



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 22, 2006

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

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Prairie farmers have planted considerably more spring wheat and canola than they had anticipated in March, according to data from the annual June farm survey, which also indicate a record area for dry field peas.

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## Releases

### Principal field crops

June 2006 (preliminary)

Prairie farmers have planted considerably more spring wheat and canola than they had anticipated in March, according to data from the annual June farm survey, which also indicate a record area for dry field peas.

Data from the June survey, Statistics Canada's largest area survey, comprising 29,600 farmers, revealed some important changes from the March Intentions Survey results released three months earlier, when many farmers were not sure what they were going to plant.

Two of the most substantial changes were in spring wheat and canola. Farmers reported they had planted 13.3 million acres in canola by June, up from an original estimate of 11.5 million acres. This put the estimate for canola just shy of 13.4 million acres in 2005.

Spring wheat acreage also rose from the estimate set in March. Farmers reported planting 20.0 million acres compared with the March estimate of 19.5 million acres.

These increases appear to be at the expense of the area Prairie farmers previously allotted to summer fallow.

In Ontario and Quebec, the area planted in grain corn remained relatively unchanged from intentions in March, while soybeans decreased slightly.

Across the West, seeding progress can be described as average with some problems reported due to excessively wet conditions, most notably in northeast Saskatchewan.

Generally adequate moisture conditions and the hint of improving prices, combined with escalating costs for fuel and fertilizer, provide the framework for the 2006 planting season. In response, Prairie farmers planted increased areas of spring wheat, oats and dry field peas compared with 2005.

### Seeding of major grains and oilseeds

| Crop               | 2005          | March<br>2006 | June<br>2006  | 2005<br>to<br>June<br>2006<br>% change |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| thousands of acres |               |               |               |  |
| <b>Total wheat</b> | <b>24,943</b> | <b>25,620</b> | <b>26,492</b> | <b>6.2</b>                             |
| Spring wheat       | 17,905        | 19,843        | 20,424        | 14.1                                   |
| Canola             | 13,570        | 11,597        | 13,392        | -1.3                                   |
| Barley             | 10,972        | 10,389        | 10,108        | -7.9                                   |
| Summer fallow      | 10,160        | 11,710        | 9,305         | -8.4                                   |
| Oats               | 4,580         | 5,390         | 5,446         | 18.9                                   |
| Durum wheat        | 5,785         | 4,050         | 4,260         | -26.4                                  |
| Dry field peas     | 3,375         | 3,454         | 3,509         | 4.0                                    |
| Soybeans           | 2,907         | 3,142         | 2,989         | 2.8                                    |
| Corn for grain     | 2,778         | 2,818         | 2,805         | 1.0                                    |
| Flaxseed           | 2,080         | 2,245         | 2,120         | 1.9                                    |

### Oilseeds: Fractionally less canola planted but slightly more flaxseed

Farmers estimated they have planted 13.3 million acres in canola, down a marginal 0.7% from 2005. The seeded area remained unchanged in both Manitoba and Alberta. In Saskatchewan, it declined just 1.5% to 6.5 million acres. Acreage in all three areas is all well above their respective 10-year averages.

The possibility of improved canola prices appears to be the catalyst for continued above-average areas planted to canola. This was the case in spite of large stocks of canola remaining to be marketed and comparatively high input costs for this crop.

Flaxseed area was up for the second year in a row, rising 1.9% to 2.1 million acres, 40,000 acres more than the area reported in 2005. Producers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan reported increases, while Alberta farmers reported planting 10,000 acres less flaxseed.

### Spring wheat area up, durum wheat down

Firming prices appear to have convinced wheat growers to shift from durum wheat and summer fallow into spring wheat. Prairie farmers reported planting 20.0 million acres of spring wheat, up 2.5 million acres from 2005. The 10-year average is 19.8 million acres.

Farmers in all three Prairie provinces reported planting more spring wheat. Those in Saskatchewan led the way, planting an additional 1.9 million acres, followed by Manitoba at 411,000 additional acres and Alberta with 237,000 additional acres.

On the other hand, farmers planted 26.4% less durum, for a total of 4.3 million acres. Lower export demand was seen as the main reason for the decline.

Durum acreage fell 25.3% in Saskatchewan and 31.0% in Alberta.

### **Barley area down, oat area up**

Prairie farmers planted 9.4 million acres of barley, down 800,000 acres from the 10.2 million acres seeded in 2005. The area seeded to barley has been in steady decline since the recent peak in 2002 of 11.7 million acres. The 10-year average is 11.1 million acres.

Provincially, the picture is mixed. Saskatchewan and Alberta reported declines of 16.7% and 2.2% respectively from 2005. Following last year's excessive rain, farmers in Manitoba reported an 11.1% increase, returning the crop to its 10-year average of 1.2 million acres.

The area seeded to oats rose considerably on prospects of increased export demand and feed use. Oat area planted on the Prairies rose 21.9% to 4.9 million acres. The 10-year average is 4.5 million acres.

Provincially, Manitoba reported a 38.9% increase to 1.0 million acres. The area in Saskatchewan rose 25.0% to 2.5 million acres, and in Alberta, it rose 7.7% to 1.4 million acres.

### **Record field pea area**

Field pea area on the Prairies rose to record territory of 3.5 million acres, breaking the previous mark of 3.4 million acres set in 2004.

In Saskatchewan, where over three quarters of all field peas are grown, farmers increased their plantings of field peas by 70,000 acres from 2005 to 2.8 million acres.

Manitoba farmers reported a decline of 37.5% to 75,000 acres, while Alberta reported a 18.9% increase to 660,000 acres.

### **Ontario and Quebec farmers planted a little more grain corn, fewer soybeans**

Total grain corn acreage in Ontario and Quebec rose slightly, with the area planted to corn in Ontario at 1.6 million acres, up 2.5% from 2005. In Quebec, corn acreage fell 1.7% to 1.0 million acres.

Ontario farmers have planted 650,000 acres of genetically modified corn, which represented 40% of the provincial planted area, up from 39% in 2005. Quebec farmers planted 514,000 acres of genetically modified corn, 51% of the province's total, an increase of 7% from 2005. In Quebec, it is the second occurrence of a similar increase year to year, with the first increase being 10% between 2003 and 2004.

Overall, soybean farmers in the two provinces reported that they planted less soybean acreage this year. Ontario farmers reported 2.2 million acres, down 7.5% from 2005. Quebec farmers reported 462,100 acres, unchanged from 2005.

Genetically modified soybeans represented 925,000 acres or 43% of total soybean plantings in Ontario, unchanged from 2005. Quebec farmers planted 195,200 acres or 42% of their acreage into genetically modified soybeans, up from 41% of total plantings in 2005.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 001-0004, 001-0010, 001-0017 to 001-0019.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3401.**

The publication *Field Crop Reporting Series: Preliminary Estimates of Principal Field Crop Areas, Canada*, 2006, Vol. 85, no. 4 (22-002-XIB, free) is now available from the *Our products and services* page of our website. A paper version (22-002-XPB, \$17/\$95) is also now available. See *How to order products*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact David Burroughs (613-951-5138; [dave.burroughs@statcan.ca](mailto:dave.burroughs@statcan.ca)), or Dave Roeske (613-951-0572; [dave.roeske@statcan.ca](mailto:dave.roeske@statcan.ca)), Agriculture Division. ■

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## Current economic conditions

Commodity prices dipped in May. Oil retreated from its record high of US \$75 a barrel and natural gas prices were only about half of last year's peak. The exceptionally warm winter in the United States put an end to the three-year-long surge in energy prices. This sharply curtailed Canada's export earnings, lowering both the trade surplus and corporate profits.

The Canadian dollar continued to strengthen, hitting a 28-year high near US 91 cents by the end of May. While short-term rates were raised by another quarter of a point, long-term rates fell by a similar amount. This contrasts with the United States, where long-term treasuries rose to near 5%.

After a brief pause in February, retail sales resumed the solid growth that began last October, rising 1.2% in March. The increase in March brought the quarterly increase of the first three months of 2006 to its highest level since 2001.

Prices have been falling sharply recently for furniture, appliances, electronics, clothing and autos. All these items have a relatively high import content, and the cost of imported consumer goods has fallen 5% since 2004 as the Canadian dollar has risen.

As for employment, the May surge appears to reflect a number of factors. Alberta's labour supply finally responded to the latent strength of its booming oil economy. While Ontario and Quebec continued to lose manufacturing jobs, this was more than offset by gains in services, supplemented by public sector hiring in education and health.

The strength of the labour market and the "prosperity cheques" issued in Alberta sent national year-over-year disposable income growth to a five-year high of 6%. The large substitution of full-time for part-time jobs in May will further boost incomes and offset the effect of higher energy prices on discretionary spending.

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 1301, 1901, 2152, 2306, 2406 and 3701.**

The print version of the June 2006 issue of *Canadian Economic Observer*, Vol. 19, no. 6 (11-010-XPB, \$25/\$243) is now available. See *How to order products*. This issue summarizes the major economic events that occurred in May and presents a feature article entitled "From she to she: changing patterns of women in the Canadian labour force".

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Philip Cross (613-951-9162; [ceo@statcan.ca](mailto:ceo@statcan.ca)), Current Economic Analysis Group. ■

## Railway carloadings

April 2006

Business slipped for Canada's railways in April as slightly less freight was loaded than in March.

Overall, railways in Canada loaded 24.2 million tonnes of goods, 3.6% less than the month before.

A number of factors appear to have contributed to the decline. In particular, shipments of metallurgical and chemical products from Ontario's industrial sector were affected by the erection of a barricade across a highway and railway lines near Caledonia, Ontario. The protest disrupted traffic along a main east-west as well as a north-south rail corridor in southern Ontario. Another factor is that April has fewer days than March.

Shipments of cars and minivans also edged down, but such a decline is often observed between March and April.

Total tonnage of non-intermodal categories reached 21.8 million metric tonnes, down 3.7% from March. A total of 270,417 rail cars were needed to load all of April's non-intermodal freight.

Intermodal loadings, that is, containers and trailers hauled on flat cars, fell 3.3% to just over 2.4 million metric tonnes.

Freight coming from the United States either destined for or passing through Canada reached 2.3 million tonnes, down 6% from March.

The interruption of traffic created by the blockade may also explain, in part, the drop observed in both intermodal loadings and traffic from the United States.

On a year-over-year basis, non-intermodal tonnage was 1.2% higher than April 2005 while both intermodal loadings and traffic received from the United States were virtually unchanged.

**Available on CANSIM: table 404-0002.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2732.**

The April 2006 issue of *Monthly Railway Carloadings*, Vol. 83, no. 4 (52-001-XIE, free) is now available from the *Our products and services* page of our website.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the Dissemination Unit (toll-free 1-866-500-8400; fax: 1-613-951-0009; [transportationstatistics@statcan.ca](mailto:transportationstatistics@statcan.ca)), Transportation Division. ■

## **Crushing statistics**

May 2006

Oilseed processors crushed 252 294 metric tonnes of canola in May. Oil production totalled 108 907 tonnes while meal production amounted to 146 644 tonnes.

The cumulative volume of canola crushed during the first 10 months of the current crop year totalled 2 806 145 metric tonnes, 1.5% behind the pace in 2003/2004 when a record 3 389 554 tonnes were crushed.

**Available on CANSIM: table 001-0005.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3404.**

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

For general information, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-465-1991; [agriculture@statcan.ca](mailto: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](mailto:les.macartney@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

## **Deliveries of major grains**

May 2006

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

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](mailto:agriculture@statcan.ca)), Agriculture Division. ■

## **Cereals and oilseeds review**

April 2006

Data that will appear in the April 2006 issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* (22-007-XIB, free) are now available.

An overview of current grain supplies and markets is also included in this publication, which will be available shortly.

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

For general information, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-465-1991; [agriculture@statcan.ca](mailto: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](mailto:les.macartney@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

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## New products

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**Canadian Economic Observer**, June 2006, Vol. 19,  
no. 6  
**Catalogue number 11-010-XPB** (\$25/\$243).

**Field Crop Reporting Series**, Vol. 85, no. 4  
**Catalogue number 22-002-XIB**  
(free).

**Field Crop Reporting Series**, Vol. 85, no. 4  
**Catalogue number 22-002-XPB** (\$17/\$95).

**Cereals and Oilseeds Review**, April 2006, Vol. 29,  
no. 4  
**Catalogue number 22-007-XIB**  
(free).

**Monthly Railway Carloadings**, April 2006, Vol. 83,  
no. 4  
**Catalogue number 52-001-XIE**  
(free).

**Retail Trade**, April 2006, Vol. 78, no. 4  
**Catalogue number 63-005-XIE**  
(free).

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
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| Catalogue 11-001-XIE (F) English 11-001-XIE04-0007-0-000  |           |
|  <b>The Daily</b>  |           |
| Statistics Canada   |           |
| Thursday, June 3, 1997<br>For release at 9:30 a.m.  |           |
| <b>MAJOR RELEASES</b>   |           |
| • <b>Urban transit, 1996</b><br>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. | 2         |
| • <b>Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996</b><br>Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was modestly weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.    | 4         |
| <b>OTHER RELEASES</b>   |           |
| Map-based Index, May 1997   | 3         |
| Short-term Expectations Survey  | 9         |
| Steel primary forms, steel ending May 31, 1997  | 12        |
| Egg production, Apr. 1997   | 13        |
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## **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.

To access *The Daily* on the Internet, visit our site at <http://www.statcan.ca>. To receive *The Daily* each morning by e-mail, send an e-mail message to [listproc@statcan.ca](mailto:listproc@statcan.ca). Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type "subscribe daily firstname lastname".

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