

Railway carloadings, February 2023

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Highlights

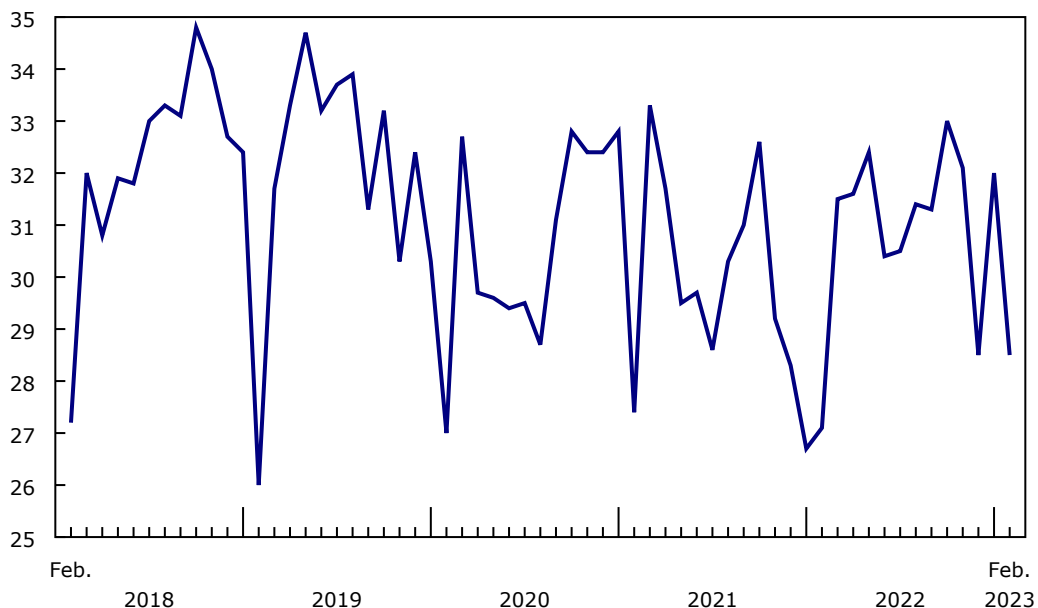
In February 2023, Canadian railways transported 28.5 million tonnes of freight, up 5.0% from February 2022 on the strength of increasing grain shipments, marking the 10th straight month of year-over-year growth.

The volume of freight carried in February 2023 was well above the five-year average for the month, breaking the record of 27.4 million tonnes established in the same month in 2021.

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

millions of tonnes



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

The increase in total freight carried in February was driven by higher volumes of domestic non-intermodal loadings (mainly commodities) since both intermodal loadings (mainly containers) and freight traffic from connections with American railways fell.

Wheat, canola and other cereal grains surging

Non-intermodal freight loadings in Canada increased for the 10th consecutive month, up 9.6% year over year to 22.5 million tonnes in February, led by large increases in some agricultural and food products—notably grains.

Increased grain traffic in February continues to reflect a rebound in [Canadian grain production](#) during 2022. Wheat loadings were up 69.2% (+841 000 tonnes) year over year in February, while loadings of canola grew 114.8% (+467 000 tonnes) from the same month in 2022.



Statistics Canada
Statistique Canada

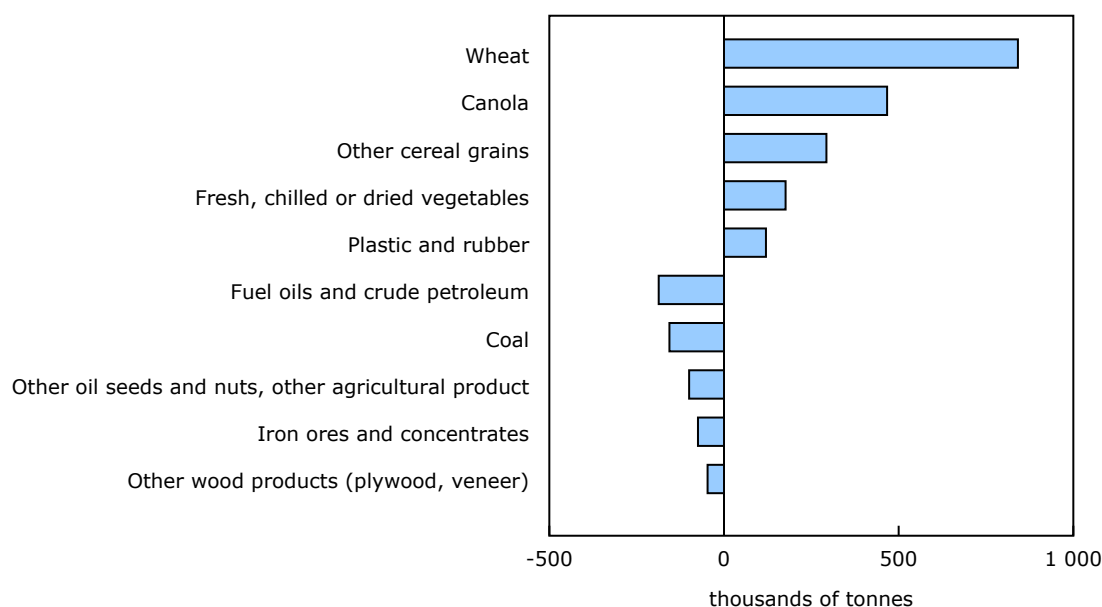
Canada

In addition, loadings of other cereal grains were up 131.3% (+293 000 tonnes) in February, following similar increases in January (+145.1%) and December (+112.3%). Meanwhile, loadings of fresh, chilled or dried vegetables grew 144.8% (+176 000 tonnes).

These findings reflect trends in exports as reported in [Canadian international merchandise trade](#), released in early April.

Year over year, other increases were reported for plastic and rubber, with loadings up 35.8% (+120 000 tonnes) in February, the seventh month of increase in a row.

Chart 2 Railway carloadings, largest commodity differences, February 2022 to February 2023



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

Carloadings of some energy products down

In February, loadings of fuel oils and crude petroleum have now declined year over year for the ninth straight month, falling by 19.4% (-187 000 tonnes).

Coal loadings dipped 4.8% (-156 000 tonnes) in February compared with the same month in 2022, after a strong 29.5% year-over-year increase the previous month. Similarly, loadings of iron ores and concentrates edged down 1.9% (-75 000 tonnes) in February following a healthy 19.4% increase in January.

Loadings of other oil seeds and nuts, other agricultural product dropped 52.4% (-100 000 tonnes) year over year in February, after posting strong gains the previous two months, while loadings of other wood products (plywood, veneer) fell 10.7% (-47 000 tonnes).

Intermodal traffic lagging

Domestic intermodal shipments—mainly containers—continued their downward trend, falling 8.6% year over year to 2.5 million tonnes in February, a third consecutive month of decline.

American freight down again

Freight traffic coming from the United States remained well below February 2022 levels, falling 10.3% to 3.5 million tonnes in February, marking the sixth consecutive month of year-over-year decline.

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) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).