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Releases

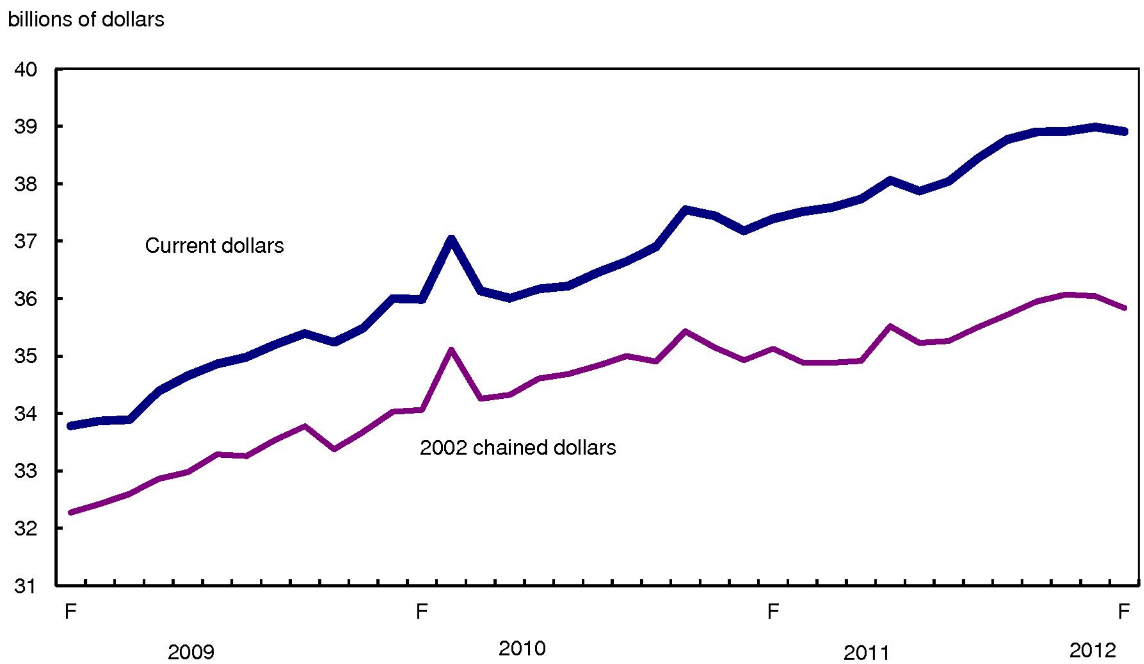
Releases

Retail trade, February 2012

Retail sales edged down 0.2% to $38.9 billion in February, largely offsetting the gain in January. New car dealers accounted for most of the decline. Lower sales were reported in 5 of 11 subsectors, representing 57% of total retail sales.

In volume terms, retail sales decreased 0.6%.

Chart 1
Retail sales decrease in February



Sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers fell 2.4%, partially offsetting the rise in January. Lower receipts at new car dealers (-2.8%) accounted for most of the decline. The "other motor vehicle dealers" industry (-3.5%) posted a decrease for a fourth month in a row. Increased sales were reported at automotive parts, accessories and tire stores (+1.3%) and used car dealers (+0.4%).

Food and beverage stores registered a second consecutive monthly decline, edging down 0.2%. Sales were down in all industries within this subsector in February.

Sporting goods, hobby, book and music store receipts (-1.0%) declined for a third month in a row, reflecting lower sales at sporting goods stores.

Following three consecutive monthly declines, sales at gasoline stations rose 1.7% in February, reflecting higher prices at the pump.

Sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers increased 2.2%, partially offsetting January's decline.

For a fifth consecutive month, sales grew at clothing and clothing accessories stores (+1.3%). Higher sales at clothing stores accounted for these gains.

General merchandise store sales rose 0.5% in February. Sales in the "other general merchandise stores" industry (+1.1%) accounted for all of the increase, advancing for a fifth time in six months.

Sales decrease most in Ontario

Retail sales fell in six provinces in February. Ontario (-0.9%) reported the largest decline in dollar terms. Lower sales of new motor vehicles were the main reason for this decrease.

Sales in Alberta decreased 0.6% in February, largely offsetting January's gain.

Quebec retailers registered a 0.7% rise in sales, a fifth increase in six months.

Sales in British Columbia (+0.4%) rose for a second consecutive month.

Note to readers

All the data in this release are seasonally adjusted and in current dollars, unless otherwise noted.

Unadjusted monthly data were revised back to January 2010, while seasonally adjusted data were revised back to January 2007. The revisions take into account late reporting or correction of respondent information, classification changes, as well as updates to seasonal and trading day factors. With these revisions, the annual sum of seasonally adjusted figures will now correspond to the annual sum of unadjusted data for reference year 2011.

Total retail sales by volume are measured by deflating values in current dollars of the various trade groups using consumer price indexes. This retail sales in chained dollars series (2002) is a chain Fisher volume index with 2002 as the reference year.

Table 1
Retail sales by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	February 2011	January 2012[r]	February 2012[p]	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	**37,390**	**38,987**	**38,909**	**-0.2**	**4.1**
Newfoundland and Labrador	639	660	656	-0.5	2.7
Prince Edward Island	150	165	160	-2.6	7.0
Nova Scotia	1,052	1,102	1,103	0.1	4.9
New Brunswick	905	949	948	-0.1	4.7
Quebec	8,394	8,621	8,680	0.7	3.4
Ontario	13,441	13,812	13,693	-0.9	1.9
Manitoba	1,370	1,396	1,390	-0.4	1.5
Saskatchewan	1,301	1,371	1,381	0.7	6.2
Alberta	5,141	5,644	5,608	-0.6	9.1
British Columbia	4,856	5,117	5,136	0.4	5.8
Yukon	54	55	56	2.4	5.1
Northwest Territories	60	62	65	3.7	8.5
Nunavut	29	33	31	-4.4	8.6

[r] *revised*
[p] *preliminary*
Note(s): *Figures may not add to totals as a result of rounding.*

Table 2
Retail sales by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	February 2011	January 2012[r]	February 2012[p]	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade	**37,390**	**38,987**	**38,909**	**-0.2**	**4.1**
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	**29,365**	**29,993**	**30,132**	**0.5**	**2.6**
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	**24,736**	**25,138**	**25,194**	**0.2**	**1.9**
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	**8,026**	**8,993**	**8,777**	**-2.4**	**9.4**
New car dealers	6,425	7,305	7,101	-2.8	10.5
Used car dealers	491	516	518	0.4	5.6
Other motor vehicle dealers	562	598	577	-3.5	2.7
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	549	575	582	1.3	6.0
Furniture and home furnishing stores	**1,264**	**1,277**	**1,277**	**0.0**	**1.0**
Furniture stores	813	808	806	-0.3	-0.9
Home furnishings stores	451	469	471	0.5	4.4
Electronics and appliance stores	**1,236**	**1,214**	**1,207**	**-0.6**	**-2.4**
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	**2,244**	**2,233**	**2,282**	**2.2**	**1.7**
Food and beverage stores	**8,671**	**8,725**	**8,707**	**-0.2**	**0.4**
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,165	6,171	6,167	-0.1	0.0
Convenience stores	543	551	543	-1.4	0.0
Specialty food stores	406	432	431	-0.2	6.0
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,557	1,571	1,567	-0.3	0.6
Health and personal care stores	**2,704**	**2,738**	**2,724**	**-0.5**	**0.7**
Gasoline stations	**4,629**	**4,855**	**4,938**	**1.7**	**6.7**
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	**2,146**	**2,252**	**2,281**	**1.3**	**6.3**
Clothing stores	1,669	1,760	1,790	1.7	7.2
Shoe stores	248	252	246	-2.4	-0.8
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	229	239	244	2.2	7.0
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	**930**	**938**	**928**	**-1.0**	**-0.2**
General merchandise stores	**4,641**	**4,867**	**4,890**	**0.5**	**5.4**
Department stores	2,184	2,251	2,245	-0.3	2.8
Other general merchandise stores	2,457	2,616	2,645	1.1	7.6
Miscellaneous store retailers	**899**	**895**	**897**	**0.2**	**-0.3**

[r] *revised*

[p] *preliminary*

Note(s): *Figures may not add to totals as a result of rounding.*

It is possible to consult the tables of unadjusted data by industry and by province and territory from the *Tables by subject* module of our website.

For information on related indicators, refer to the *Latest statistics* page on our website.

Available without charge in CANSIM: tables 080-0020 and 080-0021.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 2406 and 2408.

The February 2012 issue of *Retail Trade* (63-005-X, free) will soon be available.

Data on retail trade for March will be released on May 23.

For more information or to order data, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Ashley Ker (613-951-2252), Distributive Trades Division.

Principal field crops, March 2012 (intentions)

Early intentions for planting in 2012 show increases in spring wheat and durum wheat compared with 2011, and a possible record acreage of canola.

Indications are also that soybean acreage could reach a record high nationally. In the East, farmers anticipate seeding a record area of corn for grain.

Farmers may modify their plans prior to planting time as a result of economic and environmental conditions. Some farmers indicated that they were still undecided about their final strategies for 2012.

Possible record acreage for canola

Survey results indicate that Canadian farmers may seed a record 20.4 million acres of canola in 2012, up 8.0% or 1.5 million acres from the previous record of 18.9 million acres set in 2011. This would be the sixth consecutive annual record in canola area at the national level.

This increase is driven by Saskatchewan, where farmers anticipate increasing their canola area 9.9% to a record high of 10.8 million acres.

In Manitoba, farmers reported intentions to plant more canola, returning to pre-flood levels after being hit hard in 2011. They now intend to seed 3.3 million acres in canola, a 19.3% increase from the 2.7 million acres seeded in 2011.

Area for wheat expected to increase

At the national level, spring wheat area could rise 9.0% or 1.4 million acres to 17.2 million acres in 2012.

Similarly, durum wheat acreage is expected to increase for a second consecutive year, to 5.1 million acres in 2012 from 4.0 million acres in 2011.

In Saskatchewan, intentions show spring wheat acreage rising to 8.6 million acres, up 14.7% or 1.1 million acres. Durum wheat acreage in Saskatchewan is expected to rise 28.1%, or 975,000 acres, to 4.5 million acres.

In Manitoba, farmers anticipate that their seeded area of spring wheat will rise 24.9% in 2012 to 2.5 million acres.

In Alberta, however, early intentions are for 5.9 million acres of spring wheat, down 2.3% from the area seeded in 2011.

Potential for record acreage of corn for grain in the East

In Ontario, farmers expect to seed a record 2.24 million acres of corn for grain, up by 335,000 acres or 17.6% from 2011. This would break the previous record of 2.17 million acres set in 1981.

In Quebec, farmers anticipate the area seeded in corn for grain to rise 16.2% to just over one million acres in 2012.

Soybean acreage on the rise

Nationally, farmers are expecting to seed a soybean area of nearly 4.0 million acres in 2012, up from 3.8 million acres the previous year. This would be a record high.

Ontario farmers anticipate seeding 2.5 million acres of soybeans in 2012. If these intentions are realized, this level would surpass the record seeded area set in 2010 and unchanged in 2011.

Conversely, Quebec farmers plan to plant fewer acres of soybeans in 2012. Survey results show a 16.0% decline from 741,300 acres in 2011 to 622,700 acres in 2012. It would be the first decline in acres seeded to soybeans in Quebec since 2007.

Manitoba farmers anticipate seeding 800,000 acres in 2012, which would represent a fourth consecutive annual record high. If this increase and the intended decline in Quebec soybean area are realized, Manitoba would have the second-largest soybean area after Ontario.

Note to readers

The March Farm Survey, which collects information on crop planting intentions, was conducted between March 23 and 30, 2012, with about 13,400 farmers. They were asked to report their intended plantings of grain, oilseeds and special crops.

Subsequent surveys during the year will provide estimates of actual seeded acreages. Data on final acreages for 2012 will be released on December 5, 2012, and will be subject to revision for two years.

Table 1
March intentions of principal field crop areas

	2010 (final)	2011 (final)	March 2012 (intentions)	2010 to 2011	2011 to March 2012
	thousands of acres			% change	
Total wheat[1]	21,065	21,464	24,324	1.9	13.3
Spring wheat	16,475	15,760	17,178	-4.3	9.0
Durum wheat	3,150	4,015	5,100	27.5	27.0
Winter wheat[2]	1,439	1,689	2,047	17.3	21.2
Canola	17,608	18,862	20,372	7.1	8.0
Barley	6,911	6,472	7,968	-6.3	23.1
Summerfallow	10,760	12,410	3,970	15.3	-68.0
Soybeans	3,665	3,830	3,969	4.5	3.6
Corn for grain	3,000	3,009	3,562	0.3	18.4
Oats	3,013	3,109	3,393	3.2	9.1
Dry field peas	3,625	2,328	3,310	-35.8	42.2
Lentils	3,480	2,570	2,460	-26.1	-4.3
Flaxseed	925	695	1,040	-24.9	49.6

1. *Total wheat is the sum of winter wheat after winterkill, spring wheat and durum wheat.*
2. *The area remaining after winterkill.*

Available without charge in CANSIM: tables 001-0010 and 001-0017.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 3401 and 3465.

The publication *Field Crop Reporting Series:* "March Intentions of Principal Field Crop Areas", Vol. 91, no. 2 (22-002-X, free), is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

The stocks of principal field crops at March 31 will be released on May 7.

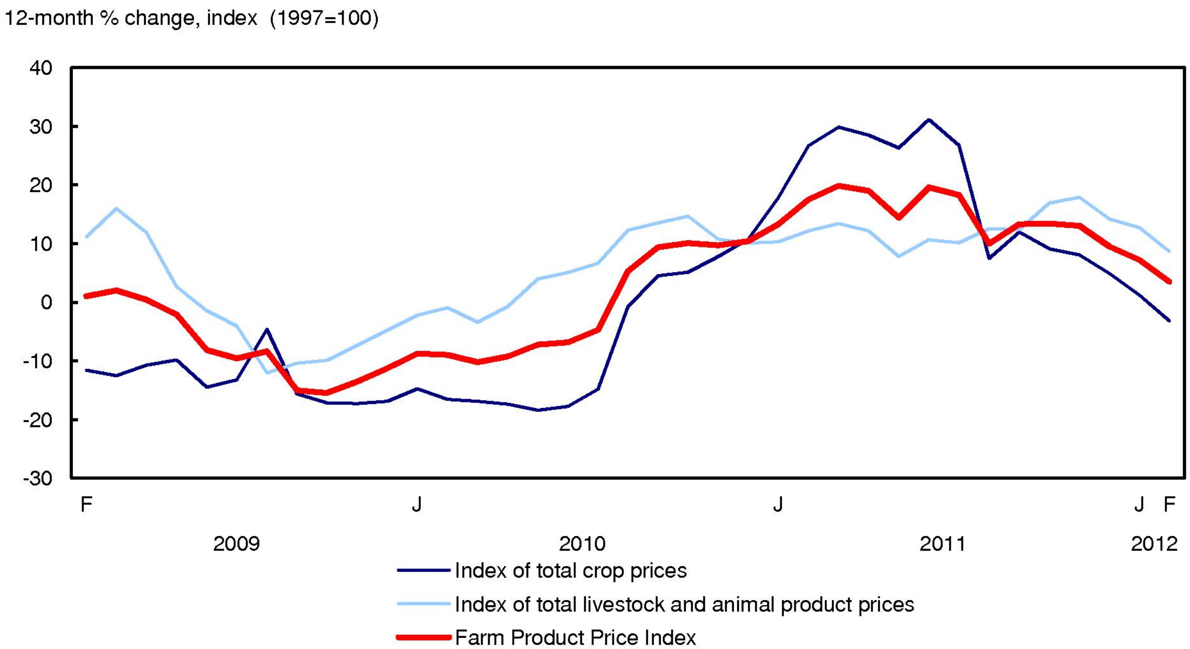
For more information, contact Statistics' Canada National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Yves Gilbert (613-951-2577; yves.gilbert@statcan.gc.ca) or Craig Byrd (613-951-5138; craig.byrd@statcan.gc.ca), Agriculture Division.

Farm Product Price Index, February 2012

Prices farmers received for their commodities in February rose 3.4% from February 2011, as the increase in overall livestock and animal product prices more than offset lower crop prices. The total index has trended upwards since August 2010; however, there has been a continual slowdown of growth since October 2011. Single-digit increases were posted in December, January and February.

Chart 1
The 12-month change in the Farm Product Price Index



Compared with the same month in 2011, the livestock and animal products index (+8.7%) continued to grow, while the crops index (-3.2%) declined for the first time since August 2010.

Advances continued for all livestock commodities, ranging from a 2.6% increase for dairy to a 16.5% increase for cattle and calves. With the exception of hogs in May 2011, all livestock commodities recorded year-over-year growth for the period from January 2011 to February 2012. Lower supplies of cattle and hogs in North America and higher input costs for supply-managed commodities have supported the year-over-year growth trends.

The decline in the total crops index was largely the result of a decrease in the grains index (-10.6%). This marked the third consecutive decline for the grains index, which started its year-over-year growth trend in September 2010. In February 2012, the International Grains Council again increased its forecast for a record global 2011/2012 grain crop.

The decline in the total crops index was moderated by increases in the oilseeds index (+3.8%) and the specialty crops index (+24.5%).

On a monthly basis, the Farm Product Price Index (+0.5%) increased in February for the second consecutive month. The increase was primarily the result of higher prices for livestock and animal products (+1.1%), as the overall crops index (-0.7%) declined.

Note to readers

The growth rate of the total Farm Product Price Index (FPPI) is derived from a weighted average of the component indices using a different set of weights in consecutive months; it is not a weighted average of the growth rates of its crop and livestock components. Given this, the growth rate of the composite FPPI can lie outside the growth rate of these components.

Table 1
Farm Product Price Index

	February 2011[r]	January 2012[r]	February 2012[p]	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	(1997=100)			% change	
Farm Product Price Index	**127.6**	**131.4**	**132.0**	**0.5**	**3.4**
Crops	**140.6**	**137.0**	**136.1**	**-0.7**	**-3.2**
Grains	147.1	135.0	131.5	-2.6	-10.6
Oilseeds	135.7	138.1	140.8	2.0	3.8
Specialty crops	128.4	167.2	159.9	-4.4	24.5
Fruit	121.2	125.0	124.0	-0.8	2.3
Vegetables	129.6	127.8	127.6	-0.2	-1.5
Potatoes	179.5	182.0	188.3	3.5	4.9
Livestock and animal products	**119.0**	**127.9**	**129.3**	**1.1**	**8.7**
Cattle and calves	116.7	133.7	135.9	1.6	16.5
Hogs	87.5	91.0	92.4	1.5	5.6
Poultry	117.2	129.1	125.8	-2.6	7.3
Eggs	117.0	129.8	129.4	-0.3	10.6
Dairy	150.5	152.3	154.4	1.4	2.6

[r] *revised*
[p] *preliminary*

Available without charge in CANSIM: tables 002-0021 and 002-0022.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5040.

The February 2012 issue of *Farm Product Price Index*, Vol. 12, no. 2 (21-007-X, free), is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre
(toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Gail-Ann Breese
(204-983-3445), Agriculture Division.

Natural gas sales, February 2012 (preliminary data)

Natural gas sales totalled 9 069 million cubic metres in February, down 0.9% compared with February 2011.

During the same period, the volume of sales to the industrial sector (+6.1%) was up and the volume of sales to the residential (-7.3%) and commercial (-7.1%) sectors were down.

Total sales in February were 5.7% lower compared with January.

Table 1
Natural gas sales

	February 2011	January 2012	February 2012[p]	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	thousands of cubic metres			% change	
Total sales	**9 150 668**	**9 612 579**	**9 069 176**	**-5.7**	**-0.9**
Residential[1]	2 809 541	2 678 337	2 605 728	-2.7	-7.3
Commercial[2]	1 990 784	2 005 099	1 848 809	-7.8	-7.1
Industrial[3] and direct sales[4]	4 350 343	4 929 143	4 614 639	-6.4	6.1

p preliminary
1. Gas sold for domestic purposes, including space heating, water heating and cooking, to a residential dwelling unit.
2. Gas sold to customers engaged in wholesale or retail trade, governments, institutions, office buildings, etc.
3. Gas sold to customers engaged in a process that creates or changes raw or unfinished materials into another form or product. Includes mining and manufacturing establishments. Includes firm, interruptible and buy/sell agreements.
4. Represents direct, non-utility, sales for consumption, where the utility acts solely as the transporter.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2149.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or the Media Hotline (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).

Production and disposition of tobacco products, March 2012

Canadian manufacturers produced 2.0 billion cigarettes in March, up 21.1% from February. The total number of cigarettes sold increased 14.5% to 1.9 billion and closing inventories increased 3.0% to 2.5 billion cigarettes.

Available without charge in CANSIM: table 303-0062.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2142.

The March 2012 issue of *Production and Disposition of Tobacco Products*, Vol. 41, no. 3 (32-022-X, free), is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or the Media Hotline (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).

Large urban transit, February 2012 (preliminary data)

Total operating revenue (excluding subsidies) for 10 of Canada's largest urban transit properties rose 8.1% from February 2011 to $255.2 million in February.

These 10 companies represent about 80% of total urban transit activity across the country.

Over the same period, ridership levels rose 4.0% to 133.6 million passenger trips.

Available without charge in CANSIM: table 408-0004.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2745.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or the Media Hotline (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).

Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins, 2011

Data for industrial chemicals and synthetic resins for 2011 are now available.

Note to readers

Data for 2009 and 2010 have been revised.

Available without charge in CANSIM: table 303-0053.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2183.

The *Industrial Chemicals and Synthetic Resins* publication (46-002-X, free) has been discontinued. To obtain copies of our previous monthly publications, which are available until June 2009, go to the *Key Resource* module of our website and select *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or the Media Hotline (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).

New products and studies

New products

Farm Product Price Index, February 2012, Vol. 12, no. 2
Catalogue number 21-007-X (HTML, free | PDF, free)

Field Crop Reporting Series, March Intentions of Principal Field Crop Areas, Vol. 91, no. 2
Catalogue number 22-002-X (HTML, free | PDF, free)

Production and Disposition of Tobacco Products, March 2012, Vol. 41, no. 3
Catalogue number 32-022-X (HTML, free | PDF, free)

Steel, Tubular Products and Steel Wire, February 2012, Vol. 8, no. 2
Catalogue number 41-019-X (HTML, free | PDF, free)

Wholesale Trade, February 2012, Vol. 75, no. 2
Catalogue number 63-008-X (HTML, free | PDF, free)

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