

The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- Wholesale trade, December 2002 and annual 2002 Wholesalers posted a seventh consecutive monthly increase in their sales (+0.3%) in December, bringing sales for 2002 up 6.2% from 2001.
- Livestock estimates, January 1, 2003
 Two years of drought in western Canada have taken their toll on the nation's cattle herd, especially in Alberta. As of January 1, 2003, farmers reported 13.4 million head of cattle on their farms, down 2.8% from January 1, 2002.

(continued on page 2)

Labour force historical review on CD-ROM 1976 to 2002

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For more information, contact Client Services (1-866-873-8788; 613-951-4090; *labour@statcan.ca*), Labour Statistics Division, or refer to the product profile on Statistics Canada's website (*www.statcan.ca*). From the *Canadian statistics* page, choose *The people*, then *Labour, employment and unemployment*, and click on the banner ad for the *Labour force historical review*.





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MAJOR RELEASES

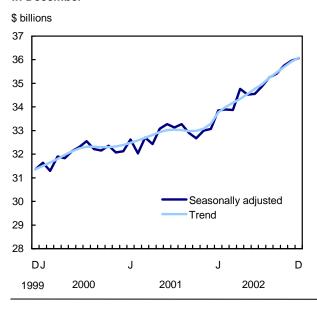
Wholesale trade

December 2002 and annual 2002 (preliminary)

Wholesalers posted a seventh consecutive monthly increase in their sales in December. Wholesale sales reached \$36.1 billion, up 0.3% from November, following gains of 0.6% in November and 1.0% in October.

In constant dollars, sales rose 0.8% in December.

Wholesale sales rise for a seventh consecutive month in December



Wholesale sales increased in 7 of the 11 trade groups in December. The lumber and building materials industry recorded the greatest gain in terms of value, with sales up 3.2%. Sales in this industry rebounded vigorously in December, after dropping 2.1% in November. Other industries reporting increases in their sales were food products (+1.3%), the other products category (+1.5%) and household goods (+6.3%). The increased sales in these industries were offset in part by declines in the automobile sector (-2.0%) and computers and software (-1.3%).

Since November 2001, wholesale sales have posted an average monthly increase of 0.7%. Previously, wholesale sales were fairly lacklustre from the spring of 2000 to October 2001, with an average growth rate of 0.1%.

Note to reader

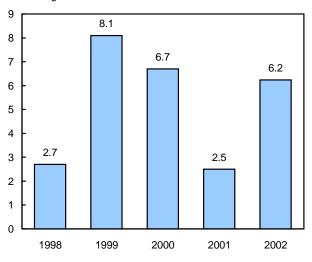
Estimates from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey are classified according to the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC80).

Direct comparisons between wholesale trade in Canada and in the United States should be undertaken with care. However, to promote a degree of uniformity, we have excluded the wholesaling of oilseeds and grain as well as petroleum products from the US data.

In addition, unlike the estimates generated in Canada, the monthly estimates of wholesale trade in the Unites States are classified according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Under NAICS, some wholesale trade establishments in a number of SIC80 industries have been re-classified to other industries. For example, computer equipment wholesalers and office supply stores are now classified into retail trade if they sell primarily through storefront locations similar to other retail establishments. Under SIC80, they remain within wholesale trade.

The annual growth rate of wholesale sales bounces back in 2002

Percentage



Wholesale sales grew in 2002

Wholesale sales were up 6.2% in 2002, compared with only 2.5% in 2001. Sales rose strongly despite signs of weakness in the US economy that persisted throughout the year. American wholesalers posted a gain of 1.5% in 2002.

Some types of wholesalers experienced relatively robust growth rates in 2002. The automotive (+15.2%),

lumber and building materials (+14.7%) and household goods (+13.9%) sectors all posted strong gains.

In constant dollars, sales grew 4.9% in 2002.

Sales, all trade groups

	2001	2002	2001 to 2002
•	\$ millio	ons	% change
Motor vehicles, parts and accessories Lumber and building materials	72,045 28,859	83,025 33,089	15.2
Household goods Beverage, drug and	10,511	11,971	13.9
tobacco products Apparel and dry goods	32,567 7,035	35,564 7,543	9.2 7.2
Total, all trade groups	394,168	418,753	6.2
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment			
and supplies Food products Farm machinery, equipment and	23,751 63,849	24,994 67,057	5.2 5.0
supplies Other products Computers, packaged software and other electronic	7,859 54,755	8,231 56,595	4.7 3.4
machinery Industrial and other machinery,	32,539	32,235	-0.9
equipment and supplies	60,397	58,449	-3.2

Automotive sector sales rebounded in 2002

Despite a 2.0% drop in December, the automotive sector saw a spectacular rebound in 2002 as a whole, with sales climbing 15.2%. This sharp increase is in contrast with 2001, when sales fell 0.7%. Various manufacturers' incentives and lower interest rates helped boost motor vehicle sales to a record high in 2002, with 1.7 million vehicles sold in Canada. The strength of the Canadian economy, as shown by a robust labour market in 2002 (+560,000 jobs), may have encouraged many consumers to go ahead with a motor vehicle purchase or lease.

Housing market boom boosted wholesale sales in 2002

In 2002, housing starts grew 25.9% (the strongest growth rate since 1983) and the home resale market increased 10.2%, according to the Canadian Real Estate Association. Since the lumber and building materials and household goods sectors are closely linked to the housing market, they profited from these increases.

Wholesale sales of household goods showed a strong upward trend throughout 2002, up a

substantial 13.9% from 2001. This strong increase ended four years of weaker growth, when growth rates ranged from 2.1% to 5.1%.

Wholesale sales of lumber and building materials have also posted hefty gains (+14.7%) in 2002. This industry has generally posted robust growth since the last quarter of 2001, owing to the strong performance of the residential construction market.

Sales declined in 2002 in some sectors dependent on business investment

Sales of industrial machinery, equipment and supplies were down 3.2% from 2001. After a sharp increase in their sales in 2000 (+12.3%), wholesale sales in this sector slowed in the first quarter of 2001. The contraction in sales continued until May 2002; after that, this sector saw a very slight upward trend in its sales.

In addition, wholesale sales of computers and software declined for the third year in a row (-0.9%). After trending upwards from October 2001 to April 2002, sales have begun to show signs of weakness in recent months. Sales in this sector are down approximately 18% from their peak in August 1999.

Only two provinces and one territory experienced growth above the Canadian average in 2002

The Northwest Territories benefited the most from the growth in wholesale sales (+35.2%). The development of mining largely explains this growth.

Sales by province and territory

			to
			2002
	\$ millio	ons	% change
Northwest Territories	193	261	35.2
British Columbia	37,056	40,006	8.0
Ontario	195,767	210,560	7.6
Canada	394,168	418,753	6.2
Quebec	79,988	84,879	6.1
Manitoba	11,636	12,321	5.9
Nova Scotia	6,996	7,288	4.2
Newfoundland and			
Labrador	2,555	2,650	3.7
Alberta	41,234	42,353	2.7
Prince Edward Island	656	661	0.7
Saskatchewan	12,521	12,390	-1.0
New Brunswick	5,418	5,243	-3.2
Nunavut	24	23	-4.7
Yukon	124	117	-5.3

British Columbia (+8.0%) and Ontario (+7.6%) also posted sales growth rates above the national average. The automotive sector and the lumber and building

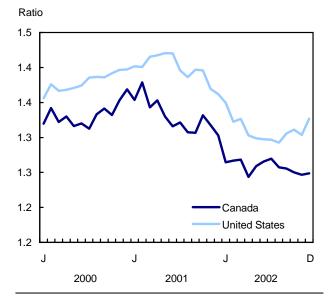
materials sector contributed to the good performance of these two provinces.

Quebec wholesalers saw their sales rise 6.1%, a rate slightly below the national average. Lumber and building materials, as well as food products accounted for much of the increase recorded in this province.

In 2002, the inventory-to-sales ratio fell to record lows on both sides of the border

After reaching a record low in April 2002 (1.24), the inventory-to-sales ratio has ranged from 1.25 to 1.27, and has stayed at 1.25 since October. This is well below the 1.33 average for 2001, despite successive increases in inventories recorded since March. In December, inventories grew 0.5%.

The Inventory-to-sales ratio reached historic lows on both sides of the border in 2002



American wholesalers have also generally reduced their inventory-to-sales ratio. As a result, ratios on both sides of the border are now at record lows. Their ratio in December was 1.30 (excluding wholesale trade of oil seed and grain as well as petroleum products).

Available on CANSIM: tables 081-0001 and 081-0002.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 2401.

The December 2002 issue of *Wholesale trade* (63-008-XIB, \$14/\$140) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

Estimates for wholesale sales for January will be released March 20.

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067 or 613-951-3549; wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jean Lebreux (613-951-4907; jean.lebreux@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

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Wholesale merchants' sales and inventories

	December 2001	September 2002 ^r	October 2002 ^r	November 2002 ^r	December 2002 ^p	November to December 2002	December 2001 to December
			Sea	asonally adjusted	t		2002
		;	\$ millions			% cha	nge
Sales, all trade groups	33,058	35,403	35,746	35,954	36,069	0.3	9.1
Food products	5,469	5,727	5,702	5,736	5,810	1.3	6.2
Beverage, drug and tobacco products	2,961	2,932	2,959	2,985	2,970	-0.5	0.3
Apparel and dry goods	627	670	637	671	671	0.0	7.0
Household goods	896	1,037	1,034	1,019	1,084	6.3	21.0
Motor vehicles, parts and accessories	5,841	7,055	7,318	7,379	7,235	-2.0	23.9
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating	5,041	7,000	7,510	1,010	7,200	2.0	20.0
equipment and supplies	1,899	2,150	2,138	2,145	2,124	-1.0	11.8
							17.4
_umber and building materials	2,476	2,862	2,879	2,819	2,908	3.2	
Farm machinery, equipment and supplies ndustrial and other machinery, equipment and	738	655	662	689	708	2.7	-4.1
	4,977	4,853	4,862	4.960	4,872	0.3	-2.1
supplies	4,977	4,000	4,002	4,860	4,012	0.3	-2.1
Computers, packaged software and other	0.507	0.507	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.0	1.7
electronic machinery	2,587	2,597	2,680	2,666	2,630	-1.3	
Other products	4,587	4,864	4,873	4,984	5,058	1.5	10.3
Sales by province and territory							
Newfoundland and Labrador	211	220	233	213	217	1.8	3.0
Prince Edward Island	54	55	57	56	56	0.1	3.4
Iova Scotia	594	598	625	637	618	-2.9	4.1
lew Brunswick	450	416	448	453	436	-3.8	-3.1
Quebec	6.771	7.155	7.157	7.138	7.175	0.5	6.0
Ontario	16.182	17,780	18,131	18,293	18,148	-0.8	12.2
Manitoba	1,043	1,056	1,055	1,017	1.046	2.8	0.3
Saskatchewan	1,103	1,079	1,028	1,038	1,090	5.0	-1.2
Alberta	3,589	3,607	3,591	3,616	3,774	4.3	5.1 5.1
						4.3 0.6	14.9
British Columbia	3,029	3,401	3,392 9	3,458	3,480		
⁄ukon	9	10	-	10	10	-4.0	7.1
Iorthwest Territories	20	24	19	21	18	-15.9	-10.6
Nunavut	2	2	2	2	2	-16.4	-1.9
nventories, all trade groups	43,072	44,458	44,691	44,818	45,042	0.5	4.6
Food products	3,250	3,406	3,441	3,439	3,437	0.0	5.8
Beverage, drug and tobacco products	3,311	3,377	3,468	3,423	3,367	-1.6	1.7
Apparel and dry goods	1,207	1,290	1,298	1,300	1,320	1.5	9.4
lousehold goods	1,455	1,673	1,714	1,751	1,763	0.7	21.2
Notor vehicles, parts and accessories	6,194	6,637	6,632	6,671	6,660	-0.2	7.5
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating	-, -	-,	-,	-,-	-,		
equipment and supplies	3,560	3,696	3,726	3,744	3,785	1.1	6.3
umber and building materials	4,003	4,351	4,374	4,414	4,426	0.3	10.5
Farm machinery, equipment and supplies	1,787	1,851	1,825	1,850	1,862	0.6	4.2
ndustrial and other machinery, equipment and	1,707	1,001	1,020	1,000	1,002	0.0	4.2
supplies	10,778	10,221	10,233	10,272	10,276	0.0	-4.7
Computers, packaged software and other	, 0	, •	,	· -,-· -	, 0		
electronic machinery	1,870	1,990	2,024	2,045	2,102	2.8	12.4
Other products	5,657	5,964	5,957	5,909	6,044	2.3	6.8

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Revised figures. Preliminary figures.

Livestock estimates

January 1, 2003

Two years of drought in western Canada have taken their toll on Canada's cattle herd, especially in Alberta. As of January 1, 2003, farmers reported 13.4 million head on their farms, down 2.8% from 13.8 million on January 1, 2002.

Meanwhile, the slowdown in the growth of Canada's hog herd, which began early in 2002, continued throughout the rest of the year. Hog producers reported 14.7 million head on farms as of January 1, 2003, up 2.5% from the previous year. Growth has averaged 5.0% over the past five years.

Farmers also reported 975,600 sheep on their farms as of January 1, 2003, down 1.8% from January 1, 2002.

Livestock inventories January 1

	Cat	Cattle		gs	Sheep and lambs	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
		'000 head				
Canada	13,762	13,372	14,367	14,726	994	976
Atlantic Quebec Ontario Manitoba Saskatchewan Alberta British Columbia	292 1,286 2,026 1,245 2,418 5,825 670	289 1,310 2,160 1,250 2,443 5,220 700	390 4,291 3,525 2,688 1,180 2,125 168	383 4,280 3,661 2,870 1,230 2,140 162	32 225 266 76 117 218 59	33 230 280 74 115 187 57

Note: Figures may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Alberta beef ranchers hit hard by drought

Alberta's beef ranchers have been hit hard by two years of drought. As of January 1, 2003, the province's cattle herd was 10.4% below year-earlier levels, in the wake of dwindling feed supplies and soaring feed prices. Alberta accounts for over 40.0% of the national cattle herd.

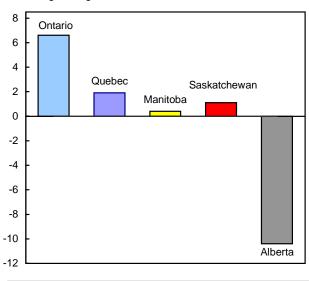
Increases in cattle inventories reported in other provinces, fuelled partly by the prospect of strengthening prices for cattle, were not sufficient to offset the declines in Alberta.

Cattle inventories in Saskatchewan rose 1.1%; those in Manitoba were up a modest 0.4% and those in British Columbia climbed 4.5%.

More feeder cattle were shipped to Ontario, where feed supplies were plentiful; as a result, Ontario's inventories increased 6.6%. In Quebec, the cattle herd grew 1.9%.

Change in January 1, 2003 cattle inventories for selected provinces

Percentage change from 2002



Supplies of barley, the primary feed grain in western Canada, plunged because of the drought. In 2002, the harvest in western Canada declined 36.4%, following a 20.7% drop in 2001.

The shortage of feed grains last year forced western farmers to import an unprecedented 2.1 million metric tonnes of grain corn from the United States during the first 11 months of 2002.

The drought also forced many producers to sell or ship their animals to other provinces and to the United States. Exports from Alberta to other provinces almost tripled to 243,200 head from July to December 2002, compared with the same period of 2001.

Cattle shipments from other provinces into Saskatchewan surged to 167,800 head, and shipments into Ontario were up 17.6%.

Trade with the United States was also hit by the drought. From July to December, cattle exports to the United States soared 43.7% to 985,000 head. Saskatchewan accounted for most of this increase in exports, as cattle came from Alberta and were then exported either to other provinces or south of the border.

At the same time, imports virtually ground to a halt. During the last six months of 2002, only 39,500 head of cattle arrived in Canada, less than one-third the level of 141,800 imported during the same six months of 2001. Alberta, which imported 94,900 head in the second half of 2001, got virtually nothing during the same period of 2002.

Breeding herd remains stable despite drought

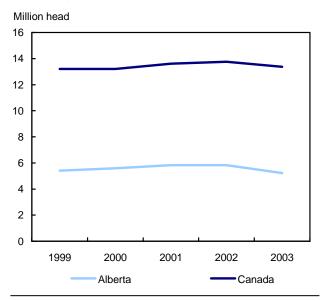
Despite the drought, Canada has maintained its breeding herd. On January 1, 2003, farmers reported 4.6 million beef cows on their farms, a modest 0.4% decrease.

A 5.8% decline in Alberta's beef cow population was offset by expansion in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, as some producers held back more heifers as opposed to shipping them for slaughter. Beef calving in the first six months of 2003 is expected to reflect this expansion.

The cattle industry has three distinct types of operation, reflecting the various stages of growth in the animals: cow-calf, feeder-stocker and feeding. The shortage of water and forage, primarily in Alberta and Saskatchewan, forced several cow-calf operators to decrease or sell their herds. Cattle inventories held by cow-calf operators in Alberta declined 11.3%, and national-level inventories of these breeding operations fell 3.4%.

As of January 1, 2003, the number of Canadian beef cattle reported by feeder and stocker/finisher operations (backgrounding) rose 3.3% from 2002, and 14.6% from 2001. Inventories on feeding operations in Alberta tumbled 21.6% to 925,000 head as of January 1, 2003. These operations were particularly hard hit by the drought that resulted in lower feed supplies and higher feed costs.

Alberta drought draws down cattle inventories at January 1, 2003



During the last six months of 2002, slaughter levels actually fell 3.1% to an estimated 1.9 million cattle. Quebec and Ontario accounted for most of the decrease, which was partly the result of Ontario producers retaining cattle to further herd expansion. Declines in inventories as of January 1, 2003 indicate declining meat production for the year.

Hog inventories: Pace of growth slows

The pace of growth in the hog sector slowed during the last three months of 2002, largely because of lower hog prices and rising feed costs. In addition, expansion was limited by a two-year moratorium on hog barn construction in Quebec, the nation's leading hog-producing province.

The American hog and pork markets have a major impact on the Canadian hog industry. The sharp decline in the American price for hogs since the start of 2002 triggered a drop in hog prices on the Canadian market.

Falling prices in the United States reflect a slowdown in the disposition of pork supplies and a higher slaughter volume. Canadian average hog prices in the second half of 2002 were about 23.0% lower than the same period of 2001.

Available on CANSIM: tables 003-0004 and 003-0030 to 003-0032.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 3460.

The reports *Livestock statistics* (23-603-XIE, \$34/\$112), *Cattle statistics* (23-012-XIE, free), *Hog statistics* (23-010-XIE, free) and *Sheep statistics* (23-011-XIE, free) 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 the information line (1-800-465-1991) or Robert Plourde (613-951-8716, robert.plourde@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.

OTHER RELEASES

Travel between Canada and other countries December 2002

Fewer Canadians travelled abroad in 2002, and fewer foreigners visited Canada, according to preliminary annual international travel data. Canadians made an estimated 39.4 million trips outside of Canada in 2002, down 8.7% from 2001. The number of visitors from the United States and overseas also declined, down 4.7% to 44.9 million. The number of overnight trips by Americans, however, rose 3.6% to 16.1 million. (Unless otherwise specified, these data are seasonally adjusted).

On a monthly basis, Canadian travel to the United States and overseas countries jumped 4.4% in December from November, the highest increase since January 2002. Travel to Canada rose for the sixth consecutive month in December (+1.8%), primarily the result of an increase in visitors from the United States.

Canadians made more than 3.4 million trips abroad in December. Of these, an estimated 3.0 million were to the United States, up 4.3%. Canadians also made 425,000 trips to overseas countries (+4.6%), the highest monthly figure on record.

The number of visitors from the United States rose 2.1% to fewer than 3.6 million. However, the number of overseas visitors dipped 0.7% to 360,000.

Only 5 of Canada's top 12 overseas markets showed increases in same-day and overnight trips to Canada in December. Mexico had the highest monthly increase (+12.5%), followed by Australia (+12.1%), the United Kingdom (+1.5%), France (+0.9%) and Germany

(+0.4%). Hong Kong recorded the largest monthly loss (-10.9%), followed by Japan (-7.2%) and Taiwan (-3.0%). The number of visitors from China remained unchanged.

Americans made 1.4 million overnight trips to Canada, up 2.8% in December. Overnight plane travel by Americans rose 1.9% to 329,000. Overnight car trips increased 3.8% to 931,000, the highest monthly level since October 1973.

Canadians took about 1.2 million overnight trips south of the border, up 6.4% from November. Overnight travel by car jumped 11.3% but overnight travel by plane remained steady (-0.1%).

Canadians made more than 1.8 million same-day car trips to the United States in December, up 1.6%.

Available on CANSIM: tables 427-0001 to 427-0006.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 5005.

The December 2002 issue of *International travel, advance information*, Vol. 18, no. 12 (66-001-PIE, \$6/\$55) is now available. See *How to order products*.

For more information, enquire or to about the concepts, methods data quality or Client of this release. contact Services (1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-2909; cult.tourstats@statcan.ca) or Frances Kremarik (613-951-4240; frances.kremarik@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

Travel between Canada and other countries

	November 2002 ^r	December 2002 ^p	November to December 2002	December 2002	December 2001 to December 2002	
	Seas	onally adjusted		Unadjusted		
	'000		% change	'000	% change	
Canadian trips abroad ¹ To the United States To other countries	3,281 2,875 406	3,424 3,000 425	4.4 4.3 4.6	2,880 2,530 350	7.6 6.5 15.7	
Same-day car trips to the United States	1,780	1,808	1.6	1,649	3.0	
Total trips, one or more nights United States ² Car Plane Other modes of transport Other countries ³	1,490 1,084 629 355 100 406	1,577 1,153 699 355 99 425	5.9 6.4 11.3 -0.1 -1.5 4.6	1,178 829 452 328 49 350	15.1 14.8 14.2 16.9 7.4 15.7	
Travel to Canada ¹ from the United States from other countries	3,845 3,483 362	3,915 3,556 360	1.8 2.1 -0.7	2,941 2,682 259	5.1 4.8 7.8	
Same-day car trips from the United States	2,001	2,036	1.8	1,674	4.9	
Total trips, one or more nights United States ² Car Plane Other modes of transport Other countries ³	1,714 1,365 897 323 145 349	1,748 1,404 931 329 143 344	2.0 2.8 3.8 1.9 -1.4 -1.2	1,175 920 593 279 48 255	4.7 3.8 2.8 7.8 -5.0 7.8	
Most important overseas markets ⁴ United Kingdom Japan France Germany Australia Mexico South Korea Hong Kong Netherlands Italy China Taiwan	68 46 28 27 14 15 12 10 10 8	69 43 28 27 16 16 15 10 10 10 8 8	1.5 -7.2 0.9 0.4 12.1 12.5 -1.2 -10.9 -0.1 -0.6 0.0 -3.0	54 23 19 14 17 13 10 8 6 6 7	1.9 16.7 4.1 0.2 22.8 27.4 10.7 1.1 7.5 34.3 18.5	

r Revised figures.

Stocks of frozen poultry meat

February 1, 2003 (preliminary)

Stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on February 1 totalled 57 070 metric tonnes, down 17.3% from February 1, 2002.

Available on CANSIM: tables 003-0023 and 003-0024.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 3425.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Sandra Gielfeldt (613-951-2505; sandy.gielfeldt@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.

Crushing statistics

January 2003

Oilseed processors crushed 145 732 metric tonnes of canola in January, according to the monthly survey of

Preliminary figures.

¹ Totals exceed the sum of "same-day car trips" and "total trips, one or more nights" because they include all of the same-day trips.

² Estimates for the United States include counts of cars and buses, and estimated numbers for planes, trains, boats and other methods.

³ Figures for other countries exclude same-day entries by land only, via the United States.

Includes same-day and one or more night trips.

crushing plants. Oil production totalled 60,520 tonnes and meal production amounted to 92 359 tonnes.

Available on CANSIM: table 001-0005.

The January 2003 issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XIB, \$11/\$112; 22-007-XPB, \$15/\$149) will be available in April. See *How to order products*.

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), Agriculture Division.

NEW PRODUCTS

International travel, advance information, December 2002, Vol. 18, no. 12 Catalogue number 66-001-PIE (\$6/\$55).

Labour force historical review, 2002 Catalogue number 71F0004XCB (\$195). All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

Catalogue numbers with an -XIB or an -XIE extension are Internet versions; those with -XMB or -XME are microfiche; -XPB or -XPE are paper versions; -XDB are electronic versions on diskette and -XCB are electronic versions on compact disc.

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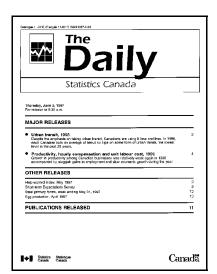
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