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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Retail Trade,** August 2004 3
  Retailers continued to enjoy steady growth in August, posting their seventh sales advance in the first eight months of 2004. Retail sales reached a record $29.1 billion in August, up 0.8% from July when sales rose 0.4%.
- **Study: Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Economy,** 1961 to 1999 7
  The process of job renewal has been hard at work in the Canadian manufacturing sector during the past four decades, resulting in the almost complete replacement of the stock of jobs, according to a new study. Job renewal resulted primarily from the replacement of old plants by new plants, the majority of which were built by new firms.

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Canadian Economic Observer
October 2004

The October issue of Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, *Canadian Economic Observer*, analyses current economic conditions, summarizes the major economic events that occurred in September and presents a feature article titled: "Four Decades of Creative Destruction: Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Base from 1961 to 1999." A separate statistical summary contains a wide range of tables and graphs on the principal economic indicators for Canada, the provinces and the major industrial nations.

The October 2004 issue of *Canadian Economic Observer*, Volume 17, no. 10 (11-010-XIB, $19/$182; 11-010-XPB, $25/$243) is now available. See *How to order products*.

Visit *Canadian Economic Observer's* page online. From the *Canadian statistics* page, choose *Economic conditions*, and on that page see the banner ad for *Canadian Economic Observer*. For more information, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627; *ceo@statcan.ca*), Current Economic Analysis Group.

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MAJOR RELEASES

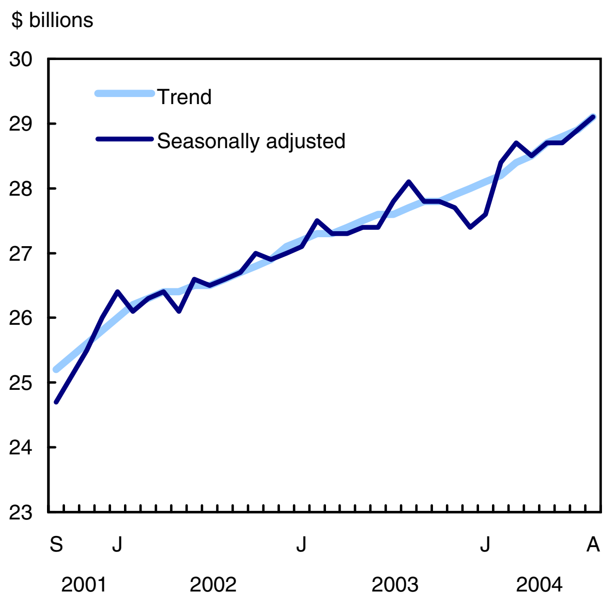
Retail Trade

August 2004

Retailers continued to enjoy steady growth in August, posting their seventh sales advance in the first eight months of 2004. Retail sales reached a record $29.1 billion in August, up 0.8% from July when sales rose 0.4%.

The only monthly decline so far this year occurred in April (-0.7%), when sales fell or remained weak in most retail sectors. Prior to this year, retailers had suffered a sequence of consecutive sales declines in the last four months of 2003, after experiencing a period of general increases that began in the fall of 2001.

Fourth retail sales gain in a row



For the first eight months of 2004, cumulative retail sales were 4.2% higher than in the same period of 2003. In comparison, the sales growth for the same period was 4.0% in 2003 and 6.7% in 2002.

Once prices are taken into account, retail sales in constant dollars rose 1.1% in August, following a 0.4% increase in July.

All but three retail sectors enjoyed sales increases of at least 0.9% in August. Retailers in the clothing (-1.5%) and miscellaneous (-1.3%) sectors posted lower sales. The miscellaneous sector includes retailers such as office supplies, sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores. For their part, general merchandise stores saw their sales remain flat in August.

Note to readers

The Monthly Retail Trade Survey covers the entire retail store universe as defined under the 2002 North American Industrial Classification System. Statistics Canada also releases the results of the Monthly Survey of Large Retailers. This latter survey tracks the sales by commodity of about 80 large retailers. These retailers represent approximately 26% of total annual retail sales and exclude sectors such as automotive, building and outdoor home supplies stores and computer and software stores. Thus the two surveys may show different trends.

For more information about the Monthly Survey of Large Retailers, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.ca) or Elton Cryderman (613-951-0669) for enquires about concepts, methods or data quality.

Home centres and hardware stores nail down the lead

In August, home centres and hardware stores continued to benefit from strong demand for their products. Sales in these stores were partly stimulated by housing starts, which are expected to reach a 17-year high in 2004, according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Sales jumped 5.8% in home centres and hardware stores in August, leading to a 3.9% gain in the overall building and outdoor home supplies sector. So far this year, sales at home centres and hardware stores, which have been increasing rapidly since the beginning of 2004, stand at nearly 12% above those reported in the first eight months of 2003.

Consumer spending at pharmacies and personal care stores advanced 1.8% in August, after falling 1.6% in July. Pharmacies and personal care stores have enjoyed strong sales increases since the start of 2004, with cumulative sales in the first eight months of the year at about 8% above those in the same period of 2003. Approximately two-thirds of all health and personal care products (including prescription drugs) are sold at pharmacies and personal care stores; the remainder are sold in supermarkets and general merchandise stores.

Retailers in the furniture, home furnishings and electronics sector posted a 1.3% sales increase in August, following a 1.5% gain in July. While sales advanced in each category of stores included in this sector, computer and software stores enjoyed by far the strongest growth (+7.1%). Sales in the overall furniture, home furnishings and electronic sector have been rising slowly since the summer of 2003, after a period of much stronger growth in the first part of that year.

Shoppers spent 0.9% more in the food and beverage sector in August compared with the previous month. Convenience and specialty food stores (+4.5%) and beer, wine and liquor stores (+1.3%) were mostly behind the sales increase observed at the sector level. Supermarkets, with slightly more than 70% of all sales in the food and beverage sector, reported a slim 0.3% sales gain in August. Sales in supermarkets have generally been rising thus far in 2004, after remaining essentially flat since the spring of 2003.

Sales in the automotive sector rose 0.9% in August, led by increases at used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers (+2.1%) and gasoline stations (+1.8%). New car dealers posted a slight sales increase in August (+0.2%), following a 1.5% gain in July. Since the start of 2004, new car dealers have regained most of their sales lost in the second half of 2003, thanks, in part, to stronger results in their used car and auto repairs activities. These sales account for about 40% of new car dealers overall revenues.

Clothing sales down

Consumers reduced their spending in clothing and accessories stores by 1.5% in August. Demand for clothing fashions has remained weak since the spring of 2004, with the exception of July. Mark down prices were partly responsible for July's gain (+1.6%), the strongest in 10 months. Prior to the spring of 2004, sales in clothing and accessories stores had generally been increasing since the fall of 2003, after a two-year period of little growth.

General merchandise stores may also have been affected by recent weakness in clothing sales. Sales remained flat in general merchandise stores in August, following a strong 1.6% gain in July. About a quarter of all sales of clothing, footwear and accessories are made through general merchandise stores. Consumer spending in general merchandise stores has remained essentially unchanged since the spring of 2004, after generally advancing since early 2003.

Ontario retailers take the lead

In August, retailers in Ontario (+1.7%), New Brunswick (+1.6%), Prince Edward Island (+1.3%) and Quebec (+1.1%) posted sales increases above the national average. On the other hand, retail sales fell in each of the western provinces. Nevertheless, retail sales growth in the first eight months of 2004 remained quite impressive in Alberta (+10.3%), Manitoba (+7.5%) and British Columbia (+6.4%).

August's increase in Ontario, which led retail sales to new heights, was the largest gain seen in that province in six months. Retail sales in Ontario stood at 1.8% above those in August 2003, the last month before they began to fall for the remainder of that year.

Related indicators for September

In September, total employment advanced at its fastest pace in four months, up 0.3% from August. A total of 156,000 jobs were created over the first nine months of 2004. Nevertheless, this is a smaller gain compared with the 205,000 new jobs created in the last four months of 2003 alone. Housing starts remained strong in September, despite a 4.2% decline from the previous month. The number of new motor vehicles sold in September is expected to have declined by about 3% from August, according to preliminary data obtained from the auto industry.

Available on CANSIM: tables 080-0014 to 080-0017 and 076-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2406 and 2408.

The August 2004 issue of *Retail Trade* (63-005-XIE, $18/$166) will soon be available.

Data on retail trade for September 2004 will be released on November 22.

For more information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; *retailinfo@statcan.ca*). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Paul Gratton (613-951-3541), Distributive Trades Division.

□

Retail sales

	August 2003	May 2004[r]	June 2004[r]	July 2004[r]	August 2004[p]	July to August 2004	August 2003 to August 2004
	seasonally adjusted						
	$ millions					% change	
Automotive	**9,621**	**9,579**	**9,703**	**9,687**	**9,776**	**0.9**	**1.6**
New car dealers	5,864	5,564	5,704	5,792	5,807	0.2	-1.0
Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,208	1,201	1,211	1,179	1,203	2.1	-0.4
Gasoline stations	2,549	2,815	2,788	2,716	2,766	1.8	8.5
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores	**1,965**	**2,002**	**1,977**	**2,006**	**2,032**	**1.3**	**3.4**
Furniture stores	695	706	677	692	700	1.1	0.7
Home furnishings stores	329	364	368	375	379	1.1	15.2
Computer and software stores	155	154	149	154	165	7.1	6.1
Home electronics and appliance stores	786	778	783	785	788	0.4	0.3
Building and outdoor home supplies stores	**1,796**	**1,704**	**1,708**	**1,733**	**1,800**	**3.9**	**0.2**
Home centres and hardware stores	1,419	1,335	1,316	1,334	1,411	5.8	-0.6
Specialized building materials and garden stores	377	369	392	400	389	-2.6	3.3
Food and beverage stores	**6,497**	**6,813**	**6,763**	**6,788**	**6,850**	**0.9**	**5.4**
Supermarkets	4,723	4,874	4,861	4,894	4,908	0.3	3.9
Convenience and specialty food stores	703	749	752	738	771	4.5	9.6
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,071	1,190	1,150	1,156	1,171	1.3	9.3
Pharmacies and personal care stores	**1,780**	**1,881**	**1,914**	**1,884**	**1,917**	**1.8**	**7.7**
Clothing and accessories stores	**1,607**	**1,670**	**1,665**	**1,692**	**1,666**	**-1.5**	**3.7**
Clothing stores	1,199	1,265	1,265	1,295	1,273	-1.7	6.2
Shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores	408	405	400	397	393	-0.9	-3.7
General merchandise stores	**3,392**	**3,493**	**3,473**	**3,527**	**3,527**	**0.0**	**4.0**
Department stores	1,760	1,823	1,798	1,849	1,844	-0.3	4.7
Other general merchandise stores	1,632	1,671	1,674	1,678	1,683	0.3	3.1
Miscellaneous retailers	**1,473**	**1,527**	**1,534**	**1,537**	**1,517**	**-1.3**	**3.0**
Sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores	728	708	731	740	740	0.1	1.7
Miscellaneous store retailers	745	818	803	797	777	-2.5	4.3
Total retail sales	**28,131**	**28,670**	**28,737**	**28,854**	**29,085**	**0.8**	**3.4**
Total excluding new car dealers, used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	**21,059**	**21,905**	**21,821**	**21,883**	**22,075**	**0.9**	**4.8**
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	490	471	466	461	465	0.7	-5.2
Prince Edward Island	118	116	115	110	112	1.3	-4.9
Nova Scotia	840	860	866	854	854	0.0	1.6
New Brunswick	654	650	645	652	663	1.6	1.3
Quebec	6,375	6,491	6,533	6,565	6,635	1.1	4.1
Ontario	10,640	10,653	10,621	10,649	10,833	1.7	1.8
Manitoba	922	967	984	981	976	-0.5	5.8
Saskatchewan	843	859	859	862	855	-0.8	1.5
Alberta	3,378	3,607	3,633	3,656	3,636	-0.6	7.6
British Columbia	3,771	3,899	3,917	3,967	3,959	-0.2	5.0
Yukon	36	35	35	35	36	2.2	1.0
Northwest Territories	45	42	44	43	44	2.2	-0.3
Nunavut	19	19	19	19	18	-3.8	-6.2

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*

Retail sales

	August 2003	July 2004[r]	August 2004[p]	August 2003 to August 2004
	Unadjusted			
	$ millions			% change
Automotive	**9,898**	**10,713**	**10,274**	**3.8**
New car dealers	5,840	6,306	5,968	2.2
Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,263	1,382	1,279	1.2
Gasoline stations	2,794	3,024	3,027	8.3
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores	**1,981**	**1,983**	**2,032**	**2.6**
Furniture stores	742	759	743	0.1
Home furnishings stores	324	376	375	15.5
Computer and software stores	143	140	156	9.4
Home electronics and appliance stores	772	708	759	-1.7
Building and outdoor home supplies stores	**1,825**	**2,085**	**1,957**	**7.2**
Home centres and hardware stores	1,420	1,638	1,535	8.1
Specialized building materials and garden stores	405	448	422	4.2
Food and beverage stores	**6,997**	**7,617**	**6,910**	**-1.2**
Supermarkets	4,953	5,340	4,823	-2.6
Convenience and specialty food stores	774	846	813	5.0
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,270	1,430	1,275	0.4
Pharmacies and personal care stores	**1,742**	**1,861**	**1,866**	**7.1**
Clothing and accessories stores	**1,669**	**1,609**	**1,656**	**-0.8**
Clothing stores	1,234	1,222	1,260	2.1
Shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores	435	387	396	-8.9
General merchandise stores	**3,382**	**3,612**	**3,434**	**1.6**
Department stores	1,734	1,763	1,758	1.4
Other general merchandise stores	1,648	1,849	1,676	1.7
Miscellaneous retailers	**1,558**	**1,502**	**1,558**	**0.0**
Sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores	744	709	745	0.2
Miscellaneous store retailers	815	793	813	-0.3
Total retail sales	**29,052**	**30,981**	**29,687**	**2.2**
Total excluding new car dealers, used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	**21,948**	**23,293**	**22,440**	**2.2**
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland and Labrador	543	524	510	-6.0
Prince Edward Island	138	137	130	-6.2
Nova Scotia	885	946	881	-0.4
New Brunswick	700	715	704	0.5
Quebec	6,633	7,098	6,825	2.9
Ontario	10,839	11,287	10,923	0.8
Manitoba	952	1,059	991	4.1
Saskatchewan	883	933	880	-0.3
Alberta	3,466	3,874	3,682	6.2
British Columbia	3,907	4,297	4,056	3.8
Yukon	41	43	41	1.6
Northwest Territories	46	48	44	-2.5
Nunavut	21	20	20	-7.3

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*

■

Study: Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Economy
1961 to 1999

The process of job renewal has been hard at work in the Canadian manufacturing sector according to a new research paper that examines job renewal from 1973 to 1996.

The driving force behind job renewal in manufacturing in Canada has not been the decisions of incumbent firms to expand employment within existing plants, or their decision to establish new plants, the paper found.

Rather, job renewal results from the decisions of new firms to establish new manufacturing plants.

Renewal occurs when old plants are supplanted by new plants. It also occurs when some plants decline and others grow. In both cases, resources and production are being shifted from less productive to more productive plants.

The paper's underlying premise is that economies are dynamic. That is, they experience a high degree of job turnover driven by competition and continuously changing tastes and technologies. Canadian manufacturers operate within a dynamic environment of job loss and renewal.

The process reflects the concept of "creative destruction," a term coined in 1942 by American economist Joseph Schumpeter, who reasoned that innovation and competition create new processes and technologies that render old industries, skills and equipment obsolete.

New firms most important source of job renewal

The study found that new firms, rather than incumbent firms, have played the most significant role in the job renewal process.

Between 1973 and 1996, employment in manufacturing grew from 1.66 million to 1.70 million, a 2% gain. Although aggregate employment levels changed little, manufacturers experienced high rates of job losses and renewal during this period.

Just over 1 million factory jobs that existed in 1973 were eliminated by 1996. However, by 1996, these 1 million positions that were lost had been replaced by new jobs. These new jobs effectively renewed two-thirds of the employment in Canadian manufacturing.

Of the factory jobs present in 1996 and new since 1973, just over 55% were created by new businesses. Renewal was closely linked to the energy, ideas and capital possessed by new businesses.

Jobs created in new plants built by incumbent firms accounted for about 19% of new jobs, while new employment from expanding existing plants represented about one out of every four new jobs.

In the long-run, the renewal process was not primarily the result of older, incumbent firms expanding their employment or building new plants. Rather, it resulted principally from the establishment of new businesses.

> ***Note to readers***
>
> *This release is based on two new research papers that measure the extent to which the manufacturing economy renews itself through the creation of jobs in new plants and the expansion of existing firms.*
>
> *The study* Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Economy: A Regional Comparison, 1973 to 1996 *examines the degree of job renewal over a two-decade period within the Canadian manufacturing economy as a whole and across provinces.*
>
> *The study* Four Decades of Creative Destruction: Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Base from 1961 to 1999 *measures turnover decade by decade. It is being released today in the* Canadian Economic Observer*.*
>
> *Job renewal is defined as the emergence of new jobs in the economy as the result of the opening of new plants or the expansion of employment in existing plants. The rate of renewal is defined as the proportion of jobs present at the end of the period that came from these two sources.*
>
> *Data from the analysis came from a longitudinal file that was constructed from Statistics Canada's Annual Survey of Manufactures and covers the period from 1961 to 1999. The survey collects information on shipments, value added, inventories and employment for manufacturing plants.*

Renewal rates varied across industries

Renewal rates differed substantially across industries. Among the lowest rates were found in primary metals, and paper and allied products where economies of scale and concentrated market structures exist. Their rates were in the 30% range over the 1973 to 1996 period.

At the other end of the spectrum, industries with the highest renewal rates included plastic products, furniture and fixtures, and fabricated metal products. Their renewal rates were largely in the 75% and over range, while rates for most other industries fell in the 50% to 60% range.

Renewal rates lowest in Atlantic Canada

The study found considerable variation in renewal rates across regions. The Atlantic provinces had relatively low renewal rates, while Western provinces had high rates.

For example, about 53% of manufacturing jobs in Newfoundland and Labrador and the three Maritime provinces in 1996 had been created since 1973. This compares with 79% of factory jobs in Alberta and 73% of those in Saskatchewan.

The average for the remaining provinces was near the national average of 63%.

The relatively low rates for the Atlantic provinces were the result primarily of the type of industries found there. The industrial structures of these provinces are heavily weighted toward industries that have inherently low rates of renewal.

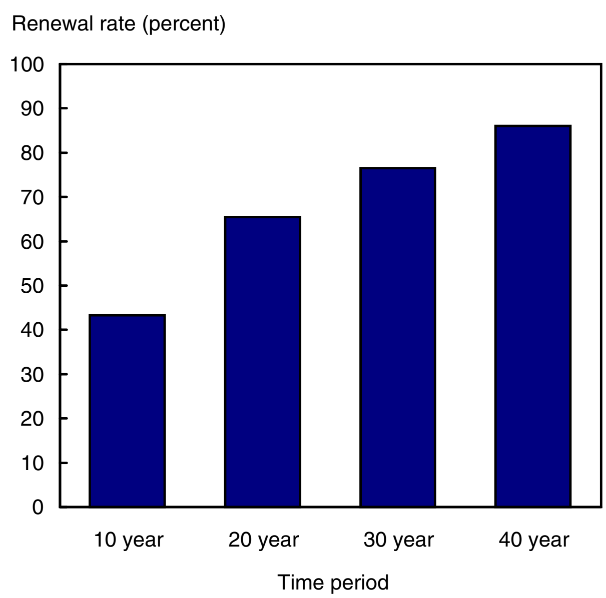
In contrast, Saskatchewan's and Alberta's high renewal rates cannot be explained by differences in industrial structures. Their high rates of renewal relate to "other factors" that have stimulated growth in these economies. Both economies have proven to be highly attractive places for both incumbent and/or new firms to establish and expand new manufacturing plants.

Cumulative effect of job losses and job gains are extensive

According to a second research paper, job turnover in the manufacturing sector has a substantial long-term component. The paper measured job turnover at the end of each decade between 1961 and 1999.

It found that almost 40% of jobs on average were renewed during any given decade. A similar proportion of jobs were lost over the same time frame.

Average renewal rates by time period



Therefore, over a relatively short period of time, about two in every five jobs were eliminated, either because of plant closures or downsizing and, in turn, were renewed.

Increasing the time frame resulted in a larger proportion of jobs that were renewed. For example, using a 20-year time frame, over 65% of the economy was renewed; over a 30-year period, renewal amounts to just over 75%.

After 40 years, just over 86% of jobs were new. In other words, a very large proportion of Canada's manufacturing economy has effectively turned over, and the economy was almost completely new.

Relationship between job turnover and growth

Looking across industries, there was only a weak negative relationship between job loss rates and growth, while there was a strong positive relationship between job renewal and growth.

Industries did not decline because of high rates of failure among their businesses. The failure rate was relatively constant across industries over long periods.

Rather it was a lack of investment in new establishments that differentiated the more dynamic industries from the declining ones.

Regardless of whether the direction of causation goes from renewal to growth or from growth to renewal, renewal was associated with growth. And that was the reason for the widespread interest in the amount of renewal taking place.

The research papers *Four Decades of Creative Destruction: Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Base from 1961 and 1999*, no. 8 (11-624-MIE2004008, free) and *Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Economy: A Regional Comparison, 1973 to 1996*, no. 23 (11F0027MIE2004023, free) are now available online. From the *Our products and services* page, under *Browse our Internet publications*, choose *Free*, then *National accounts*.

Additional information on related papers that describe the importance of turnover and competition can be found at our economic analysis site on the page *Industrial competition dynamics*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact John Baldwin (613-951-8588) or Mark Brown (613-951-7292), Micro-economic Analysis Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Population estimates by age and sex
July 1, 2004

The preliminary postcensal estimates by age and sex at July 1, 2004, the updated postcensal figures at July 1, 2003 as well as the final estimates at July 1, 2002 are now available. The corresponding components of population growth are also available.

Available on CANSIM: tables 051-0001, 051-0002 and 051-0011 to 051-0013.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3231, 3233 and 3604.

Data will appear in the publication *Annual Demographic Statistics, 2004* (91-213-XIB, $60; 91-213-XPB, $134) to be published in March 2005.

These estimates may be obtained by contacting your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre or Nathalie Proulx (613-951-2320; fax: 613-951-2307; *nathalie.proulx@statcan.ca*), Demography Division. For information on methodology, contact Denis Morissette (613-951-0694; fax: 613-951-2307; *denis.morissette@statcan.ca*), Demography Division. ■

Crushing statistics
September 2004

According to the monthly survey of crushing plants, Canadian oilseed processors crushed 223,777 metric tonnes of canola in September. Oil production last month totalled 92,320 tonnes while meal production amounted to 135,644 tonnes.

Available on CANSIM: table 001-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3404.

The September 2004 issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* (22-007-XIB, $12/$120) will soon be available.

For general information, contact Client Services (1-800-465-1991; *agriculture@statcan.ca*). To enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Les Macartney (613-951-8714; *les.macartney@statcan.ca*), Agriculture Division. ■

Deliveries of major grains
September 2004

Data on September grain deliveries are now available.

Available on CANSIM: table 001-0001.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3403, 3404 and 3443.

The September 2004 issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* (22-007-XIB, $12/$120) will soon be available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Susan Anderson (613-951-3859; *sue.anderson@statcan.ca*) or Client Services (1-800-465-1991; *agriculture@statcan.ca*), Agriculture Division. ■

Cereals and oilseeds review
August 2004

In September, Chicago corn and soybean futures' prices dropped in response to market fundamentals. Prices fell sharply in view of huge US crops and favourable weather plus increased global supplies in the current marketing year.

Winnipeg nearby canola futures' prices plunged $70 a metric tonne over the month but stayed above $300 a tonne. Despite a delayed harvest and lower crop quality, harvest volume was expected to be sizeable and of decent grade. Other bearish factors were the sharp drop in soybean prices and the stronger Canadian dollar.

The data from the August 2004 issue of the *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* are now available. The information includes data on production, stocks, prices, domestic processing, exports, farmers' deliveries, and supply-disposition analyses.

The September situation report, an overview of current market conditions, both domestic and international, is also included in the August issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* (22-007-XIB, $12/$120), which will soon be available.

For general information, contact Client Services (1-800-465-1991; *agriculture@statcan.ca*). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Les Macartney (613-951-8714; *les.macartney@statcan.ca*), Agriculture Division. ■

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Catalogue number 11-010-XIB ($19/$182).

Canadian Economic Observer, October 2004, Vol. 17, no. 10
Catalogue number 11-010-XPB ($25/$243).

Insights on the Canadian Economy: Four Decades of Creative Destruction: Renewing Canada's Manufacturing Base from 1961 to 1999, no. 8
Catalogue number 11-624-MIE2004008
(free).

Findings of the Canadian Vehicle Fuel Pilot Survey
Catalogue number 53-500-XIE
(free).

Wholesale Trade, August 2004, Vol. 67, no. 8
Catalogue number 63-008-XIE ($15/$150).

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

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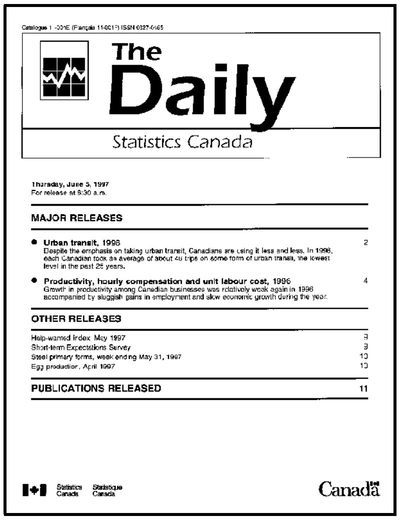
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- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
  Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

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