



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, May 8, 2000
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Field crop reporting series: Grain stocks, March 31, 2000** 2
Total stocks of canola, grain corn, barley, rye, and flaxseed on March 31 were all above their five-year averages, and record amounts of both canola and corn were in storage.

OTHER RELEASES

- Department store sales and stocks, March 2000 3
- Egg production, March 2000 3

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED



MAJOR RELEASES

Field crop reporting series: Grain stocks

March 31, 2000

Total stocks of canola, grain corn, barley, rye, and flaxseed on March 31 were all above their five-year averages, and record amounts of both canola and corn were in storage. Stocks of wheat (excluding durum wheat) were higher than last year but still below the five-year average. Conversely, total stocks of durum wheat fell below last year's level as well as the five-year average.

Total stocks of grain at March 31

	1999	2000	1999 to 2000 % change
	'000 tonnes		
All wheat	14,973	15,185	1
Wheat excluding durum	11,026	11,907	8
Barley	6,297	6,698	6
Corn for grain	4,124	4,688	14
Canola	2,297	3,828	67
Durum wheat	3,947	3,278	-17
Oats	2,111	2,000	-5
Soybeans	1,157	1,141	-1
Flax	463	752	62
Rye	237	256	8

Stocks of durum wheat decline

Total stocks of durum wheat (stocks held on farms plus stocks in commercial positions) were 3.3 million tonnes, 17% less than the 3.9 million tonnes recorded last year. The drop in stocks is a direct result of the production in the 1999-2000 crop year, falling by 30% compared with the previous crop year.

Wheat (excluding durum) increases slightly

Total stocks of wheat (excluding durum wheat) on March 31 were 11.9 million tonnes, an 8% increase from the 11.0 million tonnes recorded in 1999. The five-year average is 12.1 million tonnes. The modestly higher stocks conceal the fact that production was up 25% in the current 1999-2000 crop year, and that most of that extra production was sold because of proportionately greater export and domestic demand than last year.

Note to readers

The March Farm Stocks Survey of 12,000 farm operators was conducted by telephone interviews from March 23 to March 30. Farmers were asked to report the amounts of grain in storage. Commercial stocks of western grains originate from the Canadian Grain Commission. Commercial stocks of corn and soybeans are estimated by a Statistics Canada sample survey of grain elevators in eastern Canada.

Stocks of canola swell to record levels

Total stocks of canola were 3.8 million tonnes, 67% higher than last year and 42% above the record of 2.7 million tonnes set in 1996. Production in the 1999-2000 crop year increased by 15%, but exports and domestic use during the August 1999 to March 2000 period remained relatively stable. At the time of the survey, 85% of these record stocks were still in bins on the farm.

Flaxseed stocks highest in 20 years

Total stocks of flaxseed were 752,000 tonnes, the highest since the record of 881,000 tonnes in 1980. The five-year average is 461,000 tonnes. Despite a 3% drop in production in the 1999-2000 crop year, farmers were faced with disappointing international market demand for Canadian flaxseed; this reduced exports for the August 1999 to March 2000 period by 50% compared with the same period a year earlier.

Grain corn storage hits new record

Total stocks of corn for grain were 4.7 million tonnes, 12% more than the previous record of 4.2 million tonnes established in 1997. The high level of stocks, despite increased industrial use, was due to record production of grain corn in the 1999-2000 crop year.

Field crop reporting series no. 3: Stocks of Canadian grain at March 31, 2000 (22-002-XPB, \$15/\$88; 22-002-XIB, \$11/\$66) is now available. See How to order publications.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact David Burroughs (613-951-5138; dave.burroughs@statcan.ca) or David Roeske at (613-951-0572; dave.roeske@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Department store sales and stocks

March 2000

Department store sales fell for the second consecutive month to \$1.48 billion (seasonally adjusted). The sales declines in March (-0.4%) and February (-2.5%) followed a strong gain (+6.9%) in January.

Since the end of the summer of 1999, department store sales have generally been falling, partly because of the restructuring taking place in the industry. Previously, they had been rising since early 1996, with the exception of a pause in the spring and summer of 1998.

However, because of the strong increase in January, department store sales for the first quarter of 2000 were 2.0% higher than in the fourth quarter of 1999 and 1.5% higher than in the first quarter of 1999.

Department store sales, including concessions

	Mar. 1999	Mar. 2000	Mar. 1999 to Mar. 2000	Jan. to Mar. 2000	Jan.-Mar. 1999 to Jan.-Mar. 2000
	unadjusted				
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions	% change
Canada	1,215.5	1,252.2	3.0	3,296.4	3.2
Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island ¹	22.6	24.3	7.6	63.8	9.1
Nova Scotia	39.1	37.6	-3.9	94.6	-0.5
New Brunswick	26.4	28.1	6.8	72.2	8.1
Quebec	222.3	232.3	4.5	605.2	3.5
Ontario	515.6	536.1	4.0	1,414.7	3.9
Manitoba	51.9	53.4	2.8	138.3	3.3
Saskatchewan	40.0	43.5	8.6	116.0	8.3
Alberta	145.1	147.6	1.7	393.6	3.4
British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut ¹	152.6	149.3	-2.2	397.9	-2.0

¹ For reasons of confidentiality, data for Newfoundland and are combined, as are data for British Columbia, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Unadjusted for seasonality, department store sales at the national level advanced 3.0% in March compared with March 1999. Sales grew in all provinces except Nova Scotia (-3.9%) and the region formed by British Columbia, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (-2.2%).

Saskatchewan (+8.6%), the region formed by Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island (+7.6%) and New Brunswick (+6.8%) posted the strongest year-over-year sales gains.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 111-113.

To order data, or for general 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 or data quality of this release, contact Clérance Kimanyi (613-951-6363; kimacle@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division. ■

Egg production

March 2000 (preliminary)

Egg production estimates for March are now available.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 1145, 1146 and 5689-5691.

To order *Production of eggs* (23-003-XPB, \$110), contact Julie Gordon (613-951-5039), Agriculture Division.

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

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Field crop reporting series, vol. 79, no. 3
Catalogue number 22-002-XIB (\$11/\$66).

Field crop reporting series, vol. 79, no. 3
Catalogue number 22-002-XPB (\$15/\$88).

Cereals and oilseeds review, February 2000
Catalogue number 22-007-XPB (\$15/\$149).

Natural gas transportation and distribution,
January 2000
Catalogue number 55-002-XIB (\$13/\$125).

Retail trade, February 2000
Catalogue number 63-005-XPB (\$21/\$206).

Building permits, March 2000
Catalogue number 64-001-XIB (\$19/\$186).

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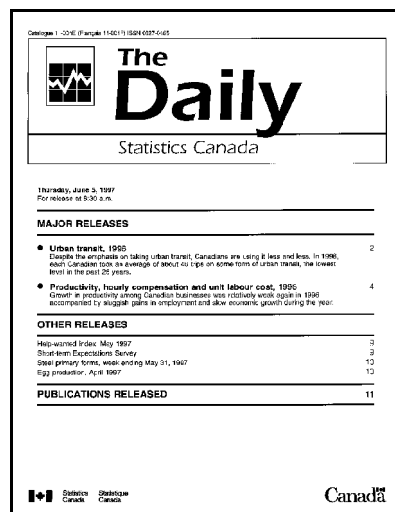
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