



The Daily

Statistics Canada

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Strong foreign demand for Canada's natural resources products, combined with higher prices, pushed the nation's total merchandise exports to a record high in 2006, according to a review of the year's activities in merchandise trade.	
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Releases

International merchandise trade: Annual review

2006

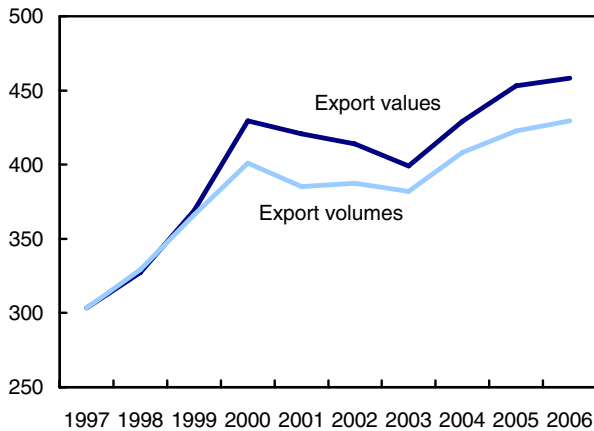
The combination of strong demand and rising prices for Canada's natural resources products, specifically metals, crude petroleum and grains, pushed the nation's total merchandise exports to a record high in 2006, according to a new report.

An annual review of the trends of merchandise trade shows that both the value and volume of merchandise exports hit a peak in 2006, as did import values and volumes.

In total, the value of exports rose 1.1% from 2005, while export volumes were up 1.6%. Overall export prices decreased as downward pressure on lumber and natural gas prices offset record prices for metals and crude petroleum.

Export values and volumes hit record highs in 2006

Billions CAN\$



A major factor in exports was the industrial goods and materials sector, specifically metals. Exports of metal ores and alloys surged to a record high

of \$45.2 billion, a 25.5% gain over 2005. This was nearly double the value of \$26.0 billion in 2003, thanks mostly to increased demand from China, which sent prices skyrocketing.

The report also showed a growing propensity among Canadian companies to do business with countries other than the United States. While the United States was still by far Canada's largest trading partner last year, its share of both exports and imports declined.

Contributing to this shift were rising exports of metals, aircraft, wheat and canola to the rest of the world, combined with lower exports of autos, forestry products and natural gas to the United States.

The United Kingdom edged out Japan as Canada's second largest export destination last year, after the United States. Exports to the United Kingdom hit \$10.1 billion, compared to \$9.4 billion for Japan. The major factors in the United Kingdom's increase were export values for gold, uranium and nickel as well as higher exports of aircraft.

In addition, while imports from the United States rose last year, they were outpaced by imports from countries such as China and Mexico, and oil-exporting nations such as Algeria, Iraq and Nigeria.

Exports: Higher commodity prices yield big gains in export values

The value of Canada's exports hit \$458.2 billion last year, a 1.1% increase from 2005, largely on the strength of surging foreign demand and rising prices for natural resources.

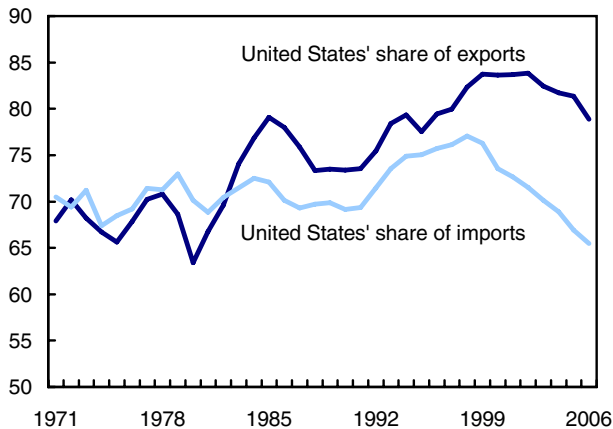
The overall gain was the result of rising export receipts for nations other than the United States. Canada's exports to the United States fell 2.0% last year, the first decline in three years. However, exports to other nations rose 14.6%.

Export values to countries other than the United States were buoyed by higher-priced metals and grain products, as well as larger shipments of aircraft, heading to the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe, as well as to Mexico and Asia.

As a result, the US share of Canada's exports fell from 81.4% in 2005 to 78.9% last year.

US share of exports and import on the decline

Share of total exports and imports



Prices for zinc, nickel and copper continued to soar in 2006, as supplies tightened and demand from emerging economies, particularly China, increased. Nickel exports to China doubled last year.

Countries other than the United States accounted for 40% of the increase in exports of metal ores and alloys in 2006. The United Kingdom was the largest market for Canadian metals, followed by China, Japan, Norway, South Korea and the Netherlands.

The value of exports of aircraft and parts rose 5.7% to \$10.2 billion, thanks to an 80% surge in exports to countries other than the United States, offsetting a 20% decline in sales to the United States. Although the United States remained the top destination for these exports, over 40% of Canada's aircraft exports were shipped to other destinations, compared with only 25% in 2005.

Agricultural products also contributed to the export gains. Wheat exports rose 34.1% last year, driven by a gain in overseas shipments, particularly to Mexico, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. Wheat exports to the United States rose by \$150 million, but the gain to other countries surged by nearly six times that value. Canola exports rose by more than one-third to \$1.8 billion, thanks to higher exports to Pakistan and China as well as to the United Arab Emirates, which imported Canadian canola for the first time.

In contrast, declines in prices and demand led to a 13.3% decline in lumber and sawmill exports to \$16.4 billion in 2006. The main factor was the weakening housing market in the United States. Exports of automotive products and natural gas also

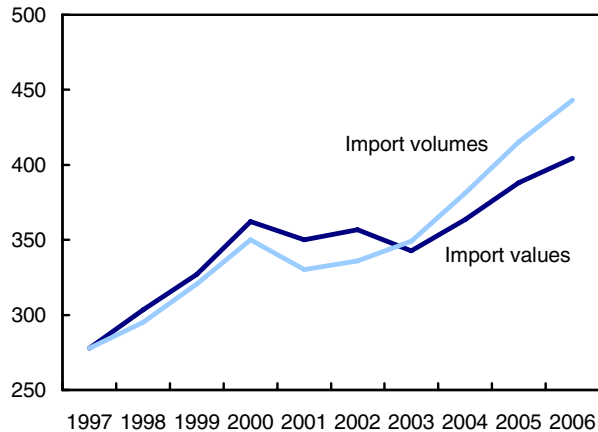
reported lower export values for the year as US demand waned.

Imports: Gains with foreign nations outpace increase with United States

Canadian companies imported a record high of \$404.5 billion in merchandise last year, up 4.2%, while volumes were up 6.7%.

Import values and volumes reach new heights in 2006

Billions CAN\$



Imports from the United States increased 1.9% to \$264.8 billion. However, this pace was surpassed by imports from countries such as China, Mexico, and countries from which the Eastern provinces import oil, such as Algeria, Iraq and Nigeria.

As a result, the United States accounted for 65.5% of Canada's imports in 2006, down from 66.9% the year before. (Canada's trade surplus with the United States fell from \$108.8 billion in 2005 to \$96.5 billion, the first drop in three years.)

China remained Canada's second largest source for imports, posting a gain of 16.8% to \$34.5 billion.

Imports from third-place Mexico remained stronger than those from Japan for a second consecutive year. The value of merchandise from Mexico rose 9.5% in 2006 to \$16.0 billion, compared with a 3.6% gain in imports from Japan (for a total of \$15.3 billion).

Strong demand for machinery and consumer goods leads to record-high imports

Last year's record-high imports were pushed up by strong imports of machinery, electronics, cars and trucks, home furnishings and clothing.

One of the principal factors was Alberta's booming economy, as construction in the oil sands expanded and people moved in droves to the province to capitalize on higher wages created by a tight labour market.

Imports of industrial machinery poured into the Western provinces in 2006, contributing to a 3.4% gain in machinery and equipment imports, worth \$114.7 billion. This increase was due partly to a stronger dollar, which spelled lower import prices, and to rising prices for crude petroleum and metals that drove up profits and provided incentives to expand production.

The rise in household incomes contributed to additional consumer spending in 2006, with Alberta, in particular, driving auto sales up to their highest level ever. The increase in sales was concentrated in Japanese and German models manufactured outside of North America, pushing automotive import values up 1.8% to \$79.8 billion. Real imports of automotive products were stronger, up 5.2% for the year.

More than \$1.3 billion worth of high definition televisions, which are imported primarily from Mexico, but also from China, made their way into Canadian electronics stores in 2006.

There was also increased demand for personal electronics equipment, such as cellular phones, mostly originating in China, South Korea and Malaysia.

Despite lower clothing prices, the value of imports rose 6.5% to \$8.3 billion. In real terms, however, the increase in the value of clothing imports was more pronounced (+11.0%).

Available on CANSIM: tables 228-0001 to 228-0003 and 228-0033 to 228-0046.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2201, 2202 and 2203.

The publication *International Merchandise Trade Annual Review, 2006* (65-208-XWE, free) is now available online from the *Publications* module of our website.

For more information on products and services, contact Sharon Nevins (toll-free 1-800-294-5583; 613-951-9798). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Diana Wyman (613-951-3116), International Trade Division. ■

Farm product prices

March 2007

Prices received by farmers in March for grains, oilseeds, specialty crops, potatoes, cattle, hogs, poultry, eggs and dairy products are now available.

The March oats price in Saskatchewan was \$179.60 per metric tonne, up 6% from February 2007 and up 45% from the March 2006 price of \$123.86.

The Ontario slaughter cattle price in March was \$93.31 per hundredweight, up 8% from February 2007 and up 13% from March 2006 when the price was \$82.27.

Farm commodity prices are now available on CANSIM. Over 35 commodities are available by province, some series going back 20 years.

Available on CANSIM: table 002-0043.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3436.

For more information, or to inquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Nickeisha Patterson (613-951-3249; fax: 613-951-3868; nickeisha.patterson@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Aircraft movement statistics: Major airports

March 2007

For a tenth consecutive month, aircraft take-offs and landings at Canadian airports with NAV CANADA air traffic control towers and flight service stations increased in March compared to March 2006. These 96 airports reported 485,477 movements in March 2007, compared with 466,092 movements at 97 airports in March 2006, an increase of 4.2% (+19,385 movements).

Itinerant movements (flights from one airport to another) increased by 1.8% (+5,996 movements) in March compared with the same month a year earlier.

Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International was the most active airport for itinerant movements, with 35,368 movements, up 0.9% (+329 movements) from March 2006.

Local movements (flights that remain in the vicinity of the airport) increased by 9.8% (+13,389 movements) in March compared with March 2006.

Calgary/Springbank airport was the most active for local movements, with 11,009 movements, up 35.2% (+2,869 movements) from March 2006.

Available on CANSIM: tables 401-0007 to 401-0020.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2715.

The March 2007 issue of *Aircraft Movement Statistics*, Vol. 1, no. 3 (51-007-XWE, free), is now available from the *Publications* module of our website.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-866-500-8400; transportationstatistics@statcan.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Financial information of universities and colleges

2005/2006

The Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) provides financial data on the major degree-granting institutions in Canada. The CAUBO data are an important part of the Statistics Canada's Financial Information of Universities and Colleges Survey.

The CAUBO data are now available for the 2005/2006 academic year. Aggregated data for degree-granting institutions that are not members of the CAUBO organization are expected to be released in July.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3121.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-4441; educationstats@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. ■

New products

Aircraft Movement Statistics: NAV CANADA Towers and Flight Service Stations, March 2007, Vol. 1, no. 3
Catalogue number 51-007-XWE
 (free).

Building Permits, March 2007, Vol. 51, no. 3
Catalogue number 64-001-XWE
 (free).

International Merchandise Trade Annual Review, 2006
Catalogue number 65-208-XWE
 (free).

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Thursday, June 5, 1997
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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Discusses the importance of taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 40 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Current productivity among Canadian businesses has steadily risen since 1990, accompanied by significant gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **High-wind index, May 1997** 3
- **Structure-Employment Survey** 3
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