

# Railway carloadings, October 2022

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## Highlights

In October, the volume of cargo carried by Canadian railways totalled 32.8 million tonnes of freight, up slightly (+0.5%) from October 2021.

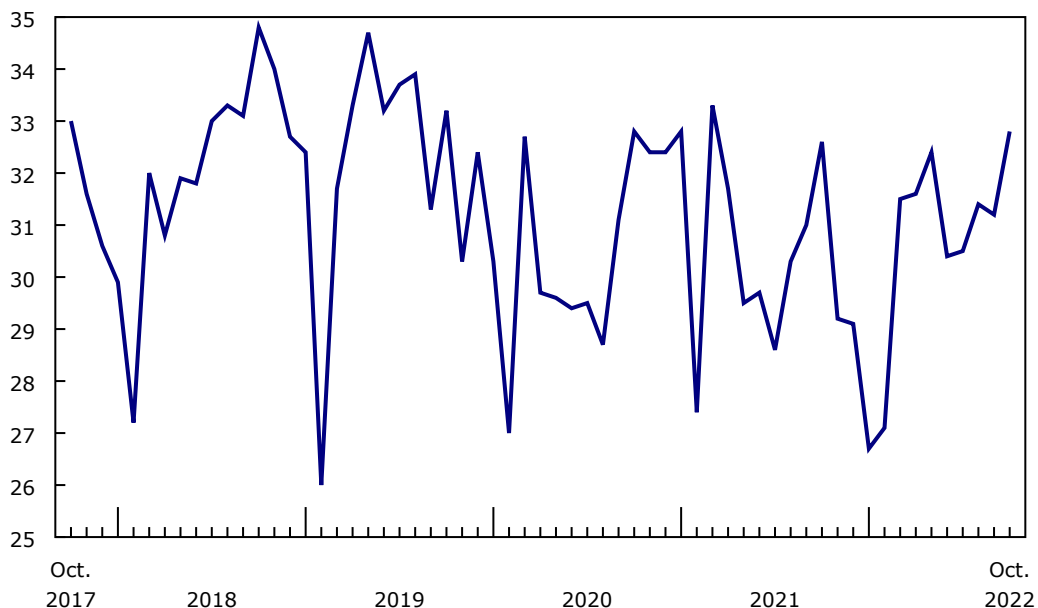
Overall freight volume was just under the five-year average of 33.3 million tonnes for October, with a record-setting increase in carloadings of wheat offsetting large declines in several commodities, including coal and iron ore.

To further explore current and historical data in an interactive format, please visit the "[Monthly Railway Carloadings: Interactive Dashboard](#)."

## Chart 1 Railway carloadings, total tonnage

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millions of tonnes



Source(s): Table [23-10-0216-01](#).

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October's small year-over-year increase in total freight carried was attributable to higher volumes of domestic loadings, both non-intermodal (mainly commodities) and intermodal (mainly containers).

## Wheat hits an all-time high

Domestic non-intermodal freight loadings increased year over year for the seventh straight month in October, up 3.8% to 26.5 million tonnes, resulting mainly from a large increase in grain shipments, notably wheat.

With favourable growing conditions across much of the Prairies, [Canada's 2022 wheat harvest](#) reached the third largest on record, and carloadings of wheat rose by an all-time record high of 101.5% (+1 487 000 tonnes) in October from the same month in 2021. This followed a substantial year-over-year increase of 65.1% in September.

Likewise, canola loadings were up by a healthy 41.1% (+446 000 tonnes) from October 2021, the largest monthly increase in tonnage since September 2020—reflecting a rebound in canola production. Indeed, Statistics Canada reported a strong year-over-year increase of 32.1% nationally for canola production, driven by higher yields.

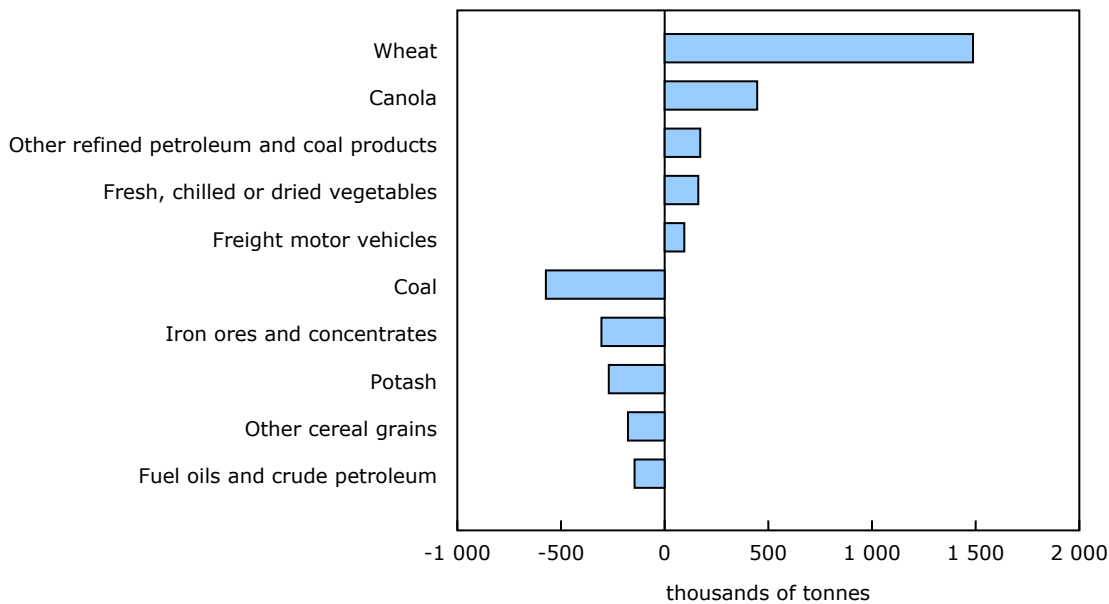
Canadian international merchandise trade reported that exports of both wheat (+18.0%) and canola (+73.8%) rose sharply year over year in October.

In addition, loadings of fresh, chilled or dried vegetables grew 100.4% (+162 000 tonnes) year over year in October, marking the second consecutive month of sharp growth.

Year over year, increases were reported for other refined petroleum and coal products, such as propane and butane, with loadings up 42.0% (+172 000 tonnes) in October, marking the 19th straight month of year-over-year growth.

Finally, loadings of freight motor vehicles, including tanker trailers and flatbed trucks—on an upward trend since February 2022—grew 105.7% (+95 000 tonnes) in October from the same month the previous year, the ninth consecutive increase.

**Chart 2**  
**Railway carloadings, largest commodity differences, October 2021 to October 2022**



Source(s): Table 23-10-0216-02.

### Coal carloadings dampen volumes

Moderating these increases were declines in several commodities. Loadings of coal fell 16.6% (-573 000 tonnes) from October 2021, the second consecutive month of year-over-year decline. This may reflect lingering production slowdowns at a mine site in British Columbia as well as a labour dispute that ended in early October at a large west coast coal terminal.

Iron ores and concentrates dipped 6.1% (-305 000 tonnes) in October compared with the same month in 2021, following seven consecutive months of increases.

Similarly, loadings of potash also posted a year-over-year decrease after six months of increases, decreasing 13.6% (-269 000 tonnes) in October from October 2021.

Loadings of other cereal grains fell 23.3% (-177 000 tonnes) over the same period, marking the 13th consecutive month of declines.

Finally, loadings of fuel oils and crude petroleum fell 13.0% (-145 000 tonnes) year over year in October, a fifth month of decline in a row.

## Domestic intermodal traffic up again

Intermodal shipments originating from Canada—mainly containers—continued their growth for a fourth month, up 0.8% year over year to 3.2 million tonnes in October.

October growth reflects strong domestic and international demand for consumer goods. Indeed, according to [Canadian international merchandise trade](#), Canada's imports (+18.6%) and exports (+14.8%) of consumer goods rose sharply year-over-year in October.

## American freight continues to decrease

In October, freight traffic arriving from the United States fell year over year for the second consecutive month, down 21.4% to 3.1 million tonnes in October, the lowest monthly volume recorded since February 2021.

### Note to readers

*The Monthly Railway Carloadings Survey collects data on the number of rail cars, tonnage, units and 20-foot equivalent units from railway transporters operating in Canada that provide for-hire freight services.*

*Cargo loadings from Armstrong, Ontario, to the Atlantic Coast are classified to the eastern division (eastern Canada), while loadings from Thunder Bay, Ontario, to the Pacific Coast are classified to the western division (western Canada).*

*Survey data are revised on a monthly basis to reflect new information.*

*The data in this release are not seasonally adjusted.*

*The [Transportation Data and Information Hub](#) provides Canadians with online access to comprehensive statistics and measures on the country's transportation sector.*

**Available tables:** table [23-10-0216-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [2732](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).