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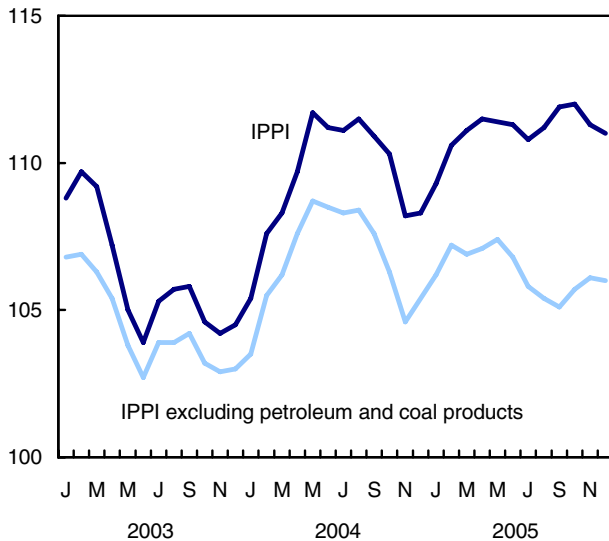
Industrial product and raw materials price indexes

December 2005

Monthly prices for manufactured goods at the factory gate were down in December, as prices for petroleum products declined for a third month. Raw materials prices were down for a fourth consecutive month in December, as prices for crude oil continued to fall.

Prices for manufactured goods decline again

Index (1997=100)



Prices charged by manufacturers, as measured by the Industrial Product Price Index (IPPI), were down 0.3% from November to December. Lower prices for petroleum products, motor vehicles and chemical products were the major contributors to this monthly decrease.

The 12-month change in the IPPI was 2.5%, down from November's year-over-year increase of 2.9% and largely due to higher prices for petroleum products as well as chemical products compared to one year earlier.

The Raw Materials Price Index (RMPI) was down 1.2% from November to December, following a 1.5% decrease the previous month. There were price decreases in mineral fuels as well as ferrous materials.

Note to readers

The **Industrial Product Price Index (IPPI)** reflects the prices that producers in Canada receive as the goods leave the plant gate. It does not reflect what the consumer pays. Unlike the Consumer Price Index, the IPPI excludes indirect taxes and all the costs that occur between the time a good leaves the plant and the time the final user takes possession of it, including the transportation, wholesale, and retail costs.

Canadian producers export many goods. They often quote their prices in foreign currencies, particularly for motor vehicles, pulp, paper, and wood products. Therefore, a rise or fall in the value of the Canadian dollar against its US counterpart affects the IPPI.

The **Raw Materials Price Index (RMPI)** reflects the prices paid by Canadian manufacturers for key raw materials. Many of these prices are set in a world market. Unlike the IPPI, the RMPI includes goods not produced in Canada.

Compared to December 2004, raw materials cost factories 16.8% more, up from the 12-month change of 12.7% in November.

In December, the IPPI (1997=100) stood at 111.0 down from November's level of 111.3. The RMPI (1997=100) stood at 146.9, down from a revised level of 148.7 in November.

IPPI: Prices for petroleum products, motor vehicles and chemical products decline

On a month-over-month basis, manufacturers' prices were down 0.3%, mainly due to lower prices for petroleum products, motor vehicles and chemical products.

Petroleum and coal products prices decreased 2.1% compared to November. If petroleum and coal product prices had been excluded, the IPPI would have edged down 0.1% rather than decreasing 0.3%.

Motor vehicles and other transport equipment declined 1.2% as the Canadian dollar remained strong. Prices for chemical products fell 1.3% from the previous month as lower prices were observed for synthetic resins.

Prices for electrical and communication products, pulp and paper products as well as machinery and equipment also declined from the previous month.

However, primary metal products rose 3.0% as prices for aluminum, nickel and copper products

increased due to strong demand and rising production costs.

Prices for fruit, vegetable and feed products, meat, fish and dairy products as well as metal fabricated products also increased in December.

IPPI: Petroleum and chemical products are the major factors in the 12-month change

On a 12-month basis, the IPPI was up 2.5% in December, following an increase of 2.9% in November.

Prices for petroleum and coal products rose 25.1% from December 2004, up from November's increase of 18.5%. If petroleum and coal product prices had been excluded, the IPPI would have increased 0.6%, rather than increasing 2.5% from the same period a year earlier.

Chemical products increased 7.8%, due to higher prices for industrial type chemicals. Prices were also higher for rubber, leather and plastic fabricated products, primary metals, fruit, vegetable and feed products, tobacco products, non-metallic minerals as well as furniture and fixtures, compared with the same period a year earlier.

On the other hand, motor vehicles and other transport equipment prices and electrical and communication products were down 3.5% and 0.6% respectively from a year ago, mostly as a result of a stronger Canadian dollar.

Lumber and other wood products declined 4.9% from December 2004 to December 2005, as year-over-year price decreases were recorded for softwood lumber, softwood plywood excluding Douglas fir and particleboard. Prices for pulp and paper products were also down from a year ago.

RMPI: Crude oil prices continue to decrease

On a monthly basis, raw materials prices fell 1.2% in December, following a decrease of 1.5% in November. Mineral fuels were down 4.1% compared to November. Crude oil prices decreased 4.5% as inventories remained high.

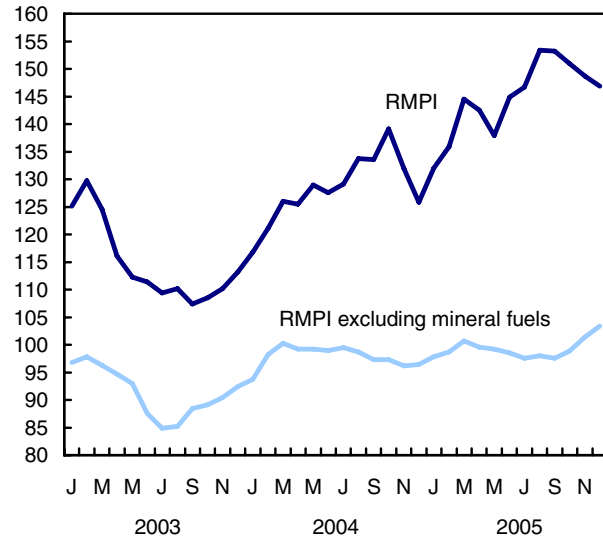
Ferrous materials decreased 0.8% from the previous month as prices were down for iron ore and iron and steel scrap.

However, prices for non-ferrous metals rose 5.5% mainly due to higher prices for zinc concentrates, radio-active concentrates, lead concentrates, copper concentrates and gold. Prices for animal and animal products rose 1.4% compared to the previous month, as increases were registered for cattle for slaughter and unprocessed whole milk. Prices for wood products increased 0.8% with higher prices for softwood logs and bolts being reported.

On a 12-month basis, the price of raw materials rose 16.8% in December, up from the 12.7% year-over-year increase in November. Mineral fuels were up 27.2% with crude oil prices rising 32.7%. If mineral fuels had been excluded, the RMPI would have increased 7.3% instead of rising 16.8%.

Raw materials prices continue to decline

Index (1997=100)



Prices for non-ferrous metals rose 28.1%, mainly because of higher prices for radio-active concentrates, zinc concentrates, copper concentrates and lead. Prices for animal and animal products were up 3.3% from a year ago, due to year-over-year increases for cattle for slaughter (+17.5%) and unprocessed whole milk (+6.1%). However, compared to December 2004, prices were down for hogs for slaughter (-15.3%) and poultry (-8.8%).

There were higher prices for non-metallic mineral products, ferrous materials and vegetable products, while wood products (-6.8%) and softwood logs and bolts prices (-9.1%) were both down compared with the same month a year earlier.

Impact of the exchange rate

Between November and December, the value of the Canadian dollar against the US dollar was up 1.7%. As a result, the total IPPI excluding the effect of the exchange rate would have risen 0.2% instead of its actual decrease of 0.3%.

On a 12-month basis, the value of the Canadian dollar rose 5.0% against the US dollar. If the impact of the exchange rate had been excluded, producer prices

would have risen 3.8% between December 2004 and December 2005, rather than their actual increase of 2.5%.

Prices for intermediate goods decrease

Prices for intermediate goods decreased 0.3% from November. Lower prices for petroleum products, chemical products, motor vehicles, electrical and communication products, and pulp and paper products were the major contributors to the decrease.

Higher prices for primary metals and fruit, vegetable and feed products partially offset the monthly decrease.

Producers of intermediate goods received 3.4% more for their goods in December 2005 than in December 2004. Higher prices were registered for petroleum products, chemical products, rubber, leather and plastic fabricated products, primary metals, non-metallic mineral products, fruit, vegetable and feed products, and machinery and equipment.

These increases were partly offset by lower prices for lumber products, motor vehicles, electrical and communication products, and meat, fish and dairy products.

Finished goods prices decline

On a monthly basis, prices for finished goods were down 0.4% from November. Lower prices for motor vehicles, machinery and equipment, electrical and communication products as well as chemical products were the major contributors to this monthly decline.

These decreases were partially offset by higher prices for petroleum products and meat, fish and dairy products.

Compared with December 2004, prices for finished goods were up by 0.9%. Higher prices for petroleum products, tobacco products, fruit, vegetable and feed products, meat, fish and dairy products, chemical products, rubber, leather and plastic fabricated products, and furniture and fixtures were the major contributors to the annual increase.

Lower prices for motor vehicles, lumber products, and pulp and paper products partly offset the annual increase.

2005 in Review

For 2005, manufacturers received an average of 1.5% more for their products than in 2004, much lower than the 3.1% increase in 2004.

The main contributors to this increase were petroleum and coal products (+23.5%), primary metal products (+2.7%), metal fabricated products (+3.8%), chemical products (+6.2%) and rubber, leather and plastic fabricated products (+5.6%).

Motor vehicles and other transport equipment prices were down 4.6% on average in 2005. This decrease was mainly the result of a stronger Canadian dollar.

Lumber and other wood products also declined 8.4% in 2005 compared to 2004 as prices were lower on average for softwood lumber, particleboard and softwood type plywood.

The value of the Canadian dollar in terms of the US dollar strengthened on average in 2005, rising 7.4%. If the impact of the exchange rate had been excluded, the annual IPPI would have risen 3.4% rather than the actual 1.5% increase.

Raw materials prices were up an average of 12.9% in 2005 compared to the 11.8% increase in 2004. Most of the upward pressure came from higher prices for mineral fuels with crude oil prices rising 31.2% on average in 2005. Other major contributors to the annual average increase were non-ferrous metals and non-metallic minerals which rose 14.2% and 9.3% respectively.

Available on CANSIM: tables 329-0038 to 329-0049 and 330-0006.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2306 and 2318.

The December 2005 issue of *Industry Price Indexes* (62-011-XIE, \$19/\$175, 62-011-XPE, \$24/\$233) will be available in February.

The industrial product and raw material price indexes for January 2006 will be released on March 1.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-1539, infounit@statcan.ca) or Danielle Gouin (613-951-3375; danielle.gouin@statcan.ca), Prices Division.

□

Industrial product price indexes
(1997=100)

	Relative importance	December 2004	November 2005 ^r	December 2005 ^p	December 2004 to December 2005	November to December 2005
					% change	
Industrial product price index (IPPI)	100.00	108.3	111.3	111.0	2.5	-0.3
IPPI excluding petroleum and coal products	94.32	105.4	106.1	106.0	0.6	-0.1
Aggregation by commodities						
Meat, fish and dairy products	5.78	106.6	106.2	106.8	0.2	0.6
Fruit, vegetables, feeds and other food products	5.99	101.8	102.8	103.4	1.6	0.6
Beverages	1.57	120.7	121.2	121.2	0.4	0.0
Tobacco and tobacco products	0.63	170.4	178.5	178.5	4.8	0.0
Rubber, leather and plastic fabricated products	3.30	110.7	118.2	118.0	6.6	-0.2
Textile products	1.58	98.8	99.9	99.8	1.0	-0.1
Knitted products and clothing	1.51	104.2	104.2	104.2	0.0	0.0
Lumber and other wood products	6.30	93.8	89.4	89.2	-4.9	-0.2
Furniture and fixtures	1.59	113.3	115.2	115.2	1.7	0.0
Pulp and paper products	7.23	102.0	102.3	101.7	-0.3	-0.6
Printing and publishing	1.70	114.7	115.2	114.9	0.2	-0.3
Primary metal products	7.80	116.2	114.8	118.2	1.7	3.0
Metal fabricated products	4.11	120.8	121.3	121.5	0.6	0.2
Machinery and equipment	5.48	106.0	107.3	106.8	0.8	-0.5
Motor vehicles and other transport equipment	22.16	97.0	94.7	93.6	-3.5	-1.2
Electrical and communications products	5.77	93.1	93.3	92.5	-0.6	-0.9
Non-metallic mineral products	1.98	112.7	115.0	115.0	2.0	0.0
Petroleum and coal products ¹	5.68	162.3	207.5	203.1	25.1	-2.1
Chemicals and chemical products	7.07	117.0	127.7	126.1	7.8	-1.3
Miscellaneous manufactured products	2.40	110.0	110.6	111.1	1.0	0.5
Miscellaneous non-manufactured products	0.38	133.2	186.0	194.3	45.9	4.5
Intermediate goods²	60.14	109.6	113.6	113.3	3.4	-0.3
First-stage intermediate goods ³	7.71	119.0	124.6	126.6	6.4	1.6
Second-stage intermediate goods ⁴	52.43	108.2	112.0	111.3	2.9	-0.6
Finished goods⁵	39.86	106.4	107.8	107.4	0.9	-0.4
Finished foods and feeds	8.50	111.2	112.1	112.4	1.1	0.3
Capital equipment	11.73	101.9	101.5	100.7	-1.2	-0.8
All other finished goods	19.63	107.1	109.8	109.3	2.1	-0.5

^r Revised.

^p Preliminary.

1. This index is estimated for the current month.
2. Intermediate goods are goods used principally to produce other goods.
3. First-stage intermediate goods are items used most frequently to produce other intermediate goods.
4. Second-stage intermediate goods are items most commonly used to produce final goods.
5. Finished goods are goods most commonly used for immediate consumption or for capital investment.

Raw materials price indexes
(1997=100)

	Relative importance	December 2004	November 2005 ^r	December 2005 ^p	December 2004 to December 2005	November to December 2005
					% change	
Raw materials price index (RMPI)	100.00	125.8	148.7	146.9	16.8	-1.2
Mineral fuels	35.16	189.4	251.2	240.9	27.2	-4.1
Vegetable products	10.28	78.2	79.1	79.1	1.2	0.0
Animals and animal products	20.30	103.5	105.4	106.9	3.3	1.4
Wood	15.60	79.0	73.0	73.6	-6.8	0.8
Ferrous materials	3.36	119.0	125.4	124.4	4.5	-0.8
Non-ferrous metals	12.93	108.1	131.3	138.5	28.1	5.5
Non-metallic minerals	2.38	124.2	134.6	134.7	8.5	0.1
RMPI excluding mineral fuels	64.84	96.4	101.4	103.4	7.3	2.0

^r Revised.

^p Preliminary.

Study: The age of Canada's public infrastructure

1963 to 2003

The average age of the four main components of Canada's public engineering infrastructure has stabilized in recent years after 20 years of steady increases, thanks to higher investment.

A new study examines the aging, from 1963 to 2003, of the four main components of engineering infrastructure owned by governments: roads and highways, sewer systems, wastewater treatment facilities and bridges.

Combined, they comprised 80% of all engineering infrastructures owned by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments in 2002.

The study found that in 2003, three of the four components had passed the halfway mark of their so-called "service life," for all levels of government.

Wastewater treatment facilities, the oldest infrastructure, had 63% of their useful life behind them in 2003. Bridges, the youngest infrastructure, had reached 49% of their useful life. Roads and highways had reached 59%, and sewer systems 52%.

The study supports, to some degree, the widely held view that Canada's infrastructure has aged. However, the aging trend has stabilized in recent years. In 2003, average age actually diminished slightly, thanks to increased investment by the various levels of government.

The steady pace of urbanization and population growth, among other factors, has necessitated huge amounts of investment, particularly for roads and sewers. This addition of new infrastructures contributed to stabilize the average age.

This stock of government-owned engineering infrastructure is huge, worth an estimated \$154.8 billion in 2002. It has a tangible impact on the economic performance of Canadian businesses, let alone the pleasure of driving on good roads and bridges.

During the past 40 years, growth in infrastructure has accounted for just under one-fifth of productivity gains in the business sector, a measure of the efficiency with which inputs are used to produce goods and services.

First decline in average age in 30 years

Overall, the average age of the four main components of engineering infrastructure considered in this study (roads and highways, sewer systems, wastewater treatment facilities and bridges) increased substantially between 1973 and 1999. Then their

Note to readers

The service life of an asset is its productive life, that is, the length of its useful life at the time of its acquisition. For example, an asphalt roadway, whether it is a road or highway, has a mean service life of 28 years.

The service life is an average based on data from the Capital and Repair Expenditure Survey.

For analytical purposes, economists use a complex formula to estimate the age of public assets such as roads and bridges. The key factor is the amount of investment in public infrastructure. Without sufficient investment, the stock of infrastructure declines and ages. The more the investment, the younger the stock.

There can be several different types of distributions for a given average age. For example, there can be structures whose ages are clustered around the average age, or a combination of young structures with much older structures.

Ultimately, this method of computing average age is for analytical purposes.

average age was stable until 2002, before declining slightly in 2003.

In 1973, on average the four components taken together were an estimated 14.7 years old. By 1999, this average had increased to 17.5 years and stayed at that level until 2002. In 2003, it edged down to 17.4 years.

Most of the aging occurred between the mid-1970s and the late 1980s. In the following years, the aging continued, but at a slower pace.

A key factor in the recent slower pace of aging is a huge jump in investment in roads and highways, which has tended to rejuvenate this transportation network.

The network has started getting "younger" as investment has risen. On the other hand, bridges and wastewater treatment facilities have been aging almost without interruption since 1977, while the age of sewer systems has fallen slightly since 2001.

Two out of three levels of government saw the age of their infrastructure, covered by this study, decline in 2003. Provincial and municipal infrastructure got younger, while the average age of federal infrastructure remained virtually unchanged.

Nevertheless, federal infrastructure was already older than provincial and municipal infrastructure.

Provincial infrastructure aged the most, its average rising from 14.4 years to 18.8 years between 1963 and 2003. The age of municipal infrastructure also increased, though to a lesser degree.

Urbanization and population growth

There are many factors contributing to investment in infrastructure: population growth, urbanisation, urban sprawl, standard of living and car usage.

The strong population growth in urban areas has probably been a primary factor in shaping major changes in infrastructure. It undoubtedly accounts, in part, for the higher growth in the discussed components of infrastructure and the expanding role of municipal governments.

Urban growth goes hand in hand with the need for infrastructure. As the municipality grows, the need for infrastructure grows.

The average age of municipal infrastructure is a function of the development of new suburbs, which are made up of recent infrastructure, as well as the infrastructure in older neighbourhoods. The development of new suburbs may decrease the average age of the municipal infrastructure even if nothing is done to offset the aging of infrastructure in older parts of a city.

Road network: Recent decline in age

The road network is by far the largest component examined in this study, accounting for two-thirds of the total value.

The road network started getting younger in 1995, following a period of steady aging from 1974 to 1992. High levels of investment have rejuvenated the road network. However, they have not been enough to bring the age of roads and highways down to what it was in the early 1960s.

The average age of roads and highways rose from 14.1 years in 1974 to 17.0 years in 1992 and then edged down to 16.6 years in 2003.

Because the average service life for roads and highways is 28 years, this means that by 2003, this network already had over 50% of its useful life behind it.

The sewer system experienced the highest growth in investment, and this is the reason that the age of the system has remained steady over the years.

Between 1963 and 2003, investment in sewer systems more than doubled (+156%)

because of urbanisation and population growth. Average annual investment rose from \$580 million between 1964 and 1973 to \$1 billion between 1994 and 2003 (in 1997 constant dollars).

Municipal sewer systems have been getting younger since 1997, as municipalities have been investing heavily in this type of infrastructure. Between 1997 and 2003, municipal governments accounted for more than 95% of the total investments. Provincial and federal sewer infrastructures are much older than municipal.

Of all four components, wastewater treatment facilities were closest to the end of their service life. The average age of treatment facilities was 18.3 years in 2003, which represented 63% of their estimated service life of 29 years.

Municipal governments were responsible for more than 70% of the stock of wastewater treatment facilities and accounted for more than 95% of the corresponding investment between 1997 and 2003.

Bridges were the youngest of the four infrastructure components relative to their useful life in 2003. They had reached only 49% of their useful life, with an average age of 22.7 years over a service life of 46 years.

By 2003, federal and provincial bridges had passed past the halfway mark of their useful life; 57% in the case of federal bridges and 53% in the case of provincial. In contrast, municipal bridges were younger, and had only 41% of their useful lives behind them.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2803.

The analytical article "The age of public infrastructure in Canada" (11-621-MIE2006035, free) is now available online in the *Analysis in Brief* series.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Valérie Gaudreault (613-951-1165), Investment and Capital Stock Division. ■

Study: Blue skies for blueberries

1980 to 2004

Canada has a long history of cultivating blueberries. For centuries, the "blues" were an important source of food and medicine for Aboriginal people, who would sun-dry the blueberries and grind them into a powder to preserve them.

The sun-dried berries could then be mixed with corn and honey to make a kind of pudding, for example. Blueberry roots could be brewed to make a tea used to relax pregnant women.

Today, with new methods of preserving and processing blueberries, and their recent elevation to "superfood" status, the world's appetite for blueberries is growing. Canada has an opportunity to play a major role in this growing industry, according to a new article.

The article profiles the industry, examining its current economic status as well as blueberry cultivation and the fruit's popularity worldwide.

In terms of area under production, blueberries rank as the number one fruit crop in the country. Blueberries officially surpassed apples in top spot in 1996.

In fact, the amount of land planted in apples has been declining, while the number of acres of blueberries has been steadily increasing since the 1980s.

Blueberry sales have skyrocketed. In 2004, the farm-gate value of the crop reached nearly \$130.9 million, compared with sales of \$72 million in 1996. This represented an annual average increase of nearly 10%.

The farm-gate value in 2004 was a close second among fruits to the \$144.4 million value of the nation's apple crop.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3438.

The article "Blue skies for blueberries" is now available free of charge online in the January 2006 edition of the newsletter *Vista on the Agri-food Industry and the Farm Community* (21-004-XIE).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Marie-Josée Robichaud (613-951-7695; marie-josée.robichaud@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Electric power selling price indexes

September to December 2005

Electric power selling price indexes (1997=100) are now available for September to December 2005.

Available on CANSIM: table 329-0050.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2325.

The December 2005 issue of *Industry Price Indexes* (62-011-XIE, \$19/\$175; 62-011-XPE, \$24/\$233) will be available in February.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca) or Adrian Fisher (613-951-9612; adrian.fisher@statcan.ca), Prices Division. ■

Asphalt roofing

December 2005

Data on asphalt roofing are now available for December.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0052.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2123.

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

Computer and peripherals price indexes

November 2005

The computer and peripherals price indexes (CPPI, 2001=100) are now available for November.

The index for commercial computers remained unchanged compared to October at 38.4. The index for consumer computers fell 4.0% to 21.6.

In the case of computer peripherals, monitor prices declined 0.3% to 66.5 and printer prices declined 0.2% to 54.5.

These indexes are available at the Canada level only.

Available on CANSIM: tables 331-0001 and 331-0002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5032.

infounit@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Fred Barzyk (613-951-2493; *fred.barzyk@statcan.ca*), Prices Division. ■

For more information on these indexes, contact Client Services (1-866-230-2248; 613-951-9606;

New products

Analysis in Brief: "The age of public infrastructure in Canada", 1963 to 2003, no. 35
Catalogue number 11-621-MIE2006035
(free).

VISTA on the Agri-food Industry and the Farm Community, January 2006
Catalogue number 21-004-XIE
(free).

Exports by Commodity, October 2005, Vol. 62, no. 10
Catalogue number 65-004-XMB (\$40/\$387).

Exports by Commodity, October 2005, Vol. 62, no. 10
Catalogue number 65-004-XPB (\$84/\$828).

Imports by Commodity, November 2005, Vol. 62, no. 11
Catalogue number 65-007-XMB (\$40/\$387).

Imports by Commodity, November 2005, Vol. 62, no. 11
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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 nationally weak output in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

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

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11



Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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