

# DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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## PRICE MOVEMENTS

MARCH 1956

**THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX:** (1949 = 100) The Consumer Price Index was unchanged at 116.4 between February 1 and March 1, 1956. A year ago it stood fractionally lower at 116.0. During this twelve month period, the index has reflected considerable stability of prices, and has ranged only about 1.0 per cent between 115.9 and 116.9. In the current month, slight increases in the Shelter, Clothing, Household Operation and Other Commodities and Services indexes were offset by a decrease of 0.7 per cent in the Food index from 109.9 to 109.1. This marks the lowest point the Food index has reached in five years, and it now stands about nine per cent above its pre-Korean level. Between February 1 and March 1, 1956, there were further price decreases for all cuts of beef and most other meat items, together with lower prices for processed cheese, lard, shortening and most canned fruits. Somewhat higher prices were recorded for oranges, coffee, eggs, and some fresh vegetables. The Shelter series remained practically unchanged, moving from 131.5 to 131.6, following fractional increases in both rent and home-ownership components. Small scattered increases among clothing items were sufficient to move the Clothing index from 108.6 to 108.7. The Household Operation component also advanced 0.1 per cent from 116.7 to 116.8 under the influence of a few small increases. Higher prices for new passenger cars as compared to those prevailing last autumn, as well as higher quotations for automobile tires and repairs, and hospital rates, were responsible for moving the Other Commodities and Services Index from 119.3 to 119.9.

Consumer Price Indexes (1949=100)

	Total Index	Food	Shelter	Clothing	Household Operation	Other Commodities and Services
March 1, 1956	116.4	109.1	131.6	108.7	116.8	119.9
February 1, 1956	116.4	109.9	131.5	108.6	116.7	119.3
March 1, 1955	116.0	110.7	128.6	108.0	117.0	118.3

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WHOLESALE PRICE INDEXES (WEEKLY)

(1935-1939 = 100)

The weekly composite index for thirty industrial material prices at wholesale declined 0.2 per cent from 249.2 to 248.8 between February 24th and March 23rd. Price declines for sisal, tin, raw cotton and steers overbalanced increases for linseed oil, oats, beef hides, wheat, raw sugar and raw rubber.

Canadian farm products at terminal markets advanced 1.2 per cent in the period under review as the composite index changed from 195.8 to 198.1. A rise of 3.9 per cent in the Field Products index from 159.7 to 165.9 reflected a sharp increase in Eastern potato prices and lesser gains for Ontario barley, corn and wheat, and Western hay, rye and potatoes. Eastern hay and Western flax, on the other hand, registered losses. The Animal Products index decline of 0.7 per cent from 232.0 to 230.3 represented lower prices for calves, hogs, steers, Eastern lambs and wool, which overbalanced increases for eggs, Eastern poultry and cheesemilk and Western lambs.

Wholesale Price Indexes (1935-1939 = 100)

	1956 Week Ended					Monthly Average		
	Feb. 24th	Mar. 2nd	Mar. 9th	Mar. 16th	Mar. 23rd	Mar. 1955	Feb. 1956	Mar. <sup>p</sup> 1956
Industrial Materials .....	249.2	249.6	249.4	249.2	248.8	229.9	247.2	249.2
Canadian Farm Products .....	195.8	195.3	195.5	196.8	198.1	207.0	195.9	196.4
Field .....	159.7	159.8	160.2	161.5	165.9	172.7	159.5	161.8
Animal .....	232.0	230.8	230.7	232.0	230.3	241.3	232.3	231.0

p - preliminary (average of four weeks)

**SECURITY PRICE INDEXES:**  
(1935-1939 = 100)

The Investors' Index of 96 common stock issues rose 7.4 per cent from 252.4 to 271.2 between February 23rd and March 22nd to register the sharpest advance over a four-week period since February 1951. All group indexes were higher: 76 Industrials advanced 8.6 per cent from 261.8 to 284.3, 13 Utilities 3.0 per cent from 205.1 to 211.3, and 7 Banks 4.4 per cent from 266.8 to 278.5. Increases of 11.5 and 10.9 per cent for Oils, and Machinery and Equipment respectively, were followed by major gains in Industrial Mines, Transportation, Building Materials, Pulp and Paper, and Textiles and Clothing. Only Telephones, down fractionally, failed to share the general upward movement. Mining stocks were also appreciably stronger as the composite index for 27 issues rose 9.0 per cent from 126.9 to 138.3 in the period under review, reflecting gains of 12.3 per cent for 5 Base Metals from 241.3 to 271.1, and 4.4 per cent for 22 Golds from 76.9 to 80.3.

Weekly Security Price Indexes (1935-1939 = 100)

	1956 Week Ended					Monthly Average		
	Feb. 23rd	Mar. 1st	Mar. 8th	Mar. 15th	Mar. 22nd	Mar. 1955	Feb. 1956	Mar. (2) 1956
<b>Investors' Price Index</b>								
96 Common Stocks .....	252.4	257.5	264.9	269.9	271.2	213.7	249.2	265.9
76 Industrials.....	261.8	267.8	277.0	283.3	284.3	218.0	258.1	278.1
13 Utilities.....	205.1	207.5	209.9	210.6	211.3	185.2	204.1	209.8
7 Banks .....	266.8	269.0	270.1	272.4	278.5	236.5	264.2	272.5
<b>Mining Stock Price Index</b>								
27 Stocks.....	126.9	128.1	131.0	136.2	138.3	105.7	125.1	133.4
22 Golds .....	76.9	77.7	77.7	80.9	80.3	69.0	76.7	79.2
5 Base Metals.....	241.3	243.5	252.9	262.7	271.1	189.6	235.8	257.6
<b>Government of Canada Long-Term Bonds - Yield Index<sup>1</sup></b> .....	106.4	106.1	106.7	107.7	107.4	95.9	106.2	107.3 <sup>(3)</sup>

1. Yield Indexes based on rates as of Wednesday of each week.

2. Average of four weeks.

3. Average of three weeks.

N.B. Enquiries concerning indexes in this release should be directed to The Prices Section, Labour and Prices Division.

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