



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

**Friday, August 18, 2006**

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

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Wholesale sales fell for a second time in three months in June, pulled down by lower sales in the automotive sector. Weak wholesale sales in the past months sharply curtailed the growth for the quarter ending in June compared to the previous two quarters.

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## Releases

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### Wholesale trade

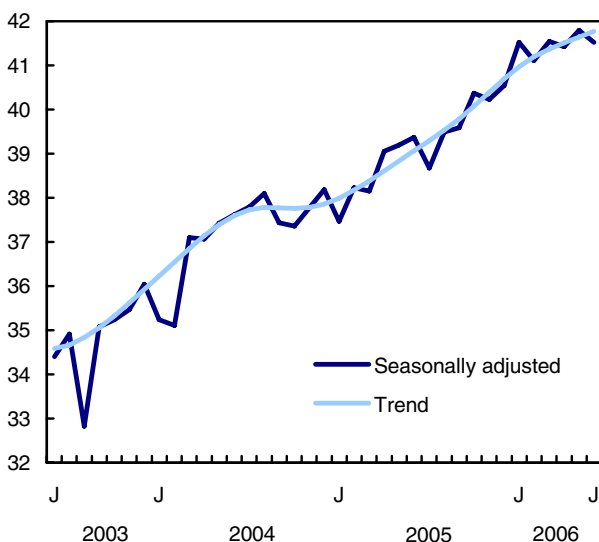
June 2006

Wholesale sales fell for a second time in three months (-0.6%) in June, pulled down by lower sales in the automotive sector. Wholesalers sold \$41.5 billion worth of goods and services. Excluding the automotive sector, sales declined 0.3%. Weak wholesale sales in these past months sharply curtailed the growth for the quarter ending in June compared to the previous two quarters.

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#### Wholesale sales decline in June

\$ billions



Since the fall of 2003, wholesalers have experienced a period of steady growth. Previously, decreasing sales of motor vehicles were the main cause of a decline that began in April 2003.

Sales contracted in three of the seven sectors in June, accounting for approximately 49% of total sales. Decreases were registered in the automotive sector (-2.1%), the "other products" category (-2.3%) and the food, beverages and tobacco products sector (-0.8%). The sectors showing the largest gains were building materials (+0.6%) and farm products (+4.7%).

In constant dollars, wholesale sales declined 0.6% in June.

### Quarterly growth slows

Sales for the quarter ending in June showed a lower growth rate than in the previous two quarters. In the second quarter, sales grew only 0.5% compared to increases of 2.9% and 2.5% in the previous two quarters. Substantial declines in sales of lumber (-8.1%), motor vehicles (-2.2%) and office and professional equipment (-3.0%) explain in part the low growth in the second quarter. These three groups all recorded strong growth in the first quarter.

### Sales down in both components of automotive sector

Wholesalers in the automotive sector were unable to hold onto all the gains made in May (+2.7%), with sales falling 2.1% to \$8.2 billion in June, the fourth decline in five months.

Wholesale sales of motor vehicles fell 1.5% in June, a fourth decline in five months. These decreases are partly due to falling demand in North America for different models of motor vehicles, stemming from consumers' reaction to rising gas prices and climbing interest rates. The lack of major promotions or incentive programs in the past six months may also have contributed to the weakness in sales.

Wholesale sales of motor vehicle parts also declined in June (-5.1%). This drop more than offset the 4.2% increase in May. Wholesalers in this industry, who sell primarily to retailers and dealers, have registered generally stable sales since March 2004.

### First decline in four months for the "other products" sector

After increases in the previous three months, sales of "other products" declined 2.3% in June. This decrease was attributable in part to weak sales of chemical products and some products relating to the agriculture industry. In previous months, the sector had strongly benefited from sales of recycled metals.

Average monthly growth, which had been very strong until May 2005, began to slow after that, partly owing to a sharp decrease in exports of some products, such as fertilizers and seed materials. Conversely, wholesalers of recycled metals and general merchandise experienced very strong growth during this period.

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### Wholesale sales in the building materials sector continue to advance

After rising 1.2% in May, sales of building materials advanced 0.6% in June. Two groups in this sector are responsible for the increase in June.

Sales of metal products (+4.3%) posted a fourth consecutive increase in June. Since September 2005, this group has followed an upward trend after a period of declines that began in December 2004. This strong showing is partly due to a sizable increase in metal prices during this period.

Wholesale sales in the building materials group edged up 0.2% in June. This group has experienced a period of practically uninterrupted growth since the fall of 2003, as a result of the strong performance of the renovation and construction market in Canada.

Sales among lumber and millwork (-2.6%) wholesalers fell for the fourth time in five months. This downward movement is largely related to declining activity in the residential construction sector in the United States. According to the US Commerce Department, new home sales in the United States were down 3% in June compared to May and down 11% compared to June 2005. Furthermore, the number of unsold homes was up sharply. Canadian wholesalers are responsible for nearly 30% of lumber exports.

### Farm products sector posts first increase in eight months

After seven consecutive decreases, wholesale sales of farm products made up some lost ground in June (+4.7%) on the strength of increased exports of live animals (+15.0%). Wholesalers in this group strongly benefited from the United States reopening the border in July 2005 to cattle under 30 months of age. Live animal exports then rose quickly, peaking in October 2005. In the months that followed, cattle exports declined.

### Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan post steepest decreases

Prince Edward Island wholesalers saw their sales tumble 14.7% in June, wiping out the gains of the previous two months. A large decrease in sales of food products, especially fish-related products, was largely responsible for the decrease in that province.

Prior to the decline in June, wholesale sales had been recovering since February 2006. This followed a strong period of contraction that began in the second quarter of 2005.

Wholesale sales in Saskatchewan also fell in June (-5.5%), as a result of lower sales of machinery and equipment and of "other products" (including seed and fertilizer, as well as agricultural chemicals).

Apart from the territories, only Alberta (+2.4%) and Quebec (+1.5%) posted gains in June. In Quebec, the increase was generalized among sectors. Alberta showed strongly increased sales of machinery and equipment as well as building materials. Together, these two groups account for approximately half of the total sales of that province. Since September 2003, Alberta's total wholesale sales have generally been rising.

### Inventories increase

After remaining relatively unchanged in May (-0.1%), inventories rose 0.8% in June. The trend in total inventories has generally been upward since November 2003. May's decrease is essentially attributable to the 3.2% decline in machinery and equipment inventories.

The inventory-to-sales ratio edged up from 1.22 in May to 1.23 in June. This ratio has generally been stable since February 2005. Previously, it went through a period of declines that began in October 2003.

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

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

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

Wholesale trade estimates for July will be released September 20.

For data or general information, contact Client Services (toll-free 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; [jean.lebreux@statcan.ca](mailto:jean.lebreux@statcan.ca)), Distributive Trades Division. □

**Wholesale merchants' sales**

|   | June<br>2005  | March<br>2006 <sup>r</sup> | April<br>2006 <sup>r</sup> | May<br>2006 <sup>r</sup> | June<br>2006 <sup>p</sup> | May<br>to<br>June<br>2006 | June<br>to<br>June<br>2006 |
|---|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Seasonally adjusted                         |               |                            |                            |                          |                           |                           |                            |
|   | \$ millions   |                            |                            |                          |                           | % change                  |                            |
| <b>Total, wholesale sales</b>               | <b>39,365</b> | <b>41,543</b>              | <b>41,421</b>              | <b>41,788</b>            | <b>41,520</b>             | <b>-0.6</b>               | <b>5.5</b>                 |
| <b>Farm products</b>                        | <b>415</b>    | <b>414</b>                 | <b>409</b>                 | <b>377</b>               | <b>395</b>                | <b>4.7</b>                | <b>-5.0</b>                |
| <b>Food, beverages and tobacco products</b> | <b>7,222</b>  | <b>7,410</b>               | <b>7,543</b>               | <b>7,577</b>             | <b>7,517</b>              | <b>-0.8</b>               | <b>4.1</b>                 |
| Food products                               | 6,608         | 6,721                      | 6,883                      | 6,917                    | 6,882                     | -0.5                      | 4.1                        |
| Alcohol and tobacco                         | 614           | 689                        | 659                        | 660                      | 636                       | -3.6                      | 3.5                        |
| <b>Personal and household goods</b>         | <b>5,659</b>  | <b>5,963</b>               | <b>5,993</b>               | <b>6,014</b>             | <b>6,032</b>              | <b>0.3</b>                | <b>6.6</b>                 |
| Apparel                                     | 850           | 731                        | 778                        | 776                      | 761                       | -2.0                      | -10.5                      |
| Household and personal products             | 2,333         | 2,597                      | 2,543                      | 2,603                    | 2,645                     | 1.6                       | 13.4                       |
| Pharmaceuticals                             | 2,476         | 2,635                      | 2,672                      | 2,635                    | 2,627                     | -0.3                      | 6.1                        |
| <b>Automotive products</b>                  | <b>7,596</b>  | <b>8,163</b>               | <b>8,128</b>               | <b>8,346</b>             | <b>8,169</b>              | <b>-2.1</b>               | <b>7.5</b>                 |
| Motor vehicles                              | 6,033         | 6,645                      | 6,642                      | 6,798                    | 6,699                     | -1.5                      | 11.0                       |
| Motor vehicle parts and accessories         | 1,562         | 1,518                      | 1,486                      | 1,548                    | 1,470                     | -5.1                      | -5.9                       |
| <b>Building materials</b>                   | <b>5,468</b>  | <b>5,944</b>               | <b>5,870</b>               | <b>5,933</b>             | <b>5,969</b>              | <b>0.6</b>                | <b>9.2</b>                 |
| Building supplies                           | 3,265         | 3,555                      | 3,507                      | 3,567                    | 3,575                     | 0.2                       | 9.5                        |
| Metal products                              | 1,094         | 1,216                      | 1,242                      | 1,295                    | 1,350                     | 4.3                       | 23.4                       |
| Lumber and millwork                         | 1,109         | 1,174                      | 1,120                      | 1,071                    | 1,043                     | -2.6                      | -5.9                       |
| <b>Machinery and electronic equipment</b>   | <b>8,334</b>  | <b>8,839</b>               | <b>8,604</b>               | <b>8,651</b>             | <b>8,660</b>              | <b>0.1</b>                | <b>3.9</b>                 |
| Machinery and equipment                     | 3,885         | 4,207                      | 4,104                      | 4,106                    | 4,162                     | 1.4                       | 7.1                        |
| Computer and other electronic equipment     | 2,651         | 2,595                      | 2,637                      | 2,607                    | 2,610                     | 0.1                       | -1.6                       |
| Office and professional equipment           | 1,798         | 2,036                      | 1,862                      | 1,938                    | 1,888                     | -2.6                      | 5.0                        |
| <b>Other products</b>                       | <b>4,670</b>  | <b>4,810</b>               | <b>4,874</b>               | <b>4,891</b>             | <b>4,777</b>              | <b>-2.3</b>               | <b>2.3</b>                 |
| <b>Total, excluding automobiles</b>         | <b>31,769</b> | <b>33,380</b>              | <b>33,293</b>              | <b>33,442</b>            | <b>33,351</b>             | <b>-0.3</b>               | <b>5.0</b>                 |
| <b>Sales, province and territory</b>        |               |                            |                            |                          |                           |                           |                            |
| Newfoundland and Labrador                   | 222           | 219                        | 224                        | 226                      | 223                       | -1.3                      | 0.4                        |
| Prince Edward Island                        | 49            | 36                         | 37                         | 41                       | 35                        | -14.7                     | -27.3                      |
| Nova Scotia                                 | 514           | 521                        | 531                        | 539                      | 522                       | -3.2                      | 1.5                        |
| New Brunswick                               | 415           | 405                        | 415                        | 407                      | 403                       | -1.2                      | -3.1                       |
| Quebec                                      | 7,607         | 7,742                      | 7,735                      | 7,773                    | 7,893                     | 1.5                       | 3.8                        |
| Ontario                                     | 19,936        | 21,161                     | 21,155                     | 21,364                   | 20,993                    | -1.7                      | 5.3                        |
| Manitoba                                    | 1,058         | 959                        | 990                        | 1,008                    | 989                       | -1.9                      | -6.5                       |
| Saskatchewan                                | 1,097         | 1,083                      | 1,058                      | 1,095                    | 1,035                     | -5.5                      | -5.6                       |
| Alberta                                     | 4,489         | 5,145                      | 5,102                      | 5,125                    | 5,248                     | 2.4                       | 16.9                       |
| British Columbia                            | 3,948         | 4,234                      | 4,146                      | 4,180                    | 4,150                     | -0.7                      | 5.1                        |
| Yukon                                       | 7             | 14                         | 8                          | 8                        | 8                         | 2.5                       | 13.5                       |
| Northwest Territories                       | 19            | 20                         | 18                         | 18                       | 18                        | 3.2                       | -3.9                       |
| Nunavut                                     | 3             | 2                          | 2                          | 2                        | 3                         | 9.4                       | -25.5                      |

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

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

|   | June<br>2005          | March<br>2006 <sup>r</sup> | April<br>2006 <sup>r</sup> | May<br>2006 <sup>r</sup> | June<br>2006 <sup>p</sup> | May<br>to<br>June<br>2006 | June<br>2005<br>to<br>June<br>2006 | May<br>2006 <sup>r</sup> | June<br>2006 <sup>p</sup> |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | Wholesale inventories |                            |                            |                          |                           | Inventory-to-sales ratio  |                                    |                          |                           |
|   | Seasonally adjusted   |                            |                            |                          |                           |                           |                                    |                          |                           |
|   | \$ millions           |                            |                            |                          |                           | % change                  |                                    |                          |                           |
| <b>Inventories</b>                      | <b>47,427</b>         | <b>49,944</b>              | <b>50,896</b>              | <b>50,854</b>            | <b>51,247</b>             | <b>0.8</b>                | <b>8.1</b>                         | <b>1.22</b>              | <b>1.23</b>               |
| Farm products                           | 177                   | 157                        | 159                        | 165                      | 183                       | 10.9                      | 3.7                                | 0.44                     | 0.46                      |
| Food products                           | 4,422                 | 4,249                      | 4,257                      | 4,294                    | 4,333                     | 0.9                       | -2.0                               | 0.62                     | 0.63                      |
| Alcohol and tobacco                     | 269                   | 277                        | 275                        | 281                      | 279                       | -0.7                      | 3.6                                | 0.43                     | 0.44                      |
| Apparel                                 | 1,605                 | 1,514                      | 1,552                      | 1,617                    | 1,651                     | 2.1                       | 2.9                                | 2.08                     | 2.17                      |
| Household and personal products         | 3,601                 | 3,675                      | 3,841                      | 3,968                    | 3,921                     | -1.2                      | 8.9                                | 1.52                     | 1.48                      |
| Pharmaceuticals                         | 2,938                 | 3,022                      | 3,044                      | 3,117                    | 3,064                     | -1.7                      | 4.3                                | 1.18                     | 1.17                      |
| Motor vehicles                          | 4,173                 | 4,764                      | 5,007                      | 4,866                    | 4,716                     | -3.1                      | 13.0                               | 0.72                     | 0.70                      |
| Motor vehicle parts and accessories     | 3,097                 | 3,186                      | 3,163                      | 3,143                    | 3,159                     | 0.5                       | 2.0                                | 2.03                     | 2.15                      |
| Building supplies                       | 4,893                 | 5,468                      | 5,511                      | 5,503                    | 5,554                     | 0.9                       | 13.5                               | 1.54                     | 1.55                      |
| Metal products                          | 2,385                 | 2,439                      | 2,509                      | 2,685                    | 2,791                     | 4.0                       | 17.0                               | 2.07                     | 2.07                      |
| Lumber and millwork                     | 1,192                 | 1,058                      | 988                        | 1,057                    | 1,061                     | 0.4                       | -11.0                              | 0.99                     | 1.02                      |
| Machinery and equipment                 | 8,910                 | 10,094                     | 10,320                     | 10,282                   | 10,616                    | 3.2                       | 19.2                               | 2.50                     | 2.55                      |
| Computer and other electronic equipment | 1,433                 | 1,505                      | 1,693                      | 1,569                    | 1,583                     | 0.9                       | 10.5                               | 0.60                     | 0.61                      |
| Office and professional equipment       | 2,423                 | 2,432                      | 2,469                      | 2,456                    | 2,485                     | 1.2                       | 2.5                                | 1.27                     | 1.32                      |
| Other products                          | 5,908                 | 6,104                      | 6,108                      | 5,853                    | 5,850                     | -0.1                      | -1.0                               | 1.20                     | 1.22                      |

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary



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## Stocks of frozen poultry meat

August 1, 2006 (preliminary)

Stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on August 1 totalled 72 572 metric tonnes, up 14.5% 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. ■

## Steel primary forms, weekly data

Week ending August 12, 2006 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending August 12 totalled 290 928 metric tonnes, up 0.1% from 290 521 tonnes a week earlier and down 0.5% from 292 306 tonnes in the same week of 2005.

The year-to-date total as of August 12 was 9 729 504 tonnes, up 1.8% from 9 559 196 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 (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; [manufact@statcan.ca](mailto:manufact@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

## Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins

June 2006

Data on industrial chemicals and synthetic resins are now available for June.

**Available on CANSIM: table 303-0014.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2183.**

The June 2006 issue of *Industrial Chemicals and Synthetic Resins*, Vol. 49, no. 6 (46-002-XIE, free) is now available from the *Publications* module of our website.

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

## Monthly Survey of Large Retailers

June 2006

Data for the monthly survey of large retailers are now available for June.

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

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

A data table is also available from the *Summary tables* module of our website.

Data for the group of large retailers for July will be released on September 18.

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 Wendy Gibbard (613-951-0353), Distributive Trades Division. ■

## Primary iron and steel

June 2006

Data on primary iron and steel for June are now available.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 303-0048 to 303-0051.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2116 and 2184.**

The June 2006 issue of *Steel, Tubular Products and Steel Wire* (41-019-XIE, free) will soon be available.

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

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## New products

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**Industrial Chemicals and Synthetic Resins**,  
June 2006, Vol. 49, no. 6  
**Catalogue number 46-002-XIE**  
(free).

**Canadian Vehicle Survey: Annual (edited  
version), 2005**  
**Catalogue number 53-223-XIE**  
(free).

**Canada's International Transactions in Securities**,  
June 2006, Vol. 72, no. 6  
**Catalogue number 67-002-XIE**  
(free).

**Cancer Incidence in Canada, 1992 to 2004**  
**Catalogue number 82-231-XWE**  
(free).

**Science, Innovation and Electronic Information  
Division Working Papers, 1994 to 2002, no. 8**  
**Catalogue number 88F0006XIE2006008**  
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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 work output in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

**OTHER RELEASES**

- Map-wanted index: May 1997 3
- Short-term Expectations Survey 8
- Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997 12
- Egg production: Apr. 1997 12

**PUBLICATIONS RELEASED** 11



### Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

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*The Daily, August 18, 2006*

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**Release dates: August 21 to 25, 2006**

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(Release dates are subject to change.)

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| <b>Release date</b> | <b>Title</b>   | <b>Reference period</b> |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 21                  | <b>Retail trade</b>  | June 2006               |
| 22                  | <b>Consumer Price Index</b>  | July 2006               |
| 22                  | <b>Health Reports</b>  | 2006                    |
| 23                  | <b>Leading indicators</b>  | July 2006               |
| 24                  | <b>Quarterly Financial Statistics for Enterprises</b>  | Second quarter 2006     |
| 24                  | <b>Farm cash receipts</b>  | Second quarter 2006     |
| 25                  | <b>Field crop reporting series: July 31 estimates of production of principal field crops</b> | July 31, 2006           |

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