 2000
8	Field crop reporting series: March 31 grain stocks	2000
12	New Housing Price Index	March 2000
15	New motor vehicle sales	March 2000
16	Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	March 2000
17	Wholesale trade	March 2000
17	Travel between Canada and other countries	March 2000
18	Consumer Price Index	April 2000
18	Retail trade	March 2000
18	Canadian economic observer	May 2000
19	Canadian international merchandise trade	March 2000
19	Health reports	Spring 2000
24	Composite Index	April 2000
24	Employment Insurance	March 2000
24	Education quarterly review	
25	Canada's international transactions in securities	March 2000
25	Farm cash receipts	Jan.-Mar. 2000
25	Net farm income	1999
26	Industrial Product Price Index	April 2000
26	Raw Materials Price Index	April 2000
29	Youth courts highlights	1998/99
29	Sentencing of young offenders in Canada	1998/99
29	Employment, earnings and hours	March 2000
30	International travel account	Jan.-Mar. 2000
30	Characteristics of international travellers	Oct.-Dec. 1999
31	National economic and financial accounts	Jan.-Mar. 2000
31	Balance of international payments	Jan.-Mar. 2000
31	Real gross domestic product at factor cost by industry	March 2000