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# The Daily

## Statistics Canada

**Tuesday, May 31, 2005**
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

## Releases



*(continued on page 2)*

### Canadian Economic Accounts Quarterly Review

First quarter 2005

The *Canadian Economic Accounts Quarterly Review* has the most up-to-date data and analysis on the economy and Canada's transactions with the rest of the world.

The section on gross domestic product (GDP) by income and expenditure provides information on topics such as consumer spending and business investment, and of course, the overall state of the economy. To find out which industries are booming, see the section on GDP by industry.

In the balance of international payments section, you can find investment flows between residents of Canada and non-residents, and exports and imports.

A section on the financial flow accounts shows the flow of funds among sectors of the economy in the financing of economic activity.

The section on labour productivity includes hours worked by Canadians, their wages and productivity for different industries. This section will be included June 10th.

The international investment position gives you Canada's indebtedness to the rest of the world and how much Canadians have invested in other countries. This section will be included June 24th.

Find out more about the wealth of Canadian households, businesses and governments with detail on assets and liabilities in the national balance sheet accounts section. This section will be included June 24th.

The first quarter 2005 issue of *Canadian Economic Accounts Quarterly Review*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (13-010-XIE, free), is now available online. From *Our products and services* page, under *Browse our Internet publications*, choose *Free*, them *National accounts*.

For more information, contact the information officer (613-951-3640, *iead-info-dcrd@statcan.ca*), Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

# Releases

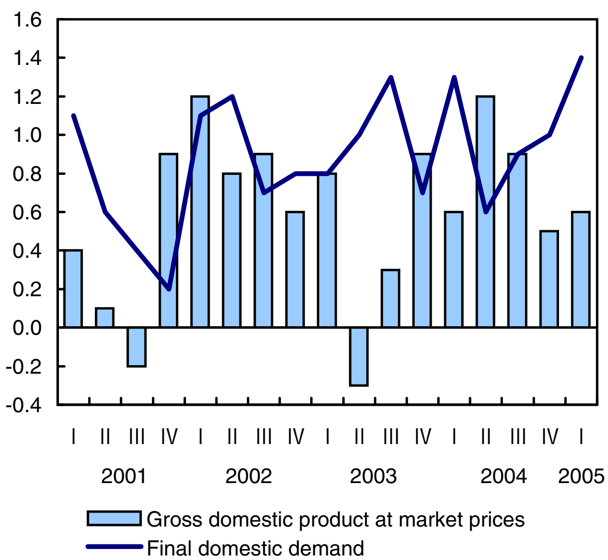
## Canadian economic accounts

First quarter 2005 and March 2005

Real gross domestic product (GDP) grew 0.6% in the first quarter of 2005, a slight acceleration from the previous quarter, boosted by consumer spending and strong growth in business investment in plant and equipment. Exports rebounded after two quarters of decline.

**Final domestic demand pushes GDP up**

Quarterly % change, chained (1997) dollars




In March, economic output declined 0.1% after increasing 0.2% in both January and February.

Overall, the Canadian economy grew at an annualized rate of 2.3% in the first three months of the year, compared with an annualized rate of 3.5% for the US economy.

Consumer spending surged ahead 1.5%, led by strong increases in purchases of durable and semi-durable goods, such as home furnishings, and clothing and footwear. The surge in consumer expenditures was felt throughout the economy and, combined with growth in government spending and business investment, helped push final domestic demand up 1.4%.

Output in the retail and wholesale trade sectors jumped by more than 2.0%, and retailers reported widespread growth in profits. Overall, corporate profits increased 3.7% in the first quarter, a marked improvement over the last half of 2004 but still well off the 8% pace set in the first and second quarters of 2004.

> ***Note to readers***
>
> *With the first quarter 2005 release of the income and expenditure accounts, the data are revised back to the first quarter of 2001. For more information, consult* The 2001 to 2004 revisions of the Income and Expenditure Accounts *page on our Web site.*
>
> *With the September 2005 release (July reference month), the monthly GDP by industry program will convert to the 2002 North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) from NAICS 1997. We are also planning to change the industry detail published. The goal is to reduce the number of industries whose contribution to total economic activity is less relevant, and to increase the detail provided for those that have become more important, such as some of the service industries. With these changes, the monthly GDP program will better reflect the current structure of the Canadian economy.*
>
> *More detailed information on these planned changes will be made available with the next release of monthly GDP. In the meantime, for questions or comments, contact Bernard Lefrançois (613-951-3622; imad@statcan.ca).*

### Real gross domestic product, chained (1997) dollars[1]

| | Change | Annualized change | Year-over-year change |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | % | |
| First quarter 2004 | 0.6 | 2.6 | 1.6 |
| Second quarter 2004 | 1.2 | 5.0 | 3.1 |
| Third quarter 2004 | 0.9 | 3.5 | 3.7 |
| Fourth quarter 2004 | 0.5 | 2.1 | 3.3 |
| First quarter 2005 | 0.6 | 2.3 | 3.3 |

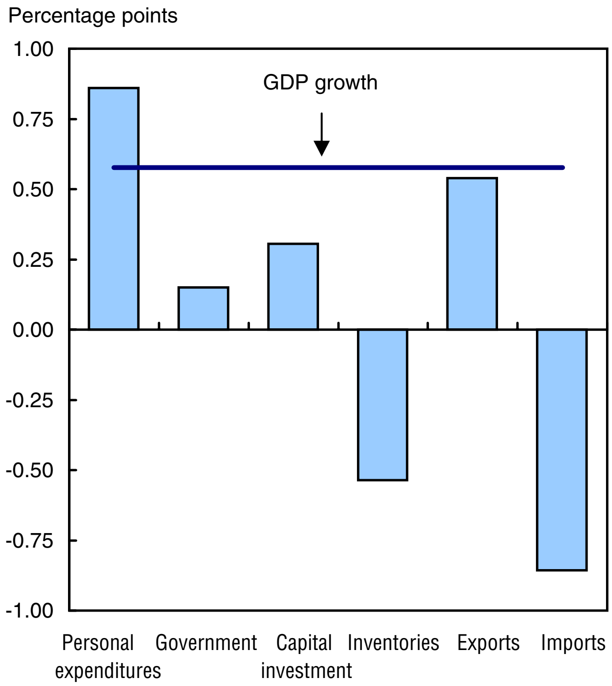
1. *The change is the growth rate from one period to the next. The annualized change is the growth rate compounded annually. The year-over-year change is the growth rate of a given quarter compared with the same quarter in a previous year.*

For the second quarter in a row, growth in the services industries (+0.9%) out-performed the goods industries, where output edged down 0.1%.

The jump in final domestic demand and increase in exports served to slow down the large inventory accumulation that occurred in the last half of 2004. While inventories continued to accumulate in the first quarter, trade inventories accumulated at a much slower pace, especially wholesale inventories, while the build-up of manufacturing inventories was similar to the previous quarter.

The strong growth in personal spending was coupled with an increase in consumer borrowing and moderate growth in personal income, such that the household sector's saving rate fell below zero. Despite the marked trend since 2000 by the household sector to increasingly borrow to finance spending on housing and big-ticket items, the ratio of interest payments to disposable income remains at a low of 7.6%, relative to the peak of 9.4% in 1995. The national saving rate sat at 11%, as the $5 billion run down in household saving was more than offset by the 9.9% increase in corporate saving, surpassing the $100 billion dollar mark.

**Personal expenditures the main contributor to growth in GDP**




Industrial production (the output of factories, mines and utilities) decreased 0.2% as the mining, oil and gas sector receded. Manufacturing output increased a slight 0.3%, due in large part to machinery and electronic equipment manufacturers who were busy exporting. Overall exports increased 1.5% after two quarters of decline, bolstered by exports of machinery and equipment (+4.1%) and energy products (+5.6%).

Business investment in residential construction declined 0.4%, as the value of new housing construction declined 1.6%, following six consecutive quarterly increases. The majority of this decline resulted from a substantial decline in the construction of single dwellings in the first quarter. In contrast, investment in non-residential construction posted its largest increase in six quarters (+1.8%).

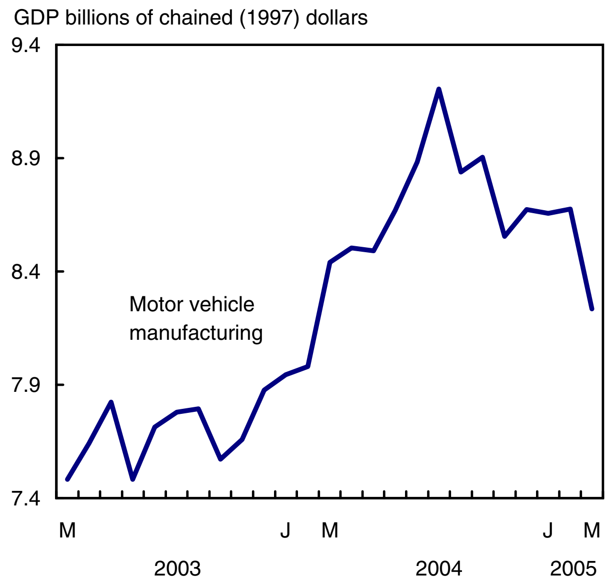
Economy-wide prices, as measured by the chain price index for GDP, rose 0.4% again this quarter.

## GDP by industry: Highlights for March 2005

Economic activity declined 0.1% in March, in large part restrained by a reduction in output of motor vehicles, as manufacturers tailored their production to changing demand.

Manufacturing output decreased 0.9%, dragged down by the automotive sector with declines in both motor vehicles (-5.1%) and parts (-3.8%). Weakness in the manufacturing sector was widespread, as 15 of the 21 major groups decreased, accounting for 71% of the sector's value added.

**Motor vehicle manufacturers respond to changing demand**




Activity in the mining and oil and gas extraction sector fell 0.9% in March, pulled down by reductions in oil and gas extraction (-0.6%), and in support activities (-7.3%). Oil producers in the tar sands were busy re-establishing their output levels following a series of problems that plagued the industry since January.

Construction activity decreased 0.3% in March. Residential construction reported its third and steepest consecutive monthly decline (-1.4%), while non-residential building construction edged up 0.1%. Engineering, repairs and other construction activity also increased 0.5%.

Wholesaling activity rose 0.8% in March. The largest gains were reported by wholesalers of machinery and electronic equipment, and personal and household products. Retailing activity decreased 0.2%, following strong growth in January and February. Food and beverage stores reported the largest gains, and automotive stores recorded the largest decreases.

**Monthly gross domestic product by industry at basic prices in chained (1997) dollars**

| | Oct. 2004[r] | Nov. 2004[r] | Dec. 2004[r] | Jan. 2005[r] | Feb. 2005[r] | Mar. 2005[p] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Seasonally adjusted | | | | | |
| | Month-to-month % change | | | | | |
| All industries | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | -0.1 |
| Goods industries | -0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | -0.4 | -0.6 |
| Services industries | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.1 |
| Industrial production | -0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | -0.4 | -0.6 |
| Manufacturing | -0.4 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.4 | -0.1 | -0.9 |
| Construction | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.1 | -0.1 | -0.3 |
| Wholesale trade | 0.3 | 1.6 | 1.0 | -0.3 | 1.5 | 0.8 |

[r] *Revised figures.*
[p] *Preliminary figures.*

## Detailed analysis and tables

More detailed analysis on today's releases from the national accounts, including additional charts and tables, can be found in the first quarter 2005 issue of *Canadian Economic Accounts Quarterly Review*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (13-010-XIE, free). From the *Our products and services* page, under *Browse our Internet publications*, choose *Free*, then *National accounts*.

## Products, services and contact information

**Gross domestic product by industry**

**Available on CANSIM: tables 379-0017 to 379-0022.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 1301 and 1302.**

The March 2005 issue of *Gross Domestic Product by Industry*, Vol. 19, no. 3 (15-001-XIE, $12/$118) is now available. See *How to order products*. A print-on-demand version is available at a different price.

Data on GDP by industry for April will be released on June 30.

For general information or to order data, contact Yolande Chantigny (1-800-887-IMAD; *imad@statcan.ca*). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Bernard Lefrançois (613-951-3622; *imad@statcan.ca*), Industry Measures and Analysis Division.

**National economic and financial accounts**

**Available on CANSIM: tables 026-0009, 378-0001, 378-0002, 380-0001 to 380-0017, 380-0019 to 380-0035, 380-0056, 380-0059 and 382-0006.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 1804, 1901 and 2602.**

The first quarter 2005 issue of *National Income and Expenditure Accounts, Quarterly Estimates* (13-001-XIB, $36/$117) will soon be available. A print-on-demand version is available at a different price.

Detailed printed tables of unadjusted and seasonally adjusted quarterly data on income and expenditure accounts (13-001-PPB, $54/$193), financial flow accounts (13-014-PPB, $54/$193) and estimates of labour income (13F0016XPB, $22/$70), including supplementary analytical tables and charts are now available.

At 8:30 am on release day, the complete seasonally adjusted quarterly income and expenditure accounts, financial flow accounts, and monthly estimates of labour income data sets can be obtained on computer diskette. The diskettes (13-001-DDB, $134/$535; 13-014-DDB, $321/$1,284; and 13F0016DDB, $134/$535) can also be purchased at a lower cost seven business days after the official release date (13-001-XDB, $27/$107; 13-014-XDB, $65/$257; and 13F0016XDB, $27/$107). To purchase any of these products, contact Client Services (613-951-3810; *iead-info-dcrd@statcan.ca*), Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the information officer (613-951-3640), Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

□

## Canadian economic accounts key indicators[1]

| | Fourth quarter 2003[r] | First quarter 2004[r] | Second quarter 2004[r] | Third quarter 2004[r] | Fourth quarter 2004[r] | First quarter 2005[p] | 2003[r] | 2004[r] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | seasonally adjusted at annual rates | | | | | | | |
| | $ millions at current prices | | | | | | | |
| **GDP by income and by expenditure** | | | | | | | | |
| Wages, salaries and supplementary labour income | 626,652 | 633,052 | 641,204 | 647,288 | 654,312 | 660,360 | 617,753 | 643,964 |
| | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 4.2 | 4.2 |
| Corporation profits before taxes | 150,532 | 163,128 | 177,176 | 178,804 | 181,484 | 188,188 | 147,592 | 175,148 |
| | 3.5 | 8.4 | 8.6 | 0.9 | 1.5 | 3.7 | 8.7 | 18.7 |
| Interest and miscellaneous investment income | 50,180 | 51,828 | 55,380 | 57,112 | 57,312 | 58,124 | 50,223 | 55,408 |
| | -3.2 | 3.3 | 6.9 | 3.1 | 0.4 | 1.4 | 6.5 | 10.3 |
| Net income of unincorporated business | 80,024 | 81,496 | 83,712 | 85,068 | 85,296 | 85,644 | 78,438 | 83,893 |
| | 2.5 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 1.6 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 4.4 | 7.0 |
| Taxes less subsidies | 144,784 | 144,672 | 148,568 | 150,276 | 151,212 | 151,064 | 141,424 | 148,682 |
| | 1.2 | -0.1 | 2.7 | 1.1 | 0.6 | -0.1 | 2.1 | 5.1 |
| Personal disposable income | 725,864 | 733,644 | 747,232 | 751,336 | 757,772 | 759,996 | 719,553 | 747,496 |
| | 0.7 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.3 | 3.7 | 3.9 |
| Personal saving rate[2] | 2.3 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.4 | 1.0 | -0.6 | 2.4 | 1.4 |
| | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| | millions of chained (1997) dollars | | | | | | | |
| Personal expenditure on consumer goods and services | 624,446 | 633,820 | 637,204 | 642,702 | 648,794 | 658,810 | 619,401 | 640,630 |
| | 0.1 | 1.5 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.5 | 3.1 | 3.4 |
| Government current expenditure on goods and services | 206,711 | 208,019 | 209,664 | 210,713 | 211,801 | 213,453 | 204,593 | 210,049 |
| | 1.2 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 2.9 | 2.7 |
| Gross fixed capital formation | 233,051 | 236,204 | 237,551 | 241,206 | 245,637 | 249,755 | 225,199 | 240,150 |
| | 2.0 | 1.4 | 0.6 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 5.9 | 6.6 |
| Investment in inventories | 9,831 | 3,944 | 2,367 | 17,458 | 22,370 | 15,815 | 11,065 | 11,535 |
| | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Exports of goods and services | 448,909 | 449,268 | 469,204 | 465,940 | 462,289 | 469,010 | 439,784 | 461,675 |
| | 3.3 | 0.1 | 4.4 | -0.7 | -0.8 | 1.5 | -2.1 | 5.0 |
| Imports of goods and services | 420,981 | 422,115 | 433,860 | 446,727 | 455,772 | 467,394 | 406,664 | 439,619 |
| | 4.9 | 0.3 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 4.1 | 8.1 |
| Gross domestic product at market prices | 1,100,645 | 1,107,771 | 1,121,455 | 1,131,229 | 1,137,256 | 1,143,801 | 1,092,388 | 1,124,428 |
| | 0.9 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 2.0 | 2.9 |
| **GDP by industry at basic prices** | | | | | | | | |
| Goods producing industries | 320,947 | 323,019 | 327,179 | 331,243 | 331,944 | 331,501 | 317,208 | 328,346 |
| | 1.4 | 0.6 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 0.2 | -0.1 | 1.7 | 3.5 |
| Services producing industries | 704,532 | 708,786 | 715,853 | 721,276 | 725,621 | 731,901 | 697,886 | 717,884 |
| | 0.9 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 2.5 | 2.9 |
| Industrial production | 240,806 | 241,773 | 245,503 | 248,581 | 248,610 | 248,048 | 238,435 | 246,117 |
| | 1.4 | 0.4 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 0.0 | -0.2 | 0.7 | 3.2 |
| Non-durable manufacturing | 72,901 | 73,228 | 74,026 | 74,865 | 74,526 | 74,334 | 72,913 | 74,161 |
| | 1.3 | 0.4 | 1.1 | 1.1 | -0.5 | -0.3 | -0.0 | 1.7 |
| Durable manufacturing | 103,385 | 103,783 | 106,724 | 109,086 | 109,154 | 109,936 | 101,679 | 107,187 |
| | 2.6 | 0.4 | 2.8 | 2.2 | 0.1 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 5.4 |
| Information and communication technologies sector, total | 58,853 | 59,489 | 60,100 | 62,059 | 62,296 | 63,254 | 57,076 | 60,986 |
| | 3.6 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 3.3 | 0.4 | 1.5 | 3.8 | 6.9 |
| Manufacturing | 176,482 | 177,209 | 180,911 | 184,092 | 183,808 | 184,375 | 174,820 | 181,505 |
| | 2.1 | 0.4 | 2.1 | 1.8 | -0.2 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 3.8 |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 23,011 | 23,537 | 23,763 | 24,256 | 24,291 | 24,094 | 22,842 | 23,962 |
| | 0.6 | 2.3 | 1.0 | 2.1 | 0.1 | -0.8 | 7.6 | 4.9 |
| Construction | 57,520 | 58,167 | 58,314 | 58,810 | 59,499 | 59,835 | 56,273 | 58,698 |
| | 1.9 | 1.1 | 0.3 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 0.6 | 4.4 | 4.3 |
| Wholesale trade | 64,099 | 63,722 | 65,490 | 66,646 | 67,752 | 69,182 | 61,941 | 65,902 |
| | 5.0 | -0.6 | 2.8 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 5.6 | 6.4 |
| Retail trade | 57,419 | 58,581 | 58,896 | 59,796 | 60,325 | 61,560 | 57,126 | 59,399 |
| | -0.9 | 2.0 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 0.9 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 4.0 |

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*
... *Figures not applicable.*
1. *The first line is the series itself expressed in millions of dollars, seasonally adjusted at annual rates. The second line is the quarter to quarter percentage change at quarterly rates.*
2. *Actual rate.*

■

## Study: Demographic trends in Canada's communities

1981 to 2001

One-third of all 2,607 individual communities in Canada had a population that was in decline in the two decades between 1981 and 2001, according to a new study.

However, these communities contained only 9% of Canada's population in 2001. In addition, only 5% of Canada's population lived in a declining community that was also located within a region that had a decreasing population.

This study, based on census data, showed that the increase or decrease of a community's population often reflected the characteristics of the larger region within which the community was located.

Communities and regions that grew were those that experienced population growth in at least three of the four inter-censal periods between 1981 and 2001. Declining communities and regions were those that experienced a population decline in at least three of the four.

Two-thirds of declining communities were located within declining regions, while only 17% were located within growing regions. In contrast, of the one-third of all communities that grew between 1981 and 2001, 77% were located within growing regions and only 12% within declining regions.

In comparison, 76% of Canada's population lived in a growing community located within a region that was also growing.

The study found that a high share of employment in agriculture was associated with declining communities. The agriculture sector is shedding jobs due to the ongoing replacement of workers with machinery.

Growing communities within growing regions had a low share of employment in agriculture. Moreover, declining communities within growing regions (that is, those communities that are particularly disadvantaged in that they buck the positive trend of their host region) had a very high intensity of employment in agriculture.

Growing communities within growing regions were the only communities that had a lower than average share of employment in manufacturing related to natural resources. Conversely, communities whose populations were declining even though they were within growing regions had a higher than average share of this employment.

This suggests that rural communities are either not developing local manufacturing activity based on the natural resources found in their local area. Or, it could mean that manufacturing is being developed, but it is not providing enough jobs to stem the population loss from rural communities.

Larger communities tend to grow faster than smaller communities. Across Canada, a majority of communities with 3,000 or more residents had a population growth of 5% or more between 1981 and 2001. On the other hand, a majority of communities with fewer than 1,000 residents experienced a population decline of 5% or more over the same period.

The study also found that community population growth or decline was influenced by the rural–urban nature of the surrounding region. In urban regions, 97% of communities were located within a growing region.

In rural regions situated close to urban areas, 63% of communities were located within a growing region. In contrast, in rural northern regions, 64% of communities were located in a declining region.

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3901.**

The *Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin*, Vol. 6, no. 3, entitled *Community Demographic Trends within their Regional Context* (21-006-XIE, free) is now available online. From the *Our products and services* page under *Browse our Internet publications*, choose *Free* then *Agriculture*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Ray Bollman (613-951-3747; *ray.bollman@statcan.ca*), Agriculture Division. ■

## Farm Product Price Index

March 2005

Prices farmers received for their commodities fell 6.5% in March from the same month a year earlier in the wake of a sharp decline in crop prices, which offset a gain in prices for livestock.

Overall, producers received prices for crops that were 21.3% below levels in March 2004, continuing a downward trend in year-over-year price changes that began in September 2003, according to the Farm Product Price Index. Farmers received lower prices for grains, oilseeds and specialty crops.

On the other hand, prices for livestock and animal products were 4.3% higher in March than they were a year earlier. This was the 10th consecutive year-over-year increase in the overall livestock and animal products index.

Prices rose in March for cattle and calves, poultry and dairy. Gains ranged from 3.8% for cattle and calves to 9.9% for dairy over year earlier levels.

On a monthly basis, prices farmers received for their commodities dropped 1.4% in March over February, as the decline in prices for livestock and animal products more than offset the increase in crop prices.

The FPPI (1997=100) stood at 96.0 in March, down from a revised February index of 97.4. This marks the first decline this year as the index was climbing from the recent low of 93.4 in November 2004.

Prices for livestock and animal products were down 3.1% in March from the revised February index, as prices for all livestock and animal products fell except for eggs. Cattle and calf prices fell after making four consecutive monthly gains. On March 2, just days before the anticipated re-opening of the US border to live Canadian cattle and an expanded list of beef products, a preliminary injunction was granted by a Montana District Court Judge to temporarily delay the re-opening of the border.

Hog prices were down slightly in March, the first monthly decline this year. Hog prices made significant gains through the first half of 2004, then started to drop in the last half of the year, pressured by large North American supplies and a strong Canadian dollar.

Prices farmers received for crops rose in March as all of the crop commodities recorded increases except for vegetables.

The grains index was up 0.8% in March, marking the second increase in the last 10 months. Prices for oilseeds also rose in March. This was the first increase in the index since May 2004. Grain and oilseed prices have been plagued by bumper crops in other exporting countries. As the new crop year approaches however, crop prices start to react to weather conditions and their impact on production.

### Farm Product Price Index

(1997=100)

| | Mar. 2004[r] | Feb. 2005[r] | Mar. 2005[p] | Mar. 2004 to Mar. 2005 | Feb. to Mar. 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | % change | |
| **Farm Product Price Index** | **102.7** | **97.4** | **96.0** | **-6.5** | **-1.4** |
| **Crops** | **105.7** | **81.3** | **83.2** | **-21.3** | **2.3** |
| Grains | 104.6 | 64.9 | 65.4 | -37.5 | 0.8 |
| Oilseeds | 105.0 | 72.8 | 76.5 | -27.1 | 5.1 |
| Specialty crops | 106.3 | 88.8 | 97.9 | -7.9 | 10.2 |
| Fruit | 102.7 | 105.3 | 108.3 | 5.5 | 2.8 |
| Vegetables | 114.3 | 118.4 | 117.4 | 2.7 | -0.8 |
| Potatoes | 109.9 | 127.9 | 128.1 | 16.6 | 0.2 |
| **Livestock and animal products** | **100.4** | **108.0** | **104.7** | **4.3** | **-3.1** |
| Cattle and calves | 97.9 | 106.0 | 101.6 | 3.8 | -4.2 |
| Hogs | 87.0 | 89.5 | 86.8 | -0.2 | -3.0 |
| Poultry | 96.8 | 102.2 | 100.7 | 4.0 | -1.5 |
| Eggs | 103.2 | 95.2 | 95.3 | -7.7 | 0.1 |
| Dairy | 116.3 | 133.1 | 127.8 | 9.9 | -4.0 |

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

**Available on CANSIM: tables 002-0021 and 002-0022.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5040.**

The March 2005 issue of *Farm Product Price Index*, Vol. 5, no. 3 (21-007-XIE, free) is now available online. From the *Our products and services* page, under *Browse our Internet publications*, choose *Free*, then *Agriculture*.

For general information or to order data, call (1-800-465-1991). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Gail-Ann Breese (204-983-3445; fax: 204-983-7543; *gail-ann.breese@statcan.ca*), Agriculture Division. ■

## Rail in Canada

2003

Operating revenues for the Canadian rail transportation industry continued their upward trend in 2003 despite a series of shocks to the economy that included the SARS crisis in Toronto, mad cow disease in Alberta and the major electricity blackout in Ontario.

Operating revenues rose 1.2% from 2002 to $8.3 billion. Freight transportation revenues, which accounted for 88.5% of total revenues, went up 1.4% to $7.3 billion. Passenger operations accounted for an additional 3.1% of total revenues.

The rail industry's operating expenses rose 1.5% to $6.7 billion, primarily the result of higher costs for locomotives and railway car maintenance in the equipment category.

In 2003, total assets were $17.6 billion, showing the capital intensive nature of the industry.

On the basis of origin and destination traffic, railways carried 249.8 million tonnes of commodities, up 2.3% from 2002. Ten commodities accounted for 57.3% of all commodities transported in Canada in 2003.

Coal remained the main commodity transported, even though tonnage fell 9.5% to about 28.6 million tonnes. According to CN Rail's annual report for 2003, coal declined partly as a result of reduced coal production in Western Canada and the closure of a metallurgical coal mine.

Among other commodities, wheat shipments fell 2.4%, while wood pulp tonnage was down 2.2%. On the other hand, iron ores and concentrates recorded the biggest increase (+12.7%).

Although total freight tonnage was higher in 2003, the railways travelled slightly shorter distances. The average haul on each railway decreased from 953 km to 943 km. Each train had an average of 74 cars in 2003, highest since 1999.

The declining trend in employment in the industry continued, as the number of jobs fell from 37,000 in 2002 to 36,000. This decrease was mainly due to a reorganization and staff reductions at CN and regional and short line railways. Both CP and VIA actually increased their work force. The average annual salary in 2003 was about $65,000.

For the first time in five years, the number of passengers travelling by rail declined. About 4.0 million passengers travelled by rail in 2003, down 6.9% from the previous year.

At the same time, passenger revenues fell from $287.5 million to $255.8 million. In contrast, between 1999 and 2003, passenger revenues rose 13.5%. The discontinuation of passenger services by some regional railways may explain part of the decline between 2002 and 2003.

VIA Rail accounted for 90.1% of all revenue from rail passenger transportation. The remainder was shared by CN, CP and the regional and short-haul carriers. VIA Rail also received 58.4% of total government payments that went to the rail industry.

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2734.**

The publication *Rail in Canada*, 2003 (52-216-XIE, $39) is now available. See *How to order products*.

To obtain data or more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the Dissemination Unit (1-866-500-8400, *transportationstatistics@statcan.ca*), Transportation Division. ■

# New products

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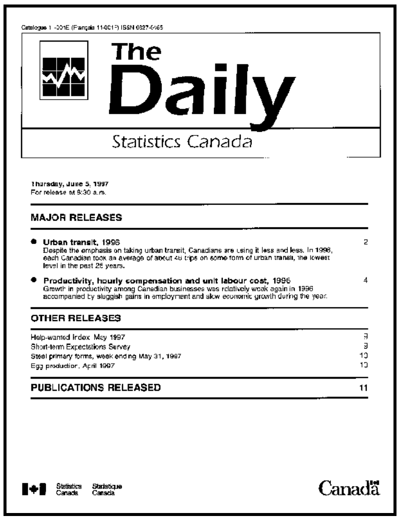
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Thursday, June 5, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.

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| 6 | **Building permits** | April 2005 |
| 8 | **Periodical publishing** | 2003/04 |
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| 9 | **Industrial capacity utilization rates** | First quarter 2005 |
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