



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, November 20, 2006

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

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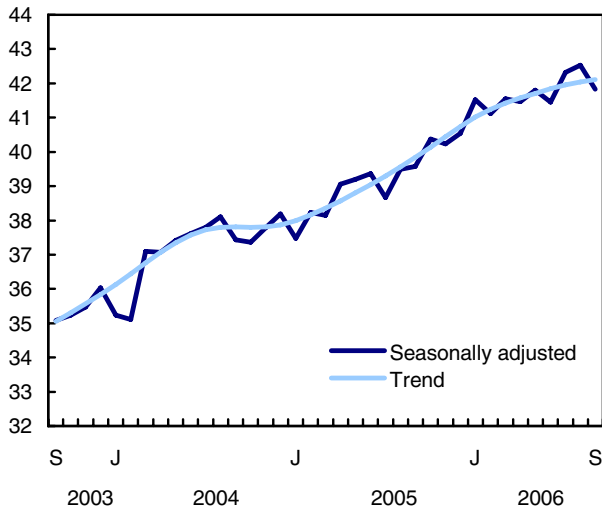
Wholesale trade

September 2006

Wholesalers ended the third quarter on a bit of a down note as the industry recorded its largest monthly drop so far this year. Despite the drop, sales growth in the third quarter accelerated thanks to the gains made in the previous two months.

Wholesale sales fall in September after two months of increases

\$ billions



After rising in the previous two months, sales fell by 1.6% in September to \$41.8 billion. Five of the seven wholesale sectors, representing 85% of sales, declined in September, with wholesalers of automotive products (-3.4%) and machinery and electronic equipment (-3.3%) bearing the brunt of the decrease. The only positive notes came in the building materials (+1.0%) sector, where sales were bolstered by a rebound in lumber and millwork sales, and the farm products sector (+4.6%), which continued its string of recent gains.

The longer term trend for the wholesale industry remains positive. Since the third quarter of 2003, wholesalers have enjoyed a period of strong growth, making it one of the economy's fastest growing sectors during this period.

In constant dollars, sales dropped by 2.2% in September.

Growth picks up in the third quarter

September's downturn masked an otherwise healthy third quarter for wholesalers, as sales increased by 1.6% compared with a modest 0.4% rise in the previous quarter. While nearly all sectors recorded higher sales during the third quarter, the most notable increase came in the "other products" sector (+4.3%), where sales were boosted by an increase in fertilizer exports following the conclusion of a new pricing agreement. The only downturn was in the building materials sector (-1.5%), where slumping sales of lumber were the main culprit.

On the provincial front, wholesalers in Saskatchewan were the main beneficiaries of the rise in fertilizer exports, as the province recorded its strongest quarterly growth in wholesale sales (+10.9%) in five years. Wholesalers in Nova Scotia (+5.9%) and British Columbia (+3.7%) also recorded increases substantially above the national average during the quarter.

Demand for machinery and electronic equipment falls

Sales of machinery and electronic equipment declined 3.3% to \$8.6 billion in September, as all three trade groups in this sector registered declines. Total sector sales had risen in three of the past four months.

Within the sector, wholesalers of computers and electronic equipment registered their fourth decline in the past five months, as September sales fell 4.2% to \$2.6 billion. After posting a strong start to the year, sales in this trade group have been somewhat sluggish of late. Computer sales were notably soft during the month, as the delay in the launch of a major update to a widely used operating system may have led some buyers to hold off on their purchases.

Most of the remaining drop in the sector came from the machinery and equipment trade group, which recorded a significant decline (-3.8%) after four months of lackluster growth. Much of this equipment is destined for the manufacturing sector and, according to the latest release of the Business Conditions Survey, manufacturers remain fairly pessimistic about their near term prospects, due in part to dissatisfaction with current order levels.

Auto sales continue to retreat from July high

Motor vehicles sales continued to retreat from their recent July peak. After dropping 10.1% in August, sales

fell a further 4.4% in September to \$6.3 billion. The recent declines in this trade group are due in part to waning US demand for many of the large vehicles made in Canada, many of which pass through the wholesale sector. Exports of passenger cars fell for the third consecutive quarter between July and September.

Rebound in lumber sales helps to boost building materials sector

The building materials sector was boosted by higher sales of lumber and millwork (+3.4%), which rose for the second consecutive month, and building supplies (+1.8%). Meanwhile, sales of metal products continued their recent slide (-2.9%).

The recent rises in lumber sales follow four months of major declines, as lumber wholesalers struggle to cope with a slumping US housing market and a weaker pricing environment. After falling continuously since January, lumber exports rose 5.7% in September.

For their part, wholesalers of building supplies saw their sales rise by 1.8% in September to \$3.6 billion, following a 2.3% rise in August. This group has experienced a period of very strong growth since the end of 2003, as building supply wholesalers continue to benefit from rising investment in the housing sector, especially in Western Canada.

The downturn in the metals group was the third straight monthly decline. In spite of the recent weakness in this trade group, sales have grown significantly over the past year or so, with the booming oil sector driving much of this demand.

Farm products sector posts a fourth consecutive rise

The farm products sector continued to rebound from its recent May low, as sales receipts rose 4.6% in September to \$466 million. As was the case in previous months, most of these gains were attributable to higher livestock sales. Many of these animals are destined for the export market, which also rose sharply during the month. Nevertheless, with restrictions on older cattle yet to be lifted following the bovine spongiform encephalopathy scare, revenues from the export of live cattle remain well below the same period in 2002, which was the last full year of trade prior to the border closing.

Declines concentrated in British Columbia and Ontario

Wholesalers in British Columbia (-5.4%) and Ontario (-2.2%) were the most affected by September's drop; sales in most of the remaining provinces and territories actually rose during the month.

Lower sales by wholesalers of machinery and equipment as well as of "other" products (mainly wholesalers of agricultural, chemical and recycled products) accounted for most of the decline in British Columbia, which had also recorded a large increase in sales during the previous month. As was the case in August, sales in Ontario were hit by lower motor vehicle sales. Motor vehicles account for about one-quarter of the sales in this province.

The largest increase came in Manitoba (+4.9%), where sales were bolstered by higher demand for agricultural products such as fertilizers and seeds.

Inventories-to-sales ratio hits a three year high

Following three consecutive monthly increases, wholesale inventories remained relatively constant in September, edging up 0.1% to \$53.0 billion. However, with sales showing a significant drop during the month, the inventory-to-shipment ratio jumped from 1.25 to 1.27 in September, which was its highest level since August 2003. Most of the increase in this ratio has come about in the past few months, and has been due in large part to a rapid buildup of machinery and equipment and metals inventories.

Available on CANSIM: tables 081-0007 and 081-0010.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2401.

The September 2006 issue of *Wholesale Trade* (63-008-XIE, free) will soon be available.

Wholesale trade estimates for October will be released on December 20.

For data or general information, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Marc Atkins (613-951-0291; marc.atkins@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

□

Wholesale merchants' inventories and inventory-to-sales ratio

| | September 2005 | June 2006 ^r | July 2006 ^r | August 2006 ^r | September 2006 ^p | August to September 2006 | September 2005 to September 2006 | August 2006 ^r | September 2006 ^p |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Wholesale inventories | | | | | | Inventory-to-sales ratio | | |
| | Seasonally adjusted | | | | | | | | |
| | \$ millions | | | | | % change | | | |
| Inventories | 48,418 | 51,312 | 52,221 | 52,980 | 53,023 | 0.1 | 9.5 | 1.25 | 1.27 |
| Farm products | 193 | 186 | 192 | 198 | 199 | 0.6 | 3.2 | 0.44 | 0.43 |
| Food products | 4,321 | 4,350 | 4,329 | 4,390 | 4,328 | -1.4 | 0.2 | 0.61 | 0.61 |
| Alcohol and tobacco | 284 | 285 | 291 | 287 | 283 | -1.1 | -0.3 | 0.43 | 0.45 |
| Apparel | 1,621 | 1,649 | 1,644 | 1,681 | 1,708 | 1.6 | 5.3 | 2.28 | 2.28 |
| Household and personal products | 3,404 | 3,922 | 3,948 | 3,911 | 3,861 | -1.3 | 13.4 | 1.46 | 1.48 |
| Pharmaceuticals | 3,166 | 3,065 | 3,179 | 3,134 | 3,164 | 0.9 | -0.1 | 1.15 | 1.16 |
| Motor vehicles | 4,395 | 4,733 | 4,737 | 4,960 | 4,849 | -2.2 | 10.3 | 0.75 | 0.76 |
| Motor vehicle parts and accessories | 3,170 | 3,195 | 3,305 | 3,349 | 3,299 | -1.5 | 4.1 | 2.09 | 2.04 |
| Building supplies | 5,042 | 5,501 | 5,574 | 5,617 | 5,588 | -0.5 | 10.8 | 1.58 | 1.54 |
| Metal products | 2,316 | 2,782 | 2,890 | 2,995 | 3,025 | 1.0 | 30.6 | 2.35 | 2.44 |
| Lumber and millwork | 976 | 1,058 | 1,044 | 1,031 | 1,051 | 2.0 | 7.7 | 1.06 | 1.05 |
| Machinery and equipment | 9,159 | 10,707 | 10,857 | 11,063 | 11,267 | 1.9 | 23.0 | 2.66 | 2.82 |
| Computer and other electronic equipment | 1,511 | 1,581 | 1,595 | 1,615 | 1,603 | -0.8 | 6.0 | 0.60 | 0.62 |
| Office and professional equipment | 2,451 | 2,521 | 2,619 | 2,666 | 2,679 | 0.5 | 9.3 | 1.29 | 1.31 |
| Other products | 6,408 | 5,778 | 6,017 | 6,084 | 6,118 | 0.6 | -4.5 | 1.18 | 1.19 |

^r revised

^p preliminary

Wholesale merchants' sales

| | September 2005 | June 2006 ^r | July 2006 ^r | August 2006 ^r | September 2006 ^p | August to September 2006 | September 2005 to September 2006 |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Seasonally adjusted | | | | | | | |
| | \$ millions | | | | % change | | |
| Total sales | 39,582 | 41,456 | 42,319 | 42,524 | 41,823 | -1.6 | 5.7 |
| Farm products | 500 | 407 | 417 | 446 | 466 | 4.6 | -6.8 |
| Food, beverages and tobacco products | 7,422 | 7,532 | 7,586 | 7,818 | 7,680 | -1.8 | 3.5 |
| Food products | 6,805 | 6,898 | 6,956 | 7,146 | 7,052 | -1.3 | 3.6 |
| Alcohol and tobacco | 618 | 634 | 630 | 672 | 628 | -6.5 | 1.7 |
| Personal and household goods | 5,582 | 6,067 | 5,906 | 6,136 | 6,092 | -0.7 | 9.1 |
| Apparel | 831 | 751 | 765 | 739 | 749 | 1.4 | -9.8 |
| Household and personal products | 2,233 | 2,660 | 2,500 | 2,681 | 2,615 | -2.5 | 17.1 |
| Pharmaceuticals | 2,518 | 2,657 | 2,642 | 2,716 | 2,728 | 0.4 | 8.3 |
| Automotive products | 8,079 | 8,139 | 8,959 | 8,243 | 7,966 | -3.4 | -1.4 |
| Motor vehicles | 6,566 | 6,635 | 7,383 | 6,639 | 6,349 | -4.4 | -3.3 |
| Motor vehicle parts and accessories | 1,512 | 1,504 | 1,576 | 1,604 | 1,617 | 0.8 | 6.9 |
| Building materials | 5,551 | 5,892 | 5,714 | 5,800 | 5,860 | 1.0 | 5.6 |
| Building supplies | 3,379 | 3,540 | 3,478 | 3,556 | 3,620 | 1.8 | 7.1 |
| Metal products | 1,135 | 1,321 | 1,281 | 1,274 | 1,237 | -2.9 | 9.0 |
| Lumber and millwork | 1,037 | 1,031 | 955 | 969 | 1,002 | 3.4 | -3.3 |
| Machinery and electronic equipment | 7,856 | 8,672 | 8,883 | 8,926 | 8,632 | -3.3 | 9.9 |
| Machinery and equipment | 3,632 | 4,147 | 4,148 | 4,154 | 3,995 | -3.8 | 10.0 |
| Computer and other electronic equipment | 2,376 | 2,602 | 2,717 | 2,700 | 2,586 | -4.2 | 8.8 |
| Office and professional equipment | 1,849 | 1,923 | 2,018 | 2,071 | 2,051 | -1.0 | 11.0 |
| Other products | 4,591 | 4,747 | 4,854 | 5,155 | 5,126 | -0.6 | 11.6 |
| Total: Excluding automobiles | 31,503 | 33,317 | 33,360 | 34,280 | 33,857 | -1.2 | 7.5 |
| Sales, province and territory | | | | | | | |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 215 | 225 | 224 | 231 | 223 | -3.2 | 3.8 |
| Prince Edward Island | 34 | 34 | 31 | 34 | 35 | 1.7 | 3.3 |
| Nova Scotia | 550 | 528 | 557 | 567 | 576 | 1.6 | 4.8 |
| New Brunswick | 397 | 401 | 405 | 410 | 411 | 0.1 | 3.5 |
| Quebec | 7,653 | 7,872 | 7,832 | 7,913 | 7,827 | -1.1 | 2.3 |
| Ontario | 19,712 | 21,022 | 21,785 | 21,420 | 20,951 | -2.2 | 6.3 |
| Manitoba | 1,072 | 979 | 970 | 1,001 | 1,050 | 4.9 | -2.0 |
| Saskatchewan | 1,159 | 1,037 | 1,110 | 1,214 | 1,232 | 1.5 | 6.3 |
| Alberta | 4,684 | 5,172 | 5,172 | 5,205 | 5,230 | 0.5 | 11.7 |
| British Columbia | 4,081 | 4,156 | 4,203 | 4,492 | 4,250 | -5.4 | 4.2 |
| Yukon | 7 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 11 | -0.7 | 51.4 |
| Northwest Territories | 16 | 18 | 17 | 22 | 24 | 11.3 | 50.4 |
| Nunavut | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3.3 | 15.7 |

^r revised

^p preliminary

Travel between Canada and other countries September 2006

Canadians set a record high for travel to overseas countries in September, continuing the trend from earlier this year. During the same month, however, travel to Canada from abroad fell in almost every category.

After two months of declines, travel to overseas countries rebounded as Canadian residents took an estimated 576,000 trips in September. This was the seventh record high of the year. (Unless otherwise specified, monthly data are seasonally adjusted.)

Meanwhile, the number of travellers from overseas countries to Canada declined 0.8% in September compared to August. Travel was down in 6 of Canada's top 12 overseas markets.

The number of visitors from Japan fell 9.6%, the largest decrease. On the other hand, a record-high 14,000 visitors arrived from China, up 13.7%, the biggest increase.

Travel from the United States also fell in September, as fewer than 2.4 million Americans took trips to Canada, down 0.6%. Overnight travel from the United States declined 0.7% as the number of car trips fell 1.4%. At the same time, the number of overnight plane trips rose 0.7%.

Same-day car travel by American residents to Canada continued its downward slide as only 1.1 million people took trips in September, down 0.9% from August. This was the seventh monthly decrease this year and another record low.

In contrast, Canadian residents took more same-day car trips to the United States in September.

Over 1.9 million same-day car trips were taken during the month, a 0.5% gain.

Overnight travel to the United States by Canadian residents remained unchanged in September. Canadians took fewer than 800,000 overnight car trips to the United States in September, down 1.7%. However, this was offset by a 2.5% gain in overnight plane travel and a 1.8% increase in overnight travel by other means. The 477,000 overnight trips by plane to the United States was a new record high.

Overall, Canadians took almost 3.4 million trips to the United States in September, up 0.4% from August.

The Canadian dollar was worth 89.6 US cents on average in September, up 0.2% from August. The loonie also gained against the Japanese yen, the British pound sterling and the euro.

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

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5005.

The September 2006 issue of *International travel, Advance Information*, Vol. 22, no. 9 (66-001-PIE, free) is now available from the *Publications* module of our website.

For general information, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-307-3382; 613-951-9169; fax: 613-951-2909; cult.tourstats@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Frances Kremerik (613-951-4240; frances.kremerik@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. □

Travel between Canada and other countries

| | August 2006 ^r | September 2006 ^p | August to September 2006 | September 2006 ^p | September 2005 to September 2006 |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| | Seasonally adjusted | | | Unadjusted | |
| | thousands | | % change | thousands | % change |
| Canadian trips abroad¹ | 3,900 | 3,936 | 0.9 | 3,813 | 6.2 |
| To the United States | 3,347 | 3,360 | 0.4 | 3,327 | 5.5 |
| To other countries | 554 | 576 | 4.1 | 486 | 11.0 |
| Same-day car trips to the United States | 1,932 | 1,942 | 0.5 | 1,957 | 3.3 |
| Total trips, one or more nights | 1,908 | 1,930 | 1.2 | 1,802 | 9.1 |
| United States ² | 1,354 | 1,354 | 0.0 | 1,316 | 8.4 |
| Car | 800 | 786 | -1.7 | 811 | 9.3 |
| Plane | 465 | 477 | 2.5 | 382 | 8.7 |
| Other modes of transportation | 89 | 91 | 1.8 | 124 | 1.6 |
| Other countries ³ | 554 | 576 | 4.1 | 486 | 11.0 |
| Travel to Canada¹ | 2,749 | 2,731 | -0.6 | 3,182 | -7.4 |
| From the United States | 2,372 | 2,357 | -0.6 | 2,648 | -8.4 |
| From other countries | 377 | 374 | -0.8 | 534 | -1.8 |
| Same-day car trips from the United States | 1,129 | 1,119 | -0.9 | 1,136 | -12.4 |
| Total trips, one or more nights | 1,497 | 1,485 | -0.8 | 1,875 | -3.9 |
| United States ² | 1,129 | 1,120 | -0.7 | 1,354 | -4.6 |
| Car | 687 | 678 | -1.4 | 779 | -3.2 |
| Plane | 317 | 319 | 0.7 | 358 | -3.5 |
| Other modes of transportation | 125 | 123 | -1.1 | 217 | -10.8 |
| Other countries ³ | 368 | 365 | -1.0 | 521 | -1.9 |
| Most important overseas markets⁴ | | | | | |
| United Kingdom | 75 | 75 | 0.2 | 116 | -1.2 |
| Japan | 33 | 30 | -9.6 | 51 | -15.7 |
| France | 31 | 31 | -1.0 | 51 | 0.6 |
| Germany | 26 | 25 | -2.4 | 46 | -8.9 |
| Australia | 18 | 17 | -0.9 | 26 | -2.5 |
| South Korea | 16 | 17 | 12.0 | 21 | 15.3 |
| Mexico | 17 | 17 | 2.9 | 19 | 6.2 |
| China | 12 | 14 | 13.7 | 19 | 42.1 |
| Netherlands | 10 | 10 | 3.0 | 15 | -2.7 |
| Hong Kong | 9 | 9 | -0.5 | 10 | -3.9 |
| Switzerland | 8 | 8 | 5.1 | 12 | -6.9 |
| Italy | 8 | 8 | -1.7 | 9 | 0.2 |

^p preliminary

^r revised

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.
4. Includes same-day and one or more night trips.

Small business profiles

2004

Small business profiles for 2004 are now available. The profiles present financial data for small businesses in Canada, defined as having annual total revenue between \$30,000 and \$5 million in 2004. They also contain revenue and expense data and are available by industry for unincorporated and incorporated businesses nationally and for each province and territory.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5028.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Gilles Paré (toll-free 1-877-679-2746 or 613-951-2517; gilles.pare@statcan.ca), Small Business and Special Surveys Division.

Deliveries of major grains

October 2006

Data on October 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 October 2006 issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* (22-007-XIB, free) will be available in December.

For general information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-465-1991; agriculture@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Crushing statistics

October 2006

Oilseed processors crushed 324,892 metric tonnes of canola in October. Oil production totalled 140,962 tonnes in October while meal production amounted to 190,736 tonnes.

This was the third highest canola crush in history, surpassed only by the record 325,303 tonnes crushed in October 1998 and 325,247 tonnes in March 2004.

Available on CANSIM: table 001-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3404.

The October 2006 issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* (22-007-XIB, free) will be available in December.

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

contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-465-1991; agriculture@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Cereals and oilseeds review

September 2006

Data from the September 2006 issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review*, Vol. 29, no. 9 (22-007-XIB, free) are now available. An overview of current grain supplies and markets is also included in this publication, which will soon be available.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3401 and 3464.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-465-1991; agriculture@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Stocks of frozen poultry meat

November 1, 2006 (preliminary)

Stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on November 1 totalled 65,670 metric tonnes, up 0.5% from a year ago.

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

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3425.

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

New products

General Social Survey, Cycle 19: Time Use (2005): Documentation and User's Guide for the Public Use Microdata File, 2005
Catalogue number 12M0019GPE (\$75).

General Social Survey, Cycle 19: Time Use (2005): Public Use Microdata File, 2005
Catalogue number 12M0019XCB (\$2,140).

Industrial Chemicals and Synthetic Resins,
September 2006, Vol. 49, no. 9
Catalogue number 46-002-XIE
(free).

Broadcasting and Telecommunications, Vol. 36,
no. 4
Catalogue number 56-001-XIE
(free).

International Travel, Advance Information, Vol. 22,
no. 9
Catalogue number 66-001-PIE
(free).

General Social Survey on Time Use: Cycle 19: Canada's General Social Survey on Time Use: Challenges and Potential, 2005, no. 3
Catalogue number 89-622-XIE2006003
(free).

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

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11-001-XIE (11-001-XIE) 11-001-XIE (11-001-XIE)



Statistics Canada

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



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1996** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about six trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses and industry weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- Map-based index: May 1997 3
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- Egg production: Apr. 1997 12

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11



Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

Published each working day by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10-G, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

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