



The Daily

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Consumer Price Index, April 2004**

In April, consumers paid 1.6% more for the goods and services in the Consumer Price Index basket than they did in April last year, compared with a 0.7% rise in March. However, April's advance marked a return to rates prevalent during the last three months of 2003.

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- **Family income, 2002**

After five consecutive years of growth, after-tax family income remained virtually unchanged between 2001 and 2002, as the three main components (market income, government transfers and personal income taxes) each remained more or less stable.

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- Cereals and Oilseeds Review, March 2004 11
- Construction Union Wage Rate Index, April 2004 11

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Canadian Economic Observer

May 2004

The May 2004 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 April and presents two feature articles entitled "A diffusion index for GDP" and "Provincial GDP in 2003." 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 May 2004 issue of *Canadian Economic Observer*, Vol. 17, no. 5 (11-010-XIB, \$19/\$182; 11-010-XPB, \$25/\$243) is now available. See *How to order products*. As a way to encouraging you to try the new electronic version, we are offering free access to the August 2003 issue of *Canadian Economic Observer*. This will give you a risk-free opportunity to try out the electronic version. We would also encourage you to send us your feedback on this new medium of delivery by filling out the *Readership Survey*.

Visit the *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

Consumer Price Index

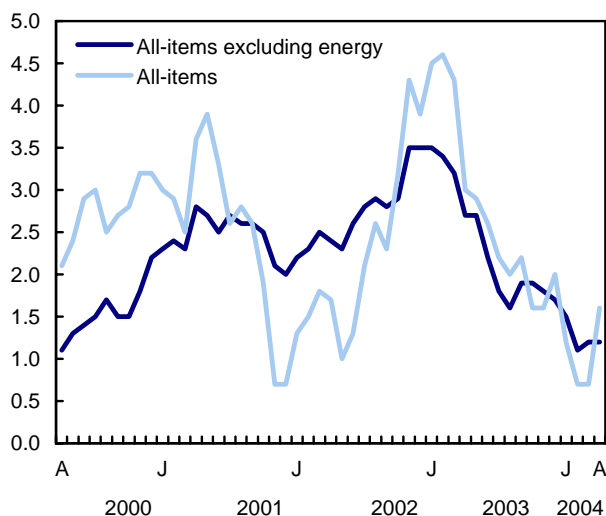
April 2004

In April, consumers paid 1.6% more for the goods and services in the Consumer Price Index basket than they did in April last year, compared with a 0.7% rise in March. However, April's advance marked a return to rates prevalent during the last three months of 2003.

The gap in the increases between March and April was the result of the double impact of energy price movements both this year and last year. Last year, there was a significant 0.7% drop in the CPI between March and April 2003, and this year, there was a 0.2% increase from the same period in 2004. As a result, the gap between the April 2003 and April 2004 indexes is greater than the gap between the March indexes.

Percentage change from the same month of the previous year

% change



From March 2003 to April 2003, the CPI fell significantly following strong price decreases for gasoline, as well as a drop in the electricity index caused by refunds to Ontario customers.

The main factors pushing the index up from March to April this year were higher electricity rates in Ontario (following the introduction of new legislation) and higher gasoline prices.

When the effects of energy prices are excluded from the CPI, the 12-month advance in April becomes 1.2%, the same as in March.

Note to readers

The 12-month variation in the CPI is calculated by comparing the most current month's index with the index for the same month of the previous year. In the All-items index chart, the 12-month change is represented by the gap between the two curves. Thus, the 12-month variation can decrease from one month to the next merely because of the fact that the base serving as the point of comparison has increased. As can be observed from the chart, the behaviour of the index in 2003 has been a very important factor in explaining the variations in the 12-month percentage changes since January 2004.

The all-items index excluding the eight volatile components identified by the Bank of Canada rose 1.8% from April 2003 to April 2004, up from 1.3% in March. The most significant contributing factor was the jump in the 12-month increase of the electricity index from 0.2% in March to 15.1% in April.

On a monthly basis, prices rose 0.2% between March and April this year. This follows a 0.3% rise in March. With the exception of March, the CPI has had no monthly increase or decrease larger than 0.2% over the last 12 months.

Important contributors to the 12-month increase

Key factors contributing to the 1.6% increase in the CPI included electricity, gasoline, homeowners' replacement cost, cigarettes and tuition fees.

On the other hand, consumers paid less for automotive vehicles, computer equipment and supplies, natural gas and fresh vegetables.

On average, the electricity index rose 15.1%. The most significant contributing factor was a 54.7% increase in Ontario's electricity index.

An electricity refund legislated by the Ontario government sent the Ontario electricity index plunging in April 2003 and made the April 2004 index higher by comparison. Also, recent legislation replaced the flat rate for electricity with a tiered rate beginning in April 2004.

On average, gasoline prices were 6.9% higher than one year ago. In contrast, they were 4.2% lower in March 2004 compared with March 2003.

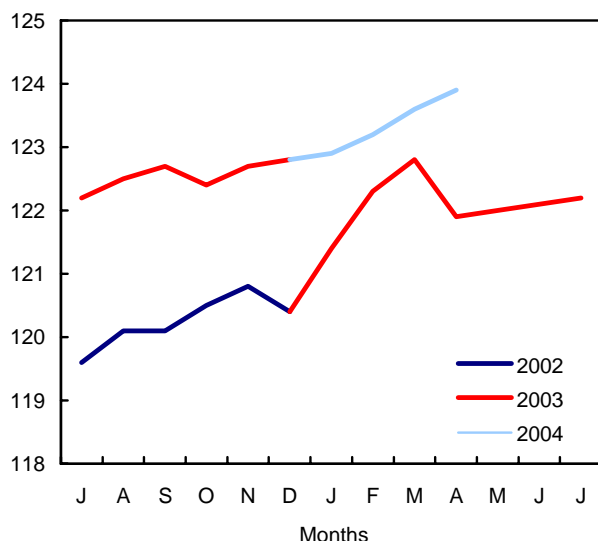
Homeowners' replacement cost, which represents the worn out structural portion of housing and is estimated using new housing prices (excluding land), was up 6.1%.

Cigarette prices were 7.9% higher than in April 2003. This increase was primarily the result of higher provincial tobacco taxes introduced in the last 12 months in most

provinces and most recently in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

All-items index

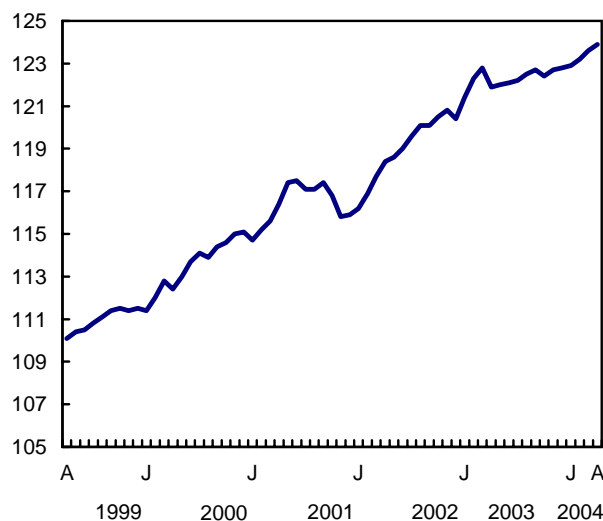
Indexes (1992=100)



Higher prices for electricity, gasoline, automotive vehicles and natural gas exerted upward pressure on the all-items CPI.

Consumer Price Index

Unadjusted index (1992=100)



On average, tuition fees increased 8.1%. Although the tuition fees are only collected once a year, in September, they continue to be one of the important factors impacting the 12-month change in the CPI. The average increase in tuition fees for the previous three years has been 3.8%.

Despite two consecutive monthly increases, automotive vehicle prices are still 1.5% lower compared with April 2003 levels. This was primarily a result of incentives from automotive vehicle manufacturers put in place throughout the last 12 months.

Computer equipment and supplies fell 16.7% as price declines were registered for both desktops and laptops.

On average, natural gas prices fell on by 8.9%. Most of this drop is attributable to the Alberta and Ontario markets.

The index for fresh vegetables fell 8.6%. Decreases can be attributed to favorable weather in the growing regions of producer countries.

Slight monthly increase in the CPI in April

Prices rose 0.2% between March and April this year. This follows a 0.3% rise in the previous month.

Downward pressure came from price decreases for fresh vegetables, women's clothing, automotive vehicle insurance premiums, computer equipment and supplies and men's clothing.

Excluding the influence of energy prices, the CPI increased 0.1%.

The 3.3% increase in the electricity index for Canada was mostly attributable to a 5.7% increase in Ontario along with a 6.5% increase in British Columbia.

Under Ontario legislation effective April 1st, electricity tariffs increased from a fixed rate of 4.3 cents per kilowatt-hour to 4.7 cents per kilowatt-hour for the first 750 kilowatt-hours used in a month. The price goes up to 5.5 cents per kilowatt-hour for usage over that threshold. There were also some changes in distribution charges.

Low precipitation levels have had BC Hydro concerned about the low water levels of their reservoirs needed to produce electricity. As a result, they are applying to move forward the implementation date of their original rate increase application to the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC). Pending its final decision in the fall, the BCUC has approved an interim rate increase effective April 1st, 2004.

Gasoline prices increased an average of 1.5% between March and April. This was the fourth

consecutive monthly increase as crude oil prices continued to rise.

Automotive vehicle prices rose 0.7% as some manufacturers adjusted their incentive programs.

Natural gas prices increased 3.2% following a 2.5% decrease in March. April's advance was almost entirely attributable to the removal of the provincial government rebate program in Alberta. The Alberta natural gas index rose by 17.5%.

Fresh vegetable prices fell 6.0% as some crops became available from Canadian hot-house producers.

The women's clothing index fell by 2.6% in April. This reduction was a result of widespread sales in most categories of women's clothing. Price drops of this magnitude are typical for women's clothing at this time of the year. Decreases were seen in all provinces.

Automotive vehicle insurance premiums fell 1.3% as a result of a 2.8% decrease in Ontario and a 9.8% drop in Prince Edward Island.

The *Automobile Insurance Rate Stabilization Act* legislated by the Ontario government came into effect on April 15th. Lower rates reflecting the changes in the *Insurance Act* had to be filed by insurance companies for approval. There have been some delays in the approval process, which in turn will delay the introduction of the new rate schedules for some companies until later this summer.

Amendments effective April 1st were also made to the *Insurance Act* in Prince Edward Island. The most important one being the \$2,500 limit on liability claims for minor personal injury. Companies operating in this province were also required to file for lower rates reflecting these amendments.

Price decreases for both desktops and laptops caused the computer equipment and supplies index to fall 3.2%.

The index for men's clothing fell by 1.4% in April 2004. Widespread sale prices were moderated by the introduction of new seasonal clothing items.

Seasonally adjusted CPI increased slightly from March to April

After seasonal adjustment, the CPI increased 0.2% from March to April.

Higher seasonally adjusted indexes for shelter (+0.5%), transportation (+0.5%), alcoholic beverages and tobacco products (+0.6%), household operations and furnishings (+0.2%), recreation, education and reading (+0.1%), and health and personal care (+0.2%) accounted for this increase.

The indexes for clothing and footwear (-0.4%) and food (-0.1%) exerted downward pressure.

All-items index excluding the eight most volatile components

The all-items index excluding the eight volatile components identified by the Bank of Canada rose 1.8% in April, up from 1.3% in March.

Contributing most to the rise in April were higher electricity prices, homeowners' replacement cost, tuition fees, restaurant meals prices, as well as homeowners' and automotive vehicle insurance premiums.

The jump in the 12-month increase in the electricity index from 0.2% in March to 15.1% in April was the result of both the refund paid to Ontario's electricity customers in April 2003 and new higher rates introduced in April 2004.

On a monthly basis, the all-items index excluding the eight volatile components identified by the Bank of Canada rose 0.2%.

Upward pressure came mostly from higher prices for electricity and automotive vehicles. Lower prices for women's clothing were the principal source of downward pressure on the index.

Energy

Energy prices rose 6.4% from April 2003 to April 2004.

Higher electricity (+15.1%) and gasoline (+6.9%) prices accounted for the increase. Over the same period, prices for natural gas (-8.9%) and fuel oil (-3.8%) fell.

From March to April, energy prices increased 2.0%, mostly under the influence of price increases for electricity (+3.3%), gasoline (+1.5%) and natural gas (+3.2%). Downward pressure came from lower prices for fuel oil (-2.3%).

Available on CANSIM: tables 326-0001, 326-0002, 326-0009, 326-0012 and 326-0016 to 326-0018.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2301.

More information about the concepts and use of the CPI are also available online in Your Guide to the Consumer Price Index.

Available at 7 a.m. on the Internet on our website. From the home page, choose Today's news releases from The Daily, then Latest Consumer Price Index.

The April 2004 issue of the *Consumer Price Index* (62-001-XIB, \$9/\$83; 62-001-XPB, \$12/\$111) is now available. See *How to order products*.

The May 2004 *Consumer Price Index* will be released on June 22, 2004.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, call

Rebecca McDougall (1-866-230-2248; 613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-1539), Prices Division.

Consumer Price Index and major components (1992=100)

	April 2004	March 2004	April 2003	March to April 2004	April 2003 to April 2004
unadjusted					
	% change				
All-items	123.9	123.6	121.9	0.2	1.6
Food	123.4	123.6	122.4	-0.2	0.8
Shelter	119.6	119.0	116.5	0.5	2.7
Household operations and furnishings	115.6	115.3	114.5	0.3	1.0
Clothing and footwear	103.8	105.3	103.8	-1.4	0.0
Transportation	143.5	142.8	141.8	0.5	1.2
Health and personal care	119.0	118.3	116.8	0.6	1.9
Recreation, education and reading	127.1	127.3	126.3	-0.2	0.6
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products	142.2	141.3	134.5	0.6	5.7
All-items (1986=100)	158.7				
Purchasing power of the consumer dollar expressed in cents, compared with 1992	80.7	80.9	82.0		
Special aggregates					
Goods	119.1	118.8	118.0	0.3	0.9
Services	129.3	129.0	126.4	0.2	2.3
All-items excluding food and energy	121.7	121.6	120.2	0.1	1.2
Energy	146.2	143.3	137.4	2.0	6.4
All-items excluding the eight most volatile components ¹	124.3	124.1	122.1	0.2	1.8

1. Excluded from the all-items CPI are the following eight most volatile components, as defined by the Bank of Canada: fruit, fruit preparations and nuts; vegetables and vegetable preparations; mortgage interest cost; natural gas; fuel oil and other fuel; gasoline; inter-city transportation; and tobacco products and smokers' supplies. The Bank of Canada further adjusts this series to obtain their measure of core inflation, which also excludes the effect of changes in indirect taxes. For data and information on core inflation, please consult the Bank of Canada website (www.bankofcanada.ca/en/inflation/index.htm).

Consumer Price Index by province, and for Whitehorse, Yellowknife and Iqaluit (1992=100)

	April 2004	March 2004	April 2003	March to April 2004	April 2003 to April 2004
unadjusted					
	% change				
Newfoundland and Labrador	121.6	121.3	121.0	0.2	0.5
Prince Edward Island	123.9	123.2	123.1	0.6	0.6
Nova Scotia	125.1	125.0	123.9	0.1	1.0
New Brunswick	123.5	123.6	123.0	-0.1	0.4
Québec	119.9	120.0	118.3	-0.1	1.4
Ontario	125.1	124.9	122.3	0.2	2.3
Manitoba	126.4	126.0	125.4	0.3	0.8
Saskatchewan	128.4	127.5	126.1	0.7	1.8
Alberta	130.6	130.3	130.2	0.2	0.3
British Columbia	122.4	121.6	120.4	0.7	1.7
Whitehorse ¹	120.2	119.9	120.3	0.3	-0.1
Yellowknife ¹	118.4	118.2	119.2	0.2	-0.7
Iqaluit (December 2002=100) ¹	100.8	100.2	99.9	0.6	0.9

1. Go online to view the geographical details for the cities of Whitehorse and Yellowknife and the town of Iqaluit.

Family income

2002

After five consecutive years of growth, after-tax family income remained virtually unchanged between 2001 and 2002, as the three main components (market income, government transfers and personal income taxes) each remained more or less stable.

After-tax income for families of two people or more amounted to an estimated \$60,500, virtually unchanged from \$60,300 in 2001, after adjusting for inflation.

This lack of growth was in contrast to the increase of 3.2% in annual average after-tax income for these families between 1996 and 2001.

Family income is correlated with economic conditions. After reaching a peak at \$53,900 in 1989, average family income declined through the recession of the early 1990s and stayed below \$52,000 up to and including 1996. Since then, it has rebounded in step with the recovering economy.

The low-income rate among families of two people or more edged up slightly in 2002 after five consecutive years of declines. A small increase in the low-income rate was experienced by those aged 18 and over. However, the proportion of children younger than age 18 years old and living in a low-income family was marginally lower, continuing its long-term decline.

Unlike most other family types, average after-tax income declined in 2002 for single-parent families headed by women. However, their income gains were among the strongest between 1996 and 2002 because of the increase in labour force participation by single mothers.

For unattached individuals, after-tax income amounted to \$25,900 in 2002, up 2.4% from 2001 and 17% from 1996. An estimated 1 million of these individuals lived in low income in 2002, about 25% of the total, down from 34% in 1996.

Main components all hold relatively steady

The three main components of after-tax income (market income, transfers from governments and personal income taxes) were all relatively unchanged from 2001.

Market income is the sum of paid employment and self-employment earnings, and income from investments and pensions, and represents the lion's share of family income, particularly for non-elderly families. In 2002, it remained at the same average level as in 2001 (approximately \$66,000) for families of two or more people. This compares with an annual average gain of 2.7% during the previous five years.

Families of two or more people paid an estimated \$12,800 on average in personal income

Note to readers

This release is based on data from two household surveys: the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) and the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF). Data prior to 1996 are drawn from the SCF and data since 1996 are taken from SLID.

All figures have been adjusted for inflation. To factor in inflation when comparing income levels across time, all income estimates are expressed in 2002 constant dollars.

Market income is the sum of earnings from employment and net self-employment income, investment income, and private retirement income. It is also called income before taxes and transfers.

After-tax income is the total of market income and government transfers, less income tax.

Low income

Statistics Canada's low income cut-offs (LICOs) are income thresholds at which a family would typically spend 20 percentage points more of its income than the average family on the necessities of food, shelter and clothing. The LICOs vary according to family and community size.

Although LICOs are often referred to as poverty lines, they have no official status as such. For further information, consult the article, "On poverty and low income" online.

taxes in 2002, about \$300 less than in 2001 after adjusting for inflation.

This decline, equal to about 2.3%, came on the heels of a 7.1% decrease in 2001 when federal and provincial tax changes included increases in exemption and income threshold levels, and cuts in tax rates. The implicit tax rate for families was 17.4% in 2002, down from 17.8% in 2001.

Government transfers cover a range of programs such as Employment Insurance (EI), Old Age Security, child tax benefits and so on. They remained virtually unchanged from 2001 at an estimated \$7,300. In 1996, transfers amounted to \$7,900 on average.

The number of families receiving EI benefits rose 8.4% in 2002, following an 11.2% gain in 2001. Average EI benefits rose from \$5,500 in 2001 to \$5,900 in 2002. These increases are attributed mainly to the program changes that expanded parental benefits.

After-tax income down for female single-parents

On average, the after-tax income for the estimated 500,000 single-parent families headed by women declined from \$32,500 in 2001 to \$30,800 in 2002 mainly because of a drop in their market income from \$27,300 to \$25,600.

Even when including the decline in 2002, the annual average rate of increase of market income for female lone-parent families was 5.5% between 1996 and 2002. This was one of the largest increases among the different family types. As a result, the 2002 after-tax

income of female single-parents was still much higher than in 1996 (\$25,300).

Continuous growth of after-tax income for senior families

Among senior families (those in which the major income recipient was aged 65 and older) after-tax income was estimated at \$43,400, up from \$39,000 in 1996.

After-tax income of senior families grew steadily for the past five years, primarily as a result of the increase of their market income. Between 1996 and 2002, after-tax income for senior families has increased 11%, compared with 18% for all younger families.

In 2002, senior families received on average an estimated \$20,200 in government transfers, accounting for 41% of their total income before taxes.

Low-income rate among children down for sixth straight year

Although the change is not significant, based on after-tax income, the low-income rate among children under the age of 18 declined for the sixth consecutive year in 2002.

An estimated 702,000 young people, or 10.2% of the total, were living in low-income families. This level was down from 713,000 children in 2001 (10.4%).

The proportion of children living in low-income families has been declining since 1996, when it peaked at 16.7%. This decline follows overall improvements in the Canadian economy during the late 1990s.

Slight rise in low-income rate of families

After five consecutive years of declines, the proportion of families living in low income rose slightly to 7.0% in 2002 from 6.6% the year before. The 6.6% level in 2001 was the lowest rate for families since 1980.

An estimated 605,000 families were in low income in 2002, compared with 564,000 in 2001 and 870,000 in 1996.

The long-term downward trend in the low-income rate reflected a healthy labour market in the latter part of the 1990s, as well as recent increases in transfers and cuts in income taxes.

Of the estimated 500,000 lone-parent families headed by women, 34.8% were in low income in 2002, up from 30.1% in 2001. This was the first increase in the low-income rate for these families in five years. Their low-income rate peaked at 49.0% in 1996.

For the population as a whole in the 10 provinces, about 2.9 million people, or 9.5%, were living in low income in 2002.

Income inequality among families remained stable

One measure of income inequality is the ratio of average market income received by the 20% of families with the highest income compared with the 20% of families with the lowest income.

In 2002, this ratio was about 11.7 to 1.0. That is, the 20% of families with the highest income received about \$11.70 in market income for every \$1.00 received by the 20% of families with the lowest income.

However, taxes and transfers moderate the differences between the quintiles of the income distribution.

In 2002, after taxes and transfers, the one-fifth of families with the highest income received \$5.20 in market income for every \$1.00 received by the one-fifth with the lowest. Historically, this ratio remained stable at about 4.8 to 1.0 for several years up to 1995. It then rose in 1996 and 1997 to 5.3 and, since then has remained at 5.2 to 5.3.

Provinces: After-tax income remained stable in most cases

Families of two people or more recorded at least marginal increases in after-tax income in most provinces in 2002, but there was the occasional exception.

In Alberta, after-tax income declined from \$65,600 in 2001 to \$64,300 in 2002. On the other hand, the proportion of these families living in low income in Alberta fell from 5.9% to 4.8%.

The biggest gain was in Nova Scotia where after-tax income for families of two or more people rose from \$49,800 to \$51,500.

In 2002, families of two or more people in Newfoundland and Labrador received, on average, government transfers estimated at \$11,300, which is the highest in Canada and well above the national average of \$7,300.

Available on CANSIM: tables 202-0101 to 202-0107, 202-0201 to 202-0203, 202-0301, 202-0401 to 202-0411, 202-0501, 202-0601 to 202-0605, 202-0701 to 202-0706 and 202-0801 to 202-0807.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3502 and 3889.

The publications *Analysis of Income in Canada, 2002* (75-203-XIE, free), *Income in*

Canada 2002 (75-202-XIE, \$36) and *Income Trends in Canada, 1980 to 2002* (13F0022XIE, \$209) are now available. See *How to order products*. The CD-ROM *Income Trends in Canada, 1980 to 2002* (13F0022XCB, \$209) will soon be available.

For more information or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality for this release, contact Client Services (1-888-297-7355; 613-951-7355; income@statcan.ca), Income Statistics Division.

Selected 2002 income concepts (in 2002 constant dollars) by main family types

	Averages			
	Market income	Government transfers	Income taxes	After-tax income
	\$ constant 2002			
Economic families, two persons or more	65,900	7,300	12,800	60,500
Elderly families	29,600	20,200	6,400	43,400
Married couples	69,500	3,600	14,200	59,000
Two-parent families with children	78,100	4,900	15,300	67,700
Female single-parent families	25,600	8,200	3,000	30,800
Unattached individuals	25,600	5,300	5,000	25,900

Average income for economic families and unattached individuals

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001	2002
	\$ constant 2002					
Economic families, two persons or more						
Market income	55,800	56,200	60,700	64,600	66,000	65,900
Government transfers	7,900	7,900	7,600	7,000	7,400	7,300
Income tax	12,500	12,600	13,700	14,100	13,100	12,800
After-tax income	51,200	51,500	54,600	57,600	60,300	60,500
Unattached individuals						
Market income	21,300	21,300	22,300	24,400	25,200	25,600
Government transfers	6,100	5,500	5,500	5,100	5,200	5,300
Income tax	4,900	4,800	5,000	5,300	5,000	5,000
After-tax income	22,400	22,100	22,800	24,100	25,300	25,900

Low-income rates (1992 base after-tax income LICO) by main family types

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001	2002
	%					
Economic families, two persons or more	9.4	10.7	8.8	7.9	6.6	7.0
Elderly families	2.5	3.0	3.6	2.9	2.2	2.7
Married couples	6.3	7.1	5.6	5.8	5.0	5.5
Two-parent families with children	8.3	9.7	7.4	7.4	5.9	5.4
Female single-parent families	44.7	49.0	39.1	33.2	30.1	34.8
Unattached individuals	30.7	33.7	30.5	28.5	26.1	24.8

Percentage of persons in low income (1992 base after-tax income LICO)

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001	2002
	%					
Persons under 18 years old	14.7	16.7	13.6	12.4	10.4	10.2
In two-parent families	9.3	11.2	8.5	8.4	6.9	6.0
In female single-parent families	48.7	52.3	42.5	37.1	34.1	38.7
Persons 18 to 64 years old	12.2	13.9	11.9	11.0	9.5	9.7
Persons 65 years and older	7.9	9.1	8.3	7.2	6.3	6.9

Selected 2002 income concepts for economic families of two persons or more by province

	Averages				
	Market income	Government transfers	Income taxes	After-tax income	Low-income rate
	\$ constant 2002				%
Canada	65,900	7,300	12,800	60,500	7.0
Newfoundland and Labrador	44,100	11,300	8,700	46,800	7.4
Prince Edward Island	47,800	9,800	8,200	49,400	4.0
Nova Scotia	54,400	8,200	11,100	51,500	6.7
New Brunswick	50,600	8,900	9,600	49,900	6.4
Quebec	58,200	7,800	12,500	53,400	7.8
Ontario	74,400	7,100	14,300	67,100	6.4
Manitoba	58,500	6,800	9,900	55,400	6.8
Saskatchewan	56,400	7,400	10,800	53,000	5.5
Alberta	71,000	6,100	12,800	64,300	4.8
British Columbia	65,300	7,200	11,700	60,800	9.7



OTHER RELEASES

Cereals and Oilseeds Review

March 2004

In April, Chicago soybean futures' prices were quite volatile and fell sharply in the few days on either side of the United States Department of Agriculture's mid-month release. Despite tight soybean fundamentals, volatility was mostly driven by uncertainty about Chinese demand, the extent of crop losses in South America and the possibility of oil imports.

Chicago corn futures' prices also fell over the month despite low-projected US and world coarse grain carry-out stocks. Prices were pressured down by good seeding progress and germination conditions in the Midwest, spill-over losses from soybeans, and a stronger US dollar.

In Winnipeg, old-crop canola futures' prices fell almost \$40 a tonne in the first eight trading days as a result of uncertainty regarding the price outlook and downward pressure and volatility from Chicago soybeans. Prices were supported by the strong crush pace, strengthening export demand and a weaker dollar. New crop canola prices were relatively stable, reflecting the tight world soybean situation and dryness in the western Prairies.

The data from the March 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 April situation report, which presents an overview of current market conditions, both domestic and international, is also included in the March 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. ■

Construction Union Wage Rate Index

April 2004

The Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) for Canada remained unchanged in April compared with the March level of 128.2 (1992=100). The composite index increased 2.0% compared with the April 2003 index.

Union wage rates are published for 16 trades in 20 metropolitan areas for both the basic rates and rates including selected supplementary payments. Indexes on a 1992=100 time base 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: tables 327-0003 and 327-0004.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2307.

The second quarter 2004 issue of *Capital Expenditure Price Statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$26/\$85) will be available in September 2004.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality for this release, contact Client Services (613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-1539, infounit@statcan.ca) or Louise Chaîné (613-951-3393), Prices Division. ■

Crushing statistics

April 2004

According to the monthly survey of crushing plants, Canadian oilseed processors crushed 307 567 metric tonnes of canola in April. Oil production last month totalled 127 105 tonnes while meal production amounted to 190 434 tonnes.

The crush volume was a record high for the month of April, eclipsing the previous record set in April 1998 by 3.5%. Three-quarters into the current 2003/04 crop year, cumulative canola crush continued at a record pace, reaching 2.56 million tonnes. This compares with the 2.48 million tonnes of canola crushed at the same point in the 1997/98 crop year, when a record 3.24 million tonnes of canola were crushed over the full crop year.

Available on CANSIM: table 001-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3404.

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

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

April 2004

Data on grain deliveries for April 2004 are now available.

Available on CANSIM: table 001-0001.

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

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

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

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Income Trends in Canada, 2002

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The Consumer Price Index, April 2004, Vol. 83, no. 4

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The Consumer Price Index, April 2004, Vol. 83, no. 4

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
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