



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

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## Releases

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### Wholesale trade

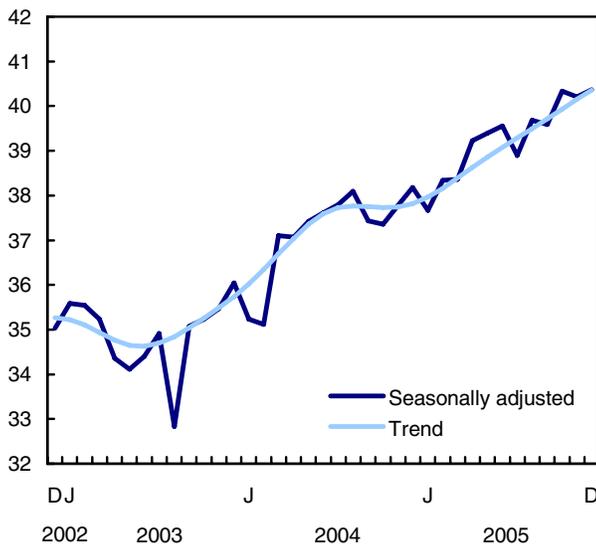
December 2005

A rebound in the automotive sector and continued growth in the building materials sector boosted wholesale sales in December.

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#### Wholesalers end year on a high note

Billions of dollars



Wholesale sales rose 0.4% in December to \$40.4 billion, after declining 0.3% in November. Most of the overall increase posted in December was attributable to two sectors: automotive products and building materials. Excluding the automotive products sector, wholesale sales declined 0.5% in December, after rising 1.0% the previous month.

Sales rose in only two of the seven sectors in December, which accounted for approximately 34% of total sales. The sectors showing increases were automotive products (+4.1%) and building materials (+3.1%). The sectors posting the largest declines were personal and household goods (-3.8%) and farm products (-8.1%).

In constant prices, wholesale sales increased by 1.4% in December.

#### Growth slowed slightly in 2005

Wholesale sales reached \$470.3 billion in 2005, up 5.4% compared with a year earlier but lower than the 6.5% growth observed in 2004. Part of the slowdown may be attributable to the lumber group and the metal products group, which were unable to repeat their performance of the previous year. In 2005, the main beneficiaries of growth were wholesalers in the machinery and equipment group.

In the last three months of 2005, the value of wholesale sales rose to \$120.9 billion, up 2.3% from the previous quarter. This sizable gain was attributable in part to the strong performance of the personal and household goods sector, which posted quarterly growth of 5.7%. The building materials sector also registered a solid 4.8% gain.

#### Year ended on high note for automotive products sector

The automotive products sector saw its sales advance 4.1% in December, despite a 3.7% drop in wholesale sales of motor vehicle parts.

The sector's advance was attributable to a 6.2% increase in motor vehicle sales. This increase only partially offset the 8.6% drop in November, which followed three consecutive months of sales growth. After a period of strong growth that began in the fall of 2002, wholesale sales peaked in January 2003. Since then, they have barely made up lost ground. The fierce competition that characterizes this sector, along with a decline in the price of many products, may have affected the value of wholesale sales.

#### Building materials continue to surge

Wholesale sales of building materials rose 3.1% in December, the fifth straight monthly gain. All groups in this sector contributed to the growth.

Sales of lumber and millwork climbed 4.8%, a fourth consecutive gain. This increase was attributable in part to rising export prices and the robust performance of the residential construction sector in Canada. According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the seasonally adjusted and annualized number of housing starts in Canada rose 1.5% in December after climbing 8.0% in November. Meanwhile, lumber exports grew 8.3% in December. Wholesalers account for nearly 30% of exports of this type of goods.

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Wholesalers of metal products posted a second consecutive increase in December (+0.5%). Since September, this group has exhibited an upward trend following a downward period that began in December 2004. The slump in steel prices following China's entry into the export market was offset in part by strong demand resulting from numerous investments in non-residential construction in Western Canada.

For their part, wholesalers in the building materials group posted a 3.5% increase in December. This group has experienced a period of practically uninterrupted growth since the fall of 2003, buoyed by the strong performance of the renovation and construction market in Canada.

### **Personal and household goods sector posts first decline in three months**

In December, wholesalers in the personal and household goods sector registered the first month-over-month decline in sales in three months (-3.8%). Two of the three categories of wholesalers in this sector posted declines. Only apparel wholesalers recorded a gain (+8.8%), their fourth consecutive monthly increase.

The 10.0% decline in wholesale sales of household goods followed two months of robust growth. This group had benefited from the strong popularity of home entertainment equipment and the release of popular DVDs in recent months. The household goods group has generally posted rising sales since mid-2003, owing in part to a booming real estate market.

Wholesale sales of pharmaceuticals declined for the third time in four months, falling 2.0% in December. Average monthly growth, which was vigorous in 2003, began to slacken in 2004, partly because of increased use of generic drugs, which cost less and have a dampening effect on the growth of prescription drug sales.

### **Sales up in six provinces**

In December, wholesalers saw their sales grow by 1.5% or more in Manitoba, British Columbia and Ontario. The 4.0% sales increase in Manitoba was the largest among the provinces, owing to gains

in the personal and household goods sector, the machinery and electronic equipment sector and the "other products" category. Wholesale sales in Manitoba have been improving since the start of 2004, after a period of decline in 2003.

British Columbia wholesalers saw their sales rise 2.9% in December. Increases were reported in numerous sectors, notably machinery and electronic equipment and the "other products" category. Annual sales in 2005 were 8.8% higher than in 2004. Wholesale sales in this province have been growing strongly since the last quarter of 2003.

In Ontario, wholesale sales rose 1.5% in December. This increase was attributable to the jump in motor vehicle sales and the "other products" category. Ontario wholesalers have recorded generally rising sales since January 2005.

### **Inventories rise**

After remaining unchanged in November, inventories rose 0.8% in December. The trend in total inventories has generally been upward since November 2003. The inventory-to-sales ratio went from 1.21 in November to 1.22 in December. This ratio has generally been stable since February 2005. Previously it went through a downward period that began in October 2003.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 081-0007 to 081-0010.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2401.**

The December 2005 issue of *Wholesale Trade* (63-008-XIE, \$15/\$150) will be available shortly.

Wholesale trade estimates for January 2006 will be released March 17.

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

**Wholesale merchants' sales**

	December 2004	September 2005 <sup>r</sup>	October 2005 <sup>r</sup>	November 2005 <sup>r</sup>	December 2005 <sup>p</sup>	November to December 2005	December 2004 to December 2005
seasonally adjusted							
	\$ millions					% change	
<b>Total, wholesale sales</b>	<b>38,182</b>	<b>39,592</b>	<b>40,340</b>	<b>40,210</b>	<b>40,363</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>5.7</b>
<b>Farm products</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>-8.1</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Food, beverages and tobacco products</b>	<b>7,149</b>	<b>7,430</b>	<b>7,297</b>	<b>7,366</b>	<b>7,334</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>2.6</b>
Food products	6,507	6,805	6,674	6,691	6,718	0.4	3.2
Alcohol and tobacco	642	625	623	675	617	-8.6	-4.0
<b>Personal and household goods</b>	<b>5,403</b>	<b>5,586</b>	<b>5,915</b>	<b>6,130</b>	<b>5,898</b>	<b>-3.8</b>	<b>9.2</b>
Apparel	784	834	911	927	1,009	8.8	28.7
Household and personal products	2,179	2,235	2,381	2,604	2,343	-10.0	7.6
Pharmaceuticals	2,440	2,517	2,622	2,598	2,546	-2.0	4.3
<b>Automotive products</b>	<b>7,668</b>	<b>8,063</b>	<b>8,136</b>	<b>7,676</b>	<b>7,988</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>
Motor vehicles	6,099	6,549	6,617	6,045	6,417	6.2	5.2
Motor vehicle parts and accessories	1,569	1,513	1,519	1,631	1,571	-3.7	0.1
<b>Building materials</b>	<b>5,358</b>	<b>5,540</b>	<b>5,562</b>	<b>5,667</b>	<b>5,844</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>9.1</b>
Building supplies	3,046	3,375	3,381	3,405	3,525	3.5	15.7
Metal products	1,171	1,133	1,128	1,194	1,200	0.5	2.5
Lumber and millwork	1,140	1,032	1,053	1,068	1,119	4.8	-1.9
<b>Machinery and electronic equipment</b>	<b>7,428</b>	<b>7,866</b>	<b>8,209</b>	<b>8,088</b>	<b>8,057</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>8.5</b>
Machinery and equipment	3,405	3,641	3,858	3,844	3,940	2.5	15.7
Computer and other electronic equipment	2,277	2,374	2,506	2,448	2,311	-5.6	1.5
Office and professional equipment	1,746	1,852	1,845	1,796	1,807	0.6	3.5
<b>Other products</b>	<b>4,702</b>	<b>4,604</b>	<b>4,648</b>	<b>4,761</b>	<b>4,761</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>Total - Automobiles</b>	<b>30,514</b>	<b>31,529</b>	<b>32,204</b>	<b>32,534</b>	<b>32,375</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Sales, province and territory</b>							
Newfoundland and Labrador	216	214	216	215	218	1.4	0.7
Prince Edward Island	48	34	36	36	36	0.3	-24.3
Nova Scotia	459	551	524	530	497	-6.3	8.2
New Brunswick	440	396	392	402	396	-1.4	-10.0
Quebec	7,315	7,661	7,767	7,791	7,521	-3.5	2.8
Ontario	19,609	19,702	20,364	20,098	20,393	1.5	4.0
Manitoba	988	1,077	1,120	1,118	1,163	4.0	17.7
Saskatchewan	1,051	1,163	1,195	1,199	1,138	-5.1	8.3
Alberta	4,248	4,681	4,694	4,752	4,818	1.4	13.4
British Columbia	3,775	4,085	4,008	4,037	4,155	2.9	10.1
Yukon	11	7	6	12	10	-19.6	-9.8
Northwest Territories	18	17	15	18	16	-10.8	-10.4
Nunavut	2	2	2	2	2	-17.3	-38.2

r. Revised.

p. Preliminary.

**Wholesale merchants' inventories and inventory-to-sales ratio**

	December 2004	September 2005 <sup>r</sup>	October 2005 <sup>r</sup>	November 2005 <sup>r</sup>	December 2005 <sup>p</sup>	November to December 2005	December 2004 to December 2005	November 2005 <sup>r</sup>	December 2005 <sup>p</sup>
	Wholesale inventories					Inventory-to-sales ratio			
	seasonally adjusted								
	\$ millions					% change			
<b>Inventories</b>	<b>46,509</b>	<b>48,426</b>	<b>48,696</b>	<b>48,691</b>	<b>49,074</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.21</b>	<b>1.22</b>
Farm products	138	194	194	191	143	-24.9	3.7	0.36	0.30
Food products	4,159	4,320	4,317	4,324	4,304	-0.5	3.5	0.65	0.64
Alcohol and tobacco	300	283	289	282	290	2.9	-3.4	0.42	0.47
Apparel	1,522	1,620	1,670	1,611	1,594	-1.1	4.8	1.74	1.58
Household and personal products	3,333	3,402	3,377	3,411	3,490	2.3	4.7	1.31	1.49
Pharmaceuticals	2,816	3,180	3,239	3,137	3,057	-2.5	8.6	1.21	1.20
Motor vehicles	4,187	4,383	4,393	4,360	4,670	7.1	11.5	0.72	0.73
Motor vehicle parts and accessories	3,032	3,178	3,241	3,256	3,188	-2.1	5.1	2.00	2.03
Building supplies	4,707	5,038	5,125	5,138	5,237	1.9	11.3	1.51	1.49
Metal products	2,365	2,313	2,322	2,298	2,349	2.2	-0.6	1.93	1.96
Lumber and millwork	1,138	978	1,042	1,050	1,052	0.2	-7.6	0.98	0.94
Machinery and equipment	8,775	9,138	9,238	9,380	9,520	1.5	8.5	2.44	2.42
Computer and other electronic equipment	1,418	1,515	1,527	1,494	1,454	-2.7	2.5	0.61	0.63
Office and professional equipment	2,325	2,451	2,507	2,481	2,379	-4.1	2.3	1.38	1.32
Other products	6,295	6,433	6,215	6,279	6,346	1.1	0.8	1.32	1.33

r. Revised.

p. Preliminary.



## Monthly Survey of Large Retailers

December and annual 2005

Large retailers continued to ring up sales in 2005, gaining 5.9% compared to 2004. The increase was slightly off the 6.4% gain in 2004, but fairly close to the average growth rate over the last five years. The group of large retailers saw sales rise in all major commodity groups for 2005, with increases ranging from 2.7% to 8.5%.

In December, sales increased 1.4% from a month earlier to \$8.4 billion. After three quarters of moderate to strong growth, fourth quarter sales were up a slight 0.6%. This was the smallest quarterly increase at large retailers since the fourth quarter of 2004. Despite the recent slowing, sales at large retailers had been generally rising throughout 2005. In 2004, sales increased rapidly until the fall, before posting softer growth in the final few months of the year.

### Food and gas led annual sales in 2005

With relatively low interest rates, a housing market which continued to boom and a declining unemployment rate, many indicators pointed to an encouraging sales environment in 2005 for large retailers. On the other hand, surging fuel and energy prices may have had consumers hesitating to spend.

Food and beverage sales posted the strongest annual sales growth at large retailers in 2005, with an increase of 8.5%. Food prices were up 2.3% in 2005, the largest price change in the past three years, which may have accounted for some of the 8.2% increase in food sales. Beverage sales were particularly strong, with non-alcoholic beverages up 11.4% and alcoholic beverage sales up 16.4% at large retailers compared to 2004.

The other goods and services category posted the second strongest increase in 2005, gaining 7.4%. Automotive fuel, oil and additive sales gained 25.0% at large retailers, driven up in part by a 12.8% rise in the price of gasoline. Pet food sales were another mover in this category, increasing 10.0% compared to 2004. Tobacco sales, which account for about one-fifth of the sales in this category, dampened sales growth somewhat with a slight 0.9% increase. Sales of tobacco have grown at a rate slower than its annual price increase for the past several years at large retailers.

Low interest rates and a strong economy helped create a favourable environment for furniture, home furnishing and electronics sales. Sales were up 5.2%, slower than the 9.1% pace set in 2004, but was still amongst the strongest gainers at large retailers in 2005. Big ticket items such as televisions and audio-video

#### Note to readers

*This survey includes large retailers mainly in the food, clothing, home furnishings, electronics, sporting goods, and general merchandise sectors. These retailers represent approximately 27% of total annual retail sales, or 35% when recreational and motor vehicle dealers are excluded.*

*All annual comparisons in this release use the sum of unadjusted monthly estimates. As usual, the rest of the analysis is based on seasonally adjusted estimates. Results from the Monthly Survey of Large Retailers are classified according to the 2002 North American Industrial Classification System.*

equipment (+10.2%) as well as major appliances (+6.2%), spurred the growth in this commodity group. However, sales growth of indoor furniture (+4.1%) and home furnishings (+3.4%) were somewhat lower.

In 2005, health and personal care products posted sales growth of 4.6% compared to 2004. This was the first time in eight years that this commodity group did not exceed the average growth rate for all commodity categories combined at large retailers. Prescription drug sales were up 7.2% in 2005, well below the 18.6% growth seen in 2004. Over the past several years, large retailers had rapidly expanded into the pharmaceutical market. Recently, however, the rate of expansion has slowed at supermarkets and department stores, resulting in a decrease in the year-over-year growth rate. Non-prescription drug sales were up 6.0%, while personal care products such as cosmetics and toiletries were up a minimal 2.0%.

Of the major commodity groups, housewares had the weakest sales growth in 2005. Sales growth of houseware products have been below the average rate of increase at large retailers since 2000. Household cleaning supplies gained 5.7%, while sales of tableware, kitchenware and cookware were little changed, and other household supplies such as laundry baskets, closet organizers and ironing boards declined.

### December sales finish the year on a strong note

In December, six of the eight major commodity groups pulled ahead. Sporting and leisure goods, health and personal care products, the all other goods and services category, and clothing, footwear and accessories all had strong growth in sales to finish out the year. Sales of hardware, lawn and garden products and furniture, home furnishings and electronics were the only two commodity groups to post declines.

Sales of sporting and leisure goods fared especially well in December, gaining 3.0%. Many people could expect movies and music under the tree in December, as sales of pre-recorded CDs and DVDs increased 7.8%

compared to November. Sales of sporting goods were also up, increasing 2.7% in December. However, toy and hobby supply sales did not have as much success, edging up only 0.8%.

Health and personal care product sales moved ahead in the final month of 2005, gaining 2.5% compared to November. The sales increase was almost entirely the result of a 4.8% jump in the sale of over-the-counter and prescription drugs. Drug sales had climbed gradually throughout 2005 before the more sizeable increase in December at large retailers. Of the remaining commodities in this group, eyewear sales increased 2.2% in December, while sales of personal care products remained unchanged from November.

Clothing, footwear and accessories also posted strong sales growth at large retailers in December. Sales of women's clothing and accessories accounted for a major part of the increase, gaining 3.4%. Women's clothing sales have been relatively strong in 2005, as sales finished 8.2% higher than a year earlier. This was the third sales gain in the past four months for women's clothing. On the other hand, men's clothing sales did not fare as well, losing 0.8% compared to November and finishing only 1.2% higher than a year earlier.

**Available on CANSIM: table 080-0009.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5027.**

A data table is also available in the *Canadian Statistics* module online.

Data for the group of large retailers for January will be released on March 17. Effective January 2006, data from the Monthly Survey of Large Retailers will only be available on CANSIM or by special request. Seasonally adjusted data will be discontinued following this release.

Revisions to adjusted and unadjusted data for 2005 will be available on April 19.

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; [retailinfo@statcan.ca](mailto:retailinfo@statcan.ca)). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Elton Cryderman (613-951-0669), Distributive Trades Division.

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### Annual sales by commodity for the group of large retailers

Commodity	2004	2005	2004 to 2005	2004	2005
	unadjusted		% change	Share of sales	
	\$ millions			%	
Food and beverages	30,390	32,988	8.5	32.6	33.4
Health and personal care products	9,159	9,585	4.6	9.8	9.7
Clothing, footwear and accessories	16,193	16,687	3.0	17.4	16.9
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics	14,002	14,737	5.2	15.0	14.9
Housewares	4,152	4,265	2.7	4.5	4.3
Hardware, lawn and garden products	3,792	3,993	5.3	4.1	4.0
Sporting and leisure goods	4,909	5,058	3.0	5.3	5.1
All other goods and services	10,701	11,496	7.4	11.5	11.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>93,298</b>	<b>98,808</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### Sales by commodity for the group of large retailers

Commodity	December 2004	November 2005 <sup>r</sup>	December 2005 <sup>p</sup>	November to December 2005	December 2004 to December 2005
	seasonally adjusted				
	\$ millions			% change	
Food and beverages	2,561	2,780	2,823	1.6	10.3
Health and personal care products	763	799	818	2.5	7.3
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,332	1,400	1,426	1.8	7.0
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics	1,179	1,247	1,244	-0.2	5.5
Housewares	344	363	365	0.6	6.0
Hardware, lawn and garden products	336	353	346	-2.2	2.8
Sporting and leisure goods	415	412	424	3.0	2.3
All other goods and services	922	975	998	2.3	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,853</b>	<b>8,329</b>	<b>8,444</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>7.5</b>

<sup>r</sup> Revised.

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary.

### Sales by commodity for the group of large retailers

Commodity	November 2005 <sup>r</sup>	December 2004	December 2005 <sup>p</sup>	December 2004 to December 2005
	unadjusted			
	\$ millions			% change
Food and beverages	2,694	3,004	3,394	13.0
Health and personal care products	813	987	1,064	7.8
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,617	2,325	2,473	6.4
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics	1,472	2,094	2,244	7.2
Housewares	380	470	506	7.7
Hardware, lawn and garden products	273	319	340	6.5
Sporting and leisure goods	541	932	944	1.2
All other goods and services	1,041	1,130	1,231	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,830</b>	<b>11,261</b>	<b>12,196</b>	<b>8.3</b>

<sup>r</sup> Revised.

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary.

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## Study: The lesser known private colleges 1993 and 2003

Canada's private colleges, sometimes referred to as career or business colleges, represent the lesser known players in postsecondary education. Private colleges lost ground in the postsecondary market between 1993 and 2003, according to a new study that examines graduates and their experience in the labour market.

In 1993, private college graduates aged 25 to 34 accounted for 6.3% of the total in this age group who had some form of postsecondary education. By 2003, this share had been cut by almost one-half to only 3.7%.

In contrast, the proportion of individuals with university degrees has climbed steadily.

Private colleges, sometimes referred to as career or business colleges, help to fill a gap in the public system by providing an alternative to more traditional postsecondary education programs. Ontario alone has more than 450 registered private career colleges, according to the ministry of education. Their focus is on stressing practical skills and offering courses that prepare students for clearly defined occupations.

This decline in market share was due primarily to lower enrolment among women.

The number of men holding only a private college certificate climbed from more than 23,000 in 1993 to 27,300 in 2003. During the same time, graduation among women fell from 132,400 to 59,300, a difference of 73,100.

The study found that private college certificate holders earned roughly the same as high school graduates, but they were more likely than high school graduates to be employed.

Differences in median annual earnings between young high school graduates and private college graduates working on a full-year, full-time basis were not statistically significant in 2003. The median is the point where exactly one-half of earnings are higher and one-half are lower.

Young male high school graduates in 2003 had median annual earnings of \$35,200, compared with \$35,300 for their private college counterparts.

Young women with only high school diplomas earned \$26,500, while women with only private college certificates earned \$27,700.

However, these private college certificate holders were more likely to be employed in 2003 than high school graduates.

The employment rate among men with only a high school diploma was 92% in 2003, while the rate among

men with only a private college certificate was 98%. The situation was similar among women.

The results of the study also show that students who graduated from these colleges during the past decade have made some important shifts in the choice of their fields of study. To a certain extent, these changes reflected a response to the new economy of the late 1990s and early 2000s, especially among women.

Secretarial science was by far the most popular field of study during the early 1990s. In 1993, about 39% of all graduates aged 25 to 34 who had a certificate from a private college had earned it in secretarial science. By 2003, this proportion had plunged by more than half to only 18%.

Young women shifted their focus to business and finance studies. A decade ago, women with a certificate in business and finance represented barely 10% of all private college graduates in this age group. By 2003, this had increased to more than 16%.

For men, the most important shift was in certificates in the miscellaneous category, which includes fields such as truck driving, professional sales, and real estate. By 2003, the proportion climbed to 15% of all graduates, more than double the proportion in 1993.

### Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3889.

The analytical article "Canada's private colleges: The lesser known players in postsecondary education" (11-621-MIE2006036, free) is now available online in the *Analysis in Brief* series.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Chris Li (613-951-5792), Income Statistics Division. ■

## Food services and drinking places 2004

The food services and drinking places industries experienced an upturn in 2004. Total operating revenue increased by 7% in 2004 to \$37.7 billion from \$35.3 billion in 2003.

In 2003, the food services and drinking places industries were hampered by SARS, the August power outage and mad cow disease. In 2004, an increase in consumer spending and personal disposable income as well as strong economic growth, especially in the western-most provinces, fuelled the recovery. Thus, the largest increase in operating revenue, on a year-to-year basis, was recorded in the Prairies (+9.1%), followed by British Columbia (+7.9%), Ontario

(+6.8 %), Quebec (+6.0%) and the Atlantic region (+3.6%). Combined operating revenue remained stable in the three territories.

The industry generated the greatest share of revenue in Ontario at 38%, followed by Quebec (22%), British Columbia (16%) and Alberta at 13%. The provincial revenues generated by this industry typically follow Canadian demographics. Ontario accounts for the largest share of Canada's population (39%), followed by Quebec (24%), British Columbia (13%) and Alberta (10%).

Full-service restaurants, the most severely affected in 2003, posted the strongest increase in 2004 (+7.9%). Limited service restaurants and drinking places followed with solid increases of 6.7% and 6.2% respectively. The special food services continued to grow, increasing by 4.4% in 2004. Full-service and limited service restaurants, the backbone of the food service industry, represented the largest share of food service sales at 84%.

Sales of food and non-alcoholic beverages represented slightly more than 83% of all food service revenue. Revenue from sales of alcoholic beverages followed at just over 13%. As expected, drinking places earned the majority of their revenue (70%) from the sale of alcoholic beverages, with only 20% of their revenue derived from the sale of food and non-alcoholic beverages.

The cost of sales (38%), followed by labour costs (31%) are the two largest expenses incurred by food service operators, together accounting for over two-thirds of their total expenses in 2004. Rental and leasing costs accounted for 7% of expenses followed by utilities including telecommunication, advertising and promotion, and depreciation, with each accounting for slightly less than 3%.

Operating margins for the food services and drinking places industry increased marginally between 2003 and 2004 from 3.2% to 3.6%.

Data for 2004 as well as revised data for 2003 are now available for the food services and drinking places industry, which comprises full-service restaurants, limited-service restaurants, special food services and drinking places.

Available on CANSIM: table 355-0005.

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4704.**

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Rose Krakower (613-951-6302; fax: 613-951-6696; [rose.krakower@statcan.ca](mailto:rose.krakower@statcan.ca)) or Mathieu Thomassin (613-951-1069; [mathieu.thomassin@statcan.ca](mailto:mathieu.thomassin@statcan.ca)), Service Industries Division. ■

### **Steel primary forms, weekly data**

Week ending February 11, 2006 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending February 11 totalled 301 634 metric tonnes, down 1.3% from 305 702 tonnes a week earlier and down 5.3% from 318 673 tonnes in the same week of 2005.

The year-to-date total as of February 11 was 1 743 877 tonnes, down 7.4% from 1 884 098 tonnes in the same period of 2005.

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2131.**

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; [manufact@statcan.ca](mailto:manufact@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

### **Stocks of frozen poultry meat**

February 1, 2006 (preliminary)

Stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on February 1 totalled 59 713 metric tonnes, up 19.6% from a year ago.

**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 Gielfeldt (613-951-2505; [sandy.gielfeldt@statcan.ca](mailto:sandy.gielfeldt@statcan.ca)), Agriculture Division. ■

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**Release dates:** February 20 to 24, 2006

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<b>Release date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference period</b>
20	<b>Leading indicators</b>	January 2006
20	<b>Travel between Canada and other countries</b>	December 2005
21	<b>Retail trade</b>	December 2005
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