



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Friday, August 18, 2000

For release at 8:30 a.m.

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- **Canadian international merchandise trade, June 2000** 2
 Canada's merchandise trade balance reached a new record of nearly \$5.0 billion in June, mainly because of price fluctuations. The value of exports rose 2.3% and that of imports edged down 0.4%.
- **Wholesale trade, June 2000** 5
 Wholesale sales edged upwards 0.3% in June, led by computers and electronic components as well as motor vehicles.

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MAJOR RELEASES

Canadian international merchandise trade

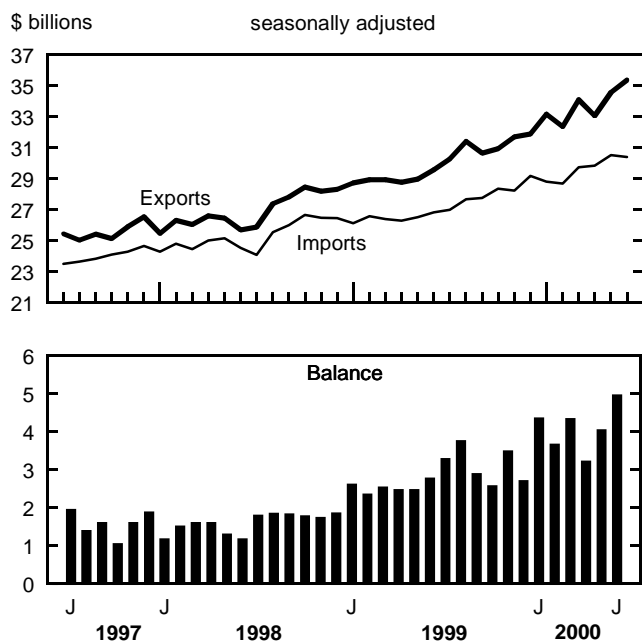
June 2000

Canada's merchandise trade balance reached a new record of nearly \$5.0 billion, mainly because of price fluctuations. The value of exports rose 2.3% and that of imports edged down 0.4%.

Export growth continued in June, advancing 2.3% to \$35.3 billion. Exports of energy and automotive products contributed the most to the increase.

Imports fell 0.4% after three consecutive monthly increases, as decreases in imports of other transportation equipment more than offset increases in energy products and industrial goods.

Exports, imports and trade balance



The increases in the merchandise trade balance in recent months are mostly the result of prices rather than changes in volume. Export prices were up mainly because of higher metal and energy prices, while import prices were down largely because of falling computer prices. The last record in merchandise trade balance, \$4.6 billion, was set in May 1996. Canada has increased its surplus with the United States from \$4.4 billion in May 1996 to \$7.8 billion in June 2000.

Note to readers

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

Energy and automotive products pushed up exports

Energy sector exports continued to be strong. Hot weather in California contributed to higher prices for Canadian natural gas and electricity, which pushed up exports by 25.5% and 4.4%, respectively. Higher prices for crude petroleum continued to push up the value of crude and refined petroleum exports.

Automotive exports gained 2.6%, as exports of automobile parts reached a record level of \$2.5 billion in June, up 8.0% from May. Truck exports rebounded by 2.6% after two months of decline. Exports of passenger vehicles were virtually unchanged, dropping 0.5%.

Machinery and equipment exports were up 1.1%. Exports of telecommunications and television equipment continued the upward trend that started in May 1999 with a further 9.0% increase in June. This growth is the result of continued strong demand for optical network equipment and wireless communications equipment. Airplane exports to countries other than the United States and helicopter exports to the United States also rose. However, exports of office machines were down 9.6%, after reaching a record level in May.

Imports edged down as large capital investments by the petroleum industry wound up

Imports declined by 0.4% in June, but remained 13.3% higher than in June 1999.

The completion of large capital investments by the petroleum industry pushed machinery and equipment imports down by 2.5% in June. However, imports of parts for communications equipment continued to grow, as Canadian demand for parts for such equipment remained strong. Despite the declining price of computers, imports of computers and computer parts were up 5.8%, as demand for these products remained strong.

Imports of energy products rose in June for the fifth consecutive month, mostly because of higher crude oil prices. Imports of petroleum and coal products, mainly aviation kerosene, dropped 21.7%, slowing down the growth in the energy product sector.

Automotive imports were up 0.8%. Imports of trucks rose 7.2%, a second consecutive monthly increase. Imports of passenger vehicles were up 2.0%. However, imports of motor vehicle parts fell 1.2%, as motor vehicle shipments by Canadian manufacturers declined.

Imports of low-priced steel products from Asia and continued growth in the chemical and plastics products enabled the industrial goods and materials sector to register a 1.8% increase in June to a record \$6.1 billion. Imports of metal fabricated basic products, mainly coin to be polished and stamped, also contributed to the overall growth.

Revisions

In general, merchandise trade data are regularly revised for each month of the current year. Factors influencing revisions include late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs forms, replacement of estimates with actual figures (once available), changes in classification of merchandise based on more current information, and seasonal adjustments. Consult the appropriate CANSIM matrices for revised data.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3713, 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-XIB, \$14/\$141; 65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188). 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-XIB, \$29/\$93; 67-001-XPB, \$38/\$124). See *How to order products*.

Merchandise trade data are available by fax on the morning of release.

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

Merchandise trade

| | May 2000 ^r | June 2000 | May to June 2000 | June to June 2000 | Jan. to June 1999 | Jan. to June 2000 | Jan.–June 1999 to Jan.–June 2000 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| seasonally adjusted, \$ current | | | | | | | |
| | \$ millions | | % change | | \$ millions | | % change |
| Principal trading partners | | | | | | | |
| Exports | | | | | | | |
| United States | 29,537 | 30,318 | 2.6 | 19.5 | 148,938 | 173,558 | 16.5 |
| Japan | 876 | 869 | -0.8 | 10.7 | 4,710 | 4,996 | 6.1 |
| European Union | 1,828 | 1,800 | -1.5 | 17.8 | 8,719 | 10,370 | 18.9 |
| Other OECD countries ¹ | 723 | 721 | -0.3 | 23.5 | 3,392 | 4,152 | 22.4 |
| All other countries | 1,572 | 1,634 | 3.9 | 25.4 | 8,088 | 9,381 | 16.0 |
| Total | 34,537 | 35,341 | 2.3 | 19.5 | 173,848 | 202,458 | 16.5 |
| Imports | | | | | | | |
| United States | 22,280 | 22,507 | 1.0 | 10.5 | 122,060 | 132,244 | 8.3 |
| Japan | 986 | 1,011 | 2.5 | 16.7 | 5,048 | 5,756 | 14.0 |
| European Union | 2,790 | 2,771 | -0.7 | 13.6 | 13,423 | 16,394 | 22.1 |
| Other OECD countries ¹ | 1,831 | 1,517 | -17.1 | 44.8 | 6,058 | 8,592 | 41.8 |
| All other countries | 2,615 | 2,580 | -1.3 | 23.7 | 12,098 | 14,937 | 23.5 |
| Total | 30,502 | 30,386 | -0.4 | 13.3 | 158,689 | 177,924 | 12.1 |
| Balance | | | | | | | |
| United States | 7,257 | 7,811 | ... | ... | 26,878 | 41,314 | ... |
| Japan | -110 | -142 | ... | ... | -338 | -760 | ... |
| European Union | -962 | -971 | ... | ... | -4,704 | -6,024 | ... |
| Other OECD countries ¹ | -1,108 | -796 | ... | ... | -2,666 | -4,440 | ... |
| All other countries | -1,043 | -946 | ... | ... | -4,010 | -5,556 | ... |
| Total | 4,035 | 4,955 | ... | ... | 15,159 | 24,534 | ... |
| Principal commodity groupings | | | | | | | |
| Exports | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural and fishing products | 2,372 | 2,301 | -3.0 | 8.4 | 12,579 | 13,510 | 7.4 |
| Energy products | 3,523 | 4,144 | 17.6 | 66.8 | 12,656 | 21,747 | 71.8 |
| Forestry products | 3,549 | 3,508 | -1.2 | 11.0 | 18,873 | 21,098 | 11.8 |
| Industrial goods and materials | 5,507 | 5,486 | -0.4 | 15.6 | 27,813 | 31,784 | 14.3 |
| Machinery and equipment | 9,167 | 9,267 | 1.1 | 30.9 | 41,248 | 50,944 | 23.5 |
| Automotive products | 7,969 | 8,176 | 2.6 | 6.1 | 47,058 | 48,974 | 4.1 |
| Other consumer goods | 1,212 | 1,215 | 0.2 | 7.9 | 6,734 | 7,094 | 5.3 |
| Special transactions trade ² | 676 | 644 | -4.7 | 5.7 | 3,665 | 3,806 | 3.8 |
| Other balance of payments adjustments | 561 | 600 | 7.0 | 12.4 | 3,219 | 3,502 | 8.8 |
| Imports | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural and fishing products | 1,513 | 1,509 | -0.3 | 5.2 | 8,762 | 8,991 | 2.6 |
| Energy products | 1,464 | 1,502 | 2.6 | 74.9 | 4,399 | 8,297 | 88.6 |
| Forestry products | 259 | 259 | 0.0 | 14.1 | 1,335 | 1,519 | 13.8 |
| Industrial goods and materials | 5,979 | 6,086 | 1.8 | 21.3 | 30,122 | 35,135 | 16.6 |
| Machinery and equipment | 10,469 | 10,212 | -2.5 | 13.0 | 52,811 | 59,453 | 12.6 |
| Automotive products | 6,451 | 6,503 | 0.8 | 4.9 | 37,025 | 38,670 | 4.4 |
| Other consumer goods | 3,307 | 3,253 | -1.6 | 7.8 | 18,069 | 19,463 | 7.7 |
| Special transactions trade ² | 522 | 510 | -2.3 | 1.4 | 3,094 | 3,120 | 0.8 |
| Other balance of payments adjustments | 537 | 552 | 2.8 | 7.2 | 3,076 | 3,274 | 6.4 |

^r Revised figures

... 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.

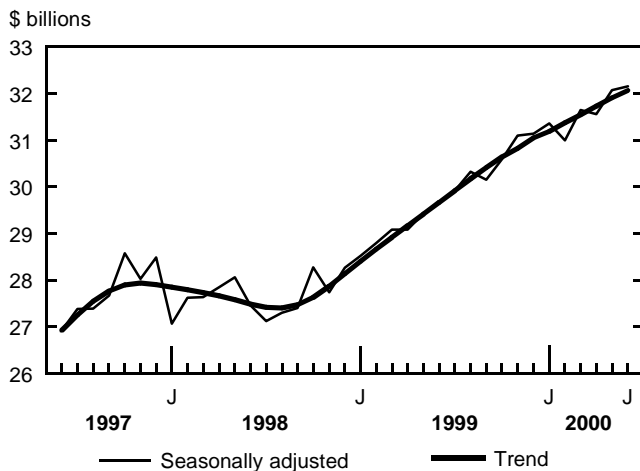
Wholesale trade

June 2000 (preliminary)

Wholesale sales edged up 0.3%, led by computers and electronic components and motor vehicles. Other trade groups saw volatility in June; generally declining sales turned back May's widespread increases. Seven of the 11 trade groups reported declines in June. Overall, wholesalers continued to enjoy generally rising sales. Wholesale sales have been rising since mid-1998, after a short period of generally declining sales that began late 1997. As a result of this month's increase, wholesalers finished the second quarter of 2000 up 1.9% over the first quarter.

Wholesalers sold \$32.2 billion in June. Strong wholesale sales were reported in computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery (+2.5%), and motor vehicles, parts and accessories (+2.0%). Small advances were also reported in food products (+0.4%) and industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies (+0.1%). All other sectors saw their sales fall in June. Notable declines were reported in household goods (-3.3%) and farm machinery, equipment and supplies (-2.7%).

Wholesale trade continues its progress



Ontario's results positive owing to strong-performing sectors

Because the motor vehicles, parts and accessories and computers, packaged software, equipment and supplies sectors are concentrated in Ontario, and because they performed strongly in June, the province's sales were up 1.5%. Sales for Ontario wholesalers have been following the national trend, generally rising since mid-1998 following a period a declining sales

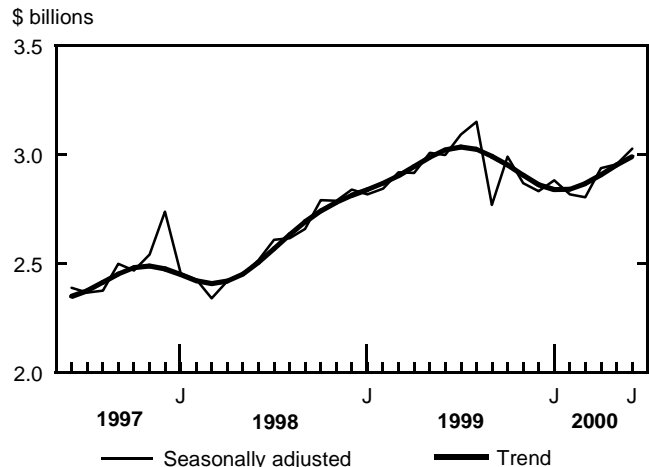
starting late 1997. Quebec wholesalers also reported an increase in June, matching the national average of 0.3%. Quebec wholesalers have enjoyed generally rising sales for the last number of years, experiencing only a leveling off between late 1997 and mid-1998.

All other provinces reported falling sales in June. The declines were broadly based across all wholesale sectors. Manitoba (-4.5%) and Saskatchewan (-3.1%) reported notable declines. The inclement weather on the Prairies in June was reported as a major reason for lower wholesale sales, especially among wholesalers of farm machinery, supplies and equipment.

Demand for electronic components and motor vehicles helps wholesalers

Wholesalers of computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery reported their third consecutive monthly increase (+2.5%) in June. Sales had been rising sharply since early 1998, but began to fall by mid-1999, leading up to Y2K. Sales have been generally climbing since the start of 2000. Wholesale sales are now approaching levels last seen prior to the downturn in 1999. While some wholesalers continue to report a shortage of electronic parts and components, the sector appears to be rebounding in reaction to the continued demand for high-speed and convenient communication devices such as the Internet and cellular phones. On the strength of this month's sales, wholesalers of computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery finished the second quarter of 2000 up a strong 4.9% over the first quarter.

Computers, packaged software and other electronic components rebound following Y2K



Wholesale sales for motor vehicles, parts and accessories reported their fourth consecutive monthly

increase, climbing 2.0% in June. Except for a period late 1999 when sales levelled off for a few months, wholesale sales for motor vehicles, parts and accessories have been generally rising since mid 1998. In addition, exports for automobile products also registered a 2.6% rise in June.

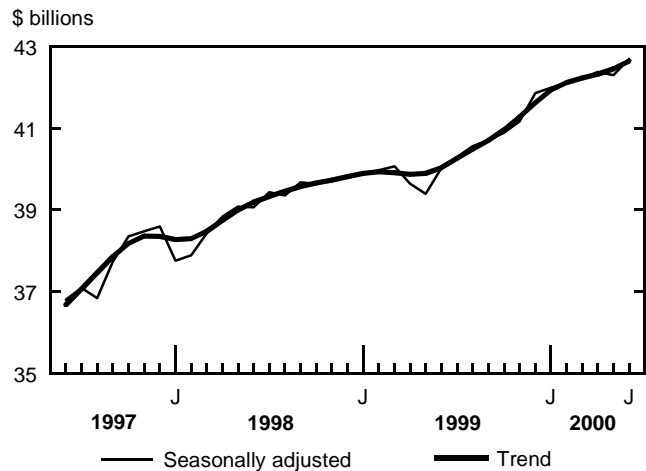
Bad weather hampers wholesalers of farm machinery, equipment and supplies

Cooler and wetter weather in most parts of the country contributed to the 2.7% decline in wholesale sales of farm machinery, equipment and supplies in June. However, wholesale sales in this sector have been generally stable since mid-1999, following generally falling sales since the fall of 1997. Despite all the adversities that appear to plague this sector, wholesalers of farm machinery, equipment and supplies reported the strongest second quarter (+6.0%) among all the wholesale sectors, making up for most of the 6.2% decline in the first quarter.

Inventories rebound

Inventories held by wholesalers were valued at \$42.7 billion in June, up 0.9% from May's drop of 0.2%. May's drop was the first following 11 consecutive monthly increases. Inventories values have been generally rising over the last several years.

Inventories rebound



The inventory-to-sales ratio rose from 1.32 in May to 1.33 in June. The ratio has been falling since early 2000, after reaching a plateau in late 1999. Prior to that, the ratio had been generally falling.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 59, 61, 648 and 649.

The June 2000 issue of *Wholesale trade* (63-008-XIB, \$14/\$140) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

Wholesale trade estimates for July will be released September 20.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit at (1-877-421-3067 or 613-951-3549; wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca) or to enquire about concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Alexander Hays (613-951-3552; haysale@statcan.ca), Wholesale Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. □

Wholesale merchants' sales and inventories

| | June 1999 ^r | March 2000 ^r | April 2000 ^r | May 2000 ^r | June 2000 ^p | May to June 2000 | June 1999 to June 2000 |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| seasonally adjusted | | | | | | | |
| | \$ millions | | | | | % change | |
| Sales, all trade groups | 29,667 | 31,641 | 31,553 | 32,069 | 32,154 | 0.3 | 8.4 |
| Food products | 4,596 | 4,751 | 4,774 | 4,814 | 4,832 | 0.4 | 5.1 |
| Beverage, drug and tobacco products | 1,839 | 1,957 | 1,959 | 2,055 | 2,028 | -1.3 | 10.3 |
| Apparel and dry goods | 532 | 543 | 544 | 541 | 534 | -1.3 | 0.4 |
| Household goods | 830 | 859 | 872 | 881 | 853 | -3.3 | 2.7 |
| Motor vehicles, parts and accessories | 5,600 | 6,217 | 6,270 | 6,298 | 6,423 | 2.0 | 14.7 |
| Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies | 1,982 | 2,090 | 2,024 | 2,107 | 2,093 | -0.7 | 5.6 |
| Lumber and building materials | 2,406 | 2,552 | 2,311 | 2,406 | 2,392 | -0.6 | -0.6 |
| Farm machinery, equipment and supplies | 611 | 623 | 603 | 611 | 595 | -2.7 | -2.7 |
| Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies | 4,317 | 4,881 | 4,874 | 4,961 | 4,967 | 0.1 | 15.1 |
| Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery | 2,997 | 2,804 | 2,937 | 2,954 | 3,027 | 2.5 | 1.0 |
| Other products | 3,957 | 4,363 | 4,385 | 4,439 | 4,409 | -0.7 | 11.4 |
| Sales by province and territory | | | | | | | |
| Newfoundland | 219 | 221 | 224 | 225 | 220 | -2.5 | 0.2 |
| Prince Edward Island | 48 | 53 | 55 | 54 | 53 | -1.9 | 10.1 |
| Nova Scotia | 557 | 576 | 565 | 574 | 557 | -3.0 | 0.1 |
| New Brunswick | 373 | 403 | 410 | 413 | 405 | -2.1 | 8.6 |
| Quebec | 6,056 | 6,446 | 6,307 | 6,465 | 6,483 | 0.3 | 7.1 |
| Ontario | 14,758 | 15,735 | 15,791 | 16,159 | 16,394 | 1.5 | 11.1 |
| Manitoba | 889 | 869 | 898 | 901 | 860 | -4.5 | -3.2 |
| Saskatchewan | 875 | 958 | 1,009 | 926 | 897 | -3.1 | 2.5 |
| Alberta | 2,689 | 3,030 | 2,983 | 3,046 | 3,021 | -0.8 | 12.3 |
| British Columbia | 3,180 | 3,324 | 3,288 | 3,282 | 3,241 | -1.2 | 1.9 |
| Yukon | 9 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 1.5 | -4.3 |
| Northwest Territories | 12 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | -4.6 | -1.8 |
| Nunavut | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | -23.5 | 22.8 |
| Inventories, all trade groups | 40,021 | 42,217 | 42,377 | 42,296 | 42,697 | 0.9 | 6.7 |
| Food products | 2,712 | 2,860 | 2,797 | 2,834 | 2,910 | 2.7 | 7.3 |
| Beverage, drug and tobacco products | 2,239 | 2,416 | 2,439 | 2,479 | 2,506 | 1.1 | 11.9 |
| Apparel and dry goods | 1,219 | 1,099 | 1,062 | 1,065 | 1,059 | -0.6 | -13.1 |
| Household goods | 1,582 | 1,492 | 1,513 | 1,521 | 1,533 | 0.8 | -3.1 |
| Motor vehicles, parts and accessories | 5,668 | 6,498 | 6,552 | 6,394 | 6,508 | 1.8 | 14.8 |
| Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies | 3,538 | 3,873 | 3,899 | 3,937 | 3,963 | 0.7 | 12.0 |
| Lumber and building materials | 3,729 | 4,065 | 4,089 | 4,007 | 3,967 | -1.0 | 6.4 |
| Farm machinery, equipment and supplies | 2,112 | 2,012 | 2,008 | 1,982 | 1,958 | -1.2 | -7.3 |
| Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies | 9,683 | 10,318 | 10,416 | 10,417 | 10,508 | 0.9 | 8.5 |
| Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery | 2,441 | 2,431 | 2,377 | 2,380 | 2,426 | 1.9 | -0.6 |
| Other products | 5,098 | 5,151 | 5,225 | 5,280 | 5,360 | 1.5 | 5.1 |

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.



OTHER RELEASES

Selected financial indexes

July 2000

July figures are now available for selected financial indexes (1992=100), including conventional mortgage rates, prime business lending rates, provincial bond yield averages and exchange rates.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9928.

These indexes will appear in the third quarter 2000 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79), which will be available in December. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality for this release, contact Denise Potvin (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca); Prices Division. ■

Construction Union Wage Rate Index

July 2000

The Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) for Canada was unchanged at 116.7 (1992=100) in July compared with the revised June figure. The index increased 2.5% compared with the July 1999 index.

Union wage rates — both basic rates and rates including selected supplementary payments — are published for 16 trades in 20 metropolitan areas. Indexes (1992=100) are calculated for the same metropolitan areas, and are published for those where a majority of trades are covered by current collective agreements.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 956, 958 and 9922-9927.

The third quarter 2000 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in December. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality for this release, contact Denise Potvin (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca); Prices Division. ■

Shipments of rolled steel

June 2000

Rolled steel shipments totalled 1 316 252 tonnes in June, down 0.5% from 1 322 526 tonnes in May and up 1.7% from 1 300 657 tonnes in June 1999.

Year-to-date shipments at the end of June totalled 7 792 498 tonnes, up 3.0% from 7 565 653 tonnes the previous year.

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

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

Steel primary forms

June 2000

Steel primary forms production in June totalled 1 419 513 tonnes, an increase of 7.6% from 1 318 663 tonnes in June 1999.

Year-to-date production reached 8 552 562 tonnes, up 6.8% from 8 011 225 tonnes in the same period of 1999.

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

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

Export and import price indexes

June 2000

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 June 2000 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 June 2000. Included with the U.S. commodity indexes

are the 10 all-countries and U.S.-only standard international trade classification 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, and 8438-8447.

The June 2000 issue of *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188 or 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (1-800-294-5583; 613-951-9647), International Trade Division. ■

Stocks of frozen poultry meat

August 1, 2000 (preliminary)

Data for stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on August 1 are now available.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 5675-5677.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Sandra Gielfeldt (613-951-2505), or Gilles Beaudry (613-951-6480), Agriculture Division. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

Infomat — A weekly review, August 18, 2000
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Infomat — A weekly review, August 18, 2000
Catalogue number **11-002-XPE** (\$4/\$145).

Primary iron and steel, June 2000
Catalogue number **41-001-XIB** (\$5/\$47).

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

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Catalogue 11-001E (1 page) (11-001E/11-001E-001E)



Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 3, 1997
For release at 9:30 a.m.



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Change the statistics 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.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was noticeably weak again in 1995, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow moderate growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

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Short-term Expectations Survey
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PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

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The Daily, August 18, 2000

RELEASE DATES: AUGUST 21 TO AUGUST 25

August 21 to August 25
(Release dates are subject to change.)

| Release date | Title | Reference period |
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| 21 | Retail trade | June 2000 |
| 23 | Livestock statistics | As of July 1, 2000 |
| 23 | Employment Insurance | June 1, 2000 |
| 24 | Canada's international transactions in securities | June 2000 |
| 24 | Employment, earnings and hours | June 2000 |
| 25 | Field crop reporting series: July 31 crop production estimates | 2000 |