

REGINA'S ECONOMIC BRIEF

A mixed first quarter for the GRA

Tariff disputes with China and the U.S. continue to fuel economic uncertainty in the Greater Regina Area (GRA). That said, inflation in the GRA fell to 2.5% in March from 3.2% in February 2025. March year-over-year employment growth grew to 2.5% (3,500 jobs) over the same period in 2024, while year-over-year unemployment rose to 5.9% from 5.6% a year prior. Recent data concludes manufacturing sales dropped 26.2% year-over-year, and both consumer and business confidence declined amid ongoing tariff concerns.

Source: Praxis Consulting (Unadjusted)

Job market maintains steady growth

In March 2025, the GRA added 3,500 jobs, a 2.5% increase from March 2024. Saskatchewan saw the highest provincial job growth, adding 19,800 jobs (up 3.4%), while Canada added 346,500 jobs (1.7%) over the same period.

Source: Statistics Canada

Manufacturing sales struggle

Manufacturing sales in the GRA dropped 26.2% year-over-year, from \$808M in February 2024 to \$596M in February 2025. U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum continue to impact local manufacturers and dampen confidence.

Source: Statistics Canada

Regina rental prices drop

Regina's average 1-bedroom apartment rental in March 2025 fell 2% to \$1,240 from March 2024 (\$1,265). Average rent in March 2025 dropped 1% to \$1,320, keeping Regina the most affordable among 25 cities tracked.

Source: Rentals.ca

GRA inflation hits 2.5% in March 2025

Inflation in the GRA dropped to 2.5% in March 2025, down from 3.2% in February 2025. Saskatchewan matched at 2.5%, while Canada sat at 2.3%. Tariffs may push prices up, but lower gas costs from the consumer carbon tax pause could help offset the impact.

Source: Statistics Canada

Unemployment climbs

In March 2025, the GRA's average year-over-year unemployment rate was 5.9%, up from 5.6% in March 2024 despite an increase in employment. Saskatchewan's unemployment rate was 4.9%, the lowest in Canada, well below the national average of 6.7%.

Source: Statistics Canada

Bank of Canada holds key interest rate

The Bank of Canada held its rate at 2.75% in April 2025, citing easing inflation but ongoing concerns over slow growth and global trade uncertainty. The steady rate aims to reduce economic risk.

Source: Bank of Canada

KEY NUMBERS

\$10B

POTENTIAL BOOST AND GROWTH FROM THE "BUY CANADIAN" MOVEMENT.

Source: Bank of Montreal

\$326,300

THE GRA'S HOUSING PRICE INDEX BENCHMARK VALUE (HPI), UP 4.4% YEAR-OVER-YEAR IN MARCH 2025.

Source: Canadian Real Estate Association

2.5%

GRA'S INFLATION RATE FOR MARCH 2025. THE RATES FOR SASKATCHEWAN AND CANADA WERE 2.5% AND 2.3% RESPECTIVELY.

Source: Statistics Canada

85%

IN 2024, THE U.S. ACCOUNTED FOR 85% OF THE GRA'S \$8.9B IN MANUFACTURING SALES, TOTALING \$7.5B.

Source: Economic Development Regina

2.75%

BANK OF CANADA'S NEW LENDING RATE, AFTER RATES HELD IN APRIL 2025.

Source: Bank of Canada



POSITIVE

NEED TO WATCH

NEGATIVE

A DEEPER LOOK...

The U.S. tariffs explained: Why everyone could lose

On March 4, 2025, the U.S. proclaimed a 25% tariff on a range of Canadian products. For the GRA and Saskatchewan, this included canola seed, oil, and meal. It sounds tough, and here's what it means.

The U.S. is Canada's top canola customer, buying \$7.7B worth in 2024, including record volumes of canola oil (3.3M metric tonnes (MMT) and canola meal (3.8 MMT). Both markets are deeply connected, and canola is Canada's No.1 crop in value with nearly 40,000 farmers involved nationwide. Canada's canola industry means approximately US\$11.2B to the U.S. economy each year, including US\$1.2B in wages. Of all of Canada's canola going to the US, Saskatchewan is attributed with delivering 55%.

The impacts of the tariffs in general and for Saskatchewan depend on two main economic concepts: the substitution effect and the price elasticity of demand for canola.

The substitution effect happens when, as prices rise, buyers seek cheaper alternatives. However, U.S. tariffs on other major canola exporters (outside Canada) combined with US farmers being unable to meet demand will produce a supply crunch. This, in turn, will likely push U.S. producers to raise their prices, ultimately resulting in consumers having to pay more.

Price elasticity of demand measures how buyers respond to price changes. If demand is elastic (i.e. a price change brings changes in demand), buyers will either cut back or switch products. If demand is inelastic, buyers will continue to buy despite higher prices. Since canola is used in cooking oil, animal feed, and biofuels, demand is likely inelastic, meaning U.S. buyers will still need Canadian canola – but have to pay a higher cost for it.

The result? Canadian farmers and processors lose sales, jobs are at risk, and major producing provinces like Alberta and Saskatchewan will see their GDP negatively impacted. Meanwhile, U.S. businesses will face rising costs, and everyday Americans will feel the impact through higher food prices at checkout.

Tariffs sound tough, and they are. They also often hurt all involved, disrupting supply chains and driving up costs. The bottom line: tariffs are a tax on imports and on everyone, especially the consumer.

KEY NUMBERS



\$16.3B

the total wage impact of the Canadian canola sector.



\$5.8B

the U.S. was Saskatchewan's top agri-food export destination, exporting goods valued at \$5.8B (2024).



\$43.7B

the total economic impact on the Canadian economy from the canola sector.



206,000

the number of full-time Canadian jobs the canola sector supports, including 142,000 paid positions and 65,000 family members involved in farming operations.



50%

Saskatchewan exported 50% of Canada's canola oil and 41% of its canola meal (2023).



55%

Saskatchewan produced more than half of Canada's canola (2024).

Source: Economic Development Regina

News Worth Watching

Regina ranks 4th nationally on CHBA Benchmark Study

Regina rose from 5th to 4th in the 2024 CHBA national benchmarking study, which ranks 23 cities on how processes, timelines, and fees impact housing affordability and availability.

Source: [SaskToday](#)

Gas prices in Regina continue to fall

Gas prices in the GRA were down 21 cents from last year on April 20, according to GasBuddy's survey of 82 stations.

Source: [SaskToday](#)

'Buy Canadian' movement could add \$10B annually to economy

A BMO report says the growing 'Buy Canadian' movement – driven by U.S. trade tensions – could boost Canada's economy by up to \$10B a year.

Source: [Yahoo! Finance](#)

Consumer confidence plunges to historic low

The Index of Consumer Confidence dropped 8.4 points to 44.2 in March, hitting a record low for the index.

Source: [The Conference Board of Canada](#)

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