

Overseas Merchandise Trade: September 2014

Embargoed until 10:45am – 24 October 2014

Key facts

September 2014 quarter:

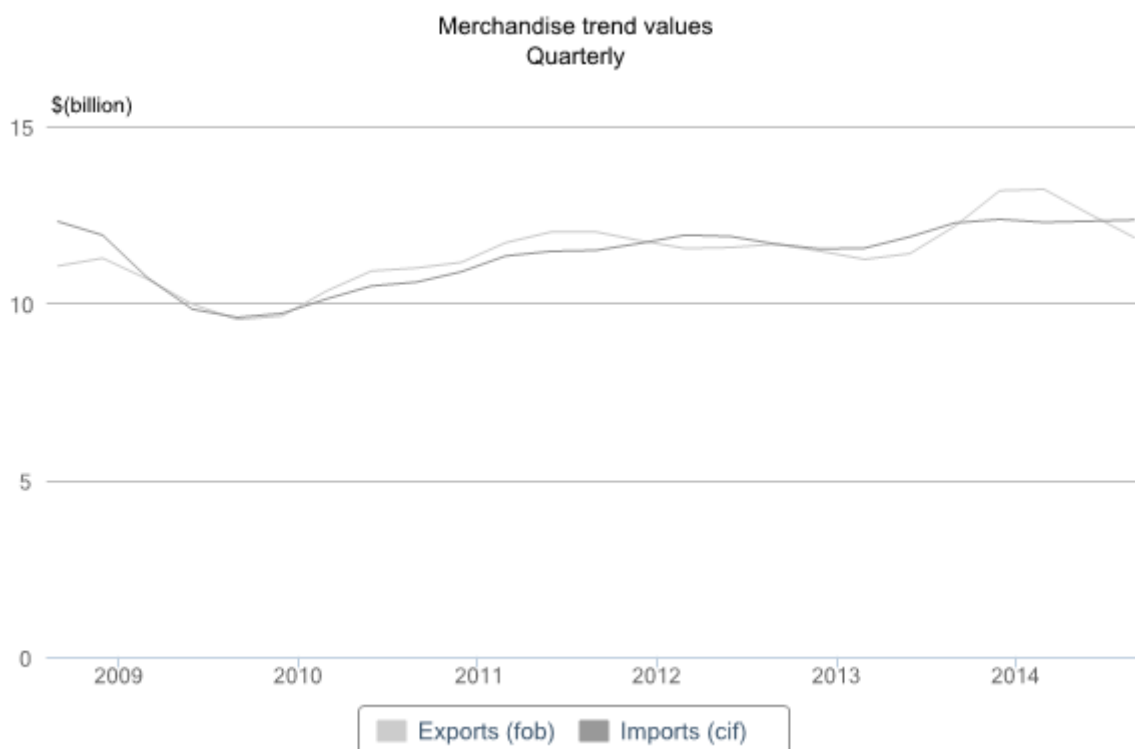
Values are seasonally adjusted and compared with the June 2014 quarter.

- Exports fell 3.0 percent (to \$12 billion), led by dairy.
- Imports rose 3.7 percent (to \$13 billion).
- Capital goods led the rise in imports, due to aircraft.
- There was a trade deficit of \$1.0 billion (8.6 percent of exports).
- Exports trend has been falling, while imports trend remains at a high level.

September 2014 month:

Values are actual and compared with the September 2013 month.

- Exports fell 5.3 percent (to \$3.6 billion), led by whole milk powder.
- Imports rose 23 percent (to \$5.0 billion), led by aircraft.
- Most main import categories rose.
- There was a trade deficit of \$1.4 billion (37 percent of exports).



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Liz MacPherson, Government Statistician
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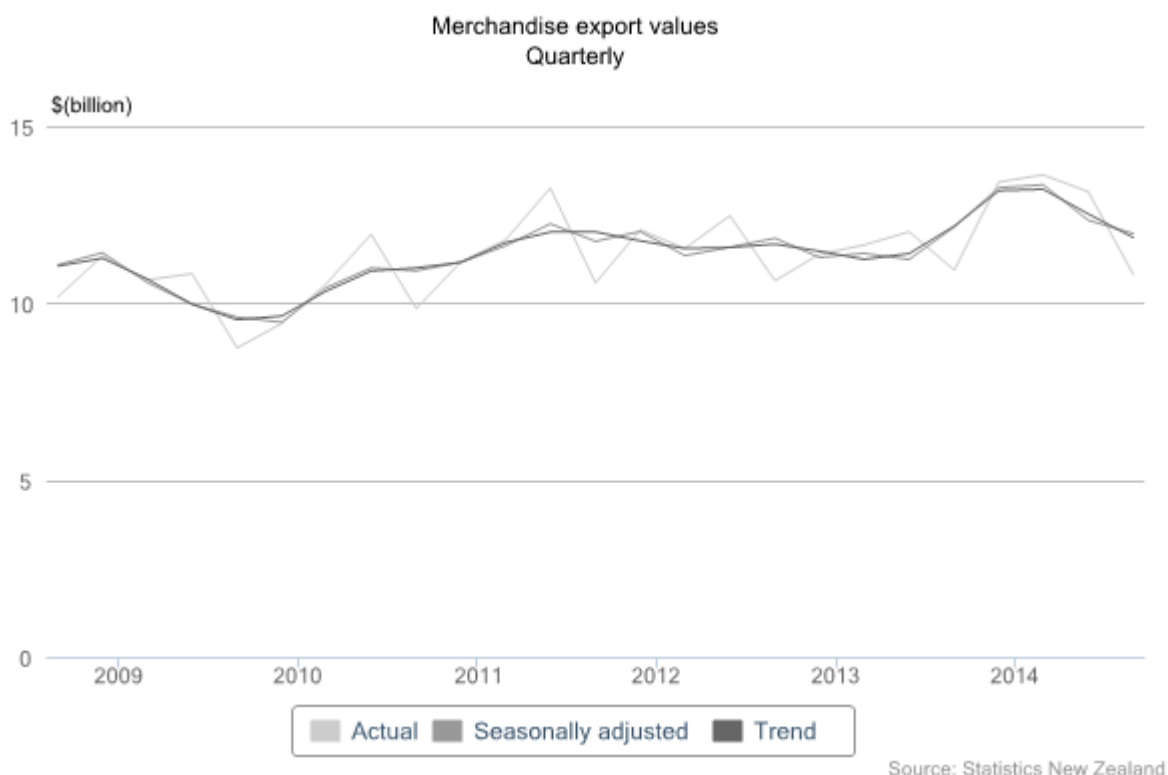
Commentary

- Quarterly exports fall 3.0 percent
- Quarterly imports rise 3.7 percent
- Trade deficit in the September 2014 quarter
- Australia top destination for exports
- Monthly exports fall 5.3 percent
- Monthly imports rise 23 percent
- September 2014 trade balance in deficit
- Exchange rate movements

Quarterly exports fall 3.0 percent

The seasonally adjusted value of exported goods fell 3.0 percent (\$376 million) to \$12.0 billion in the September 2014 quarter. This followed a 7.5 percent fall in the June 2014 quarter.

The trend, which reflects the long-term behaviour of export values, has fallen 10 percent from its record high in the March 2014 quarter and is at a similar level to mid-2013.

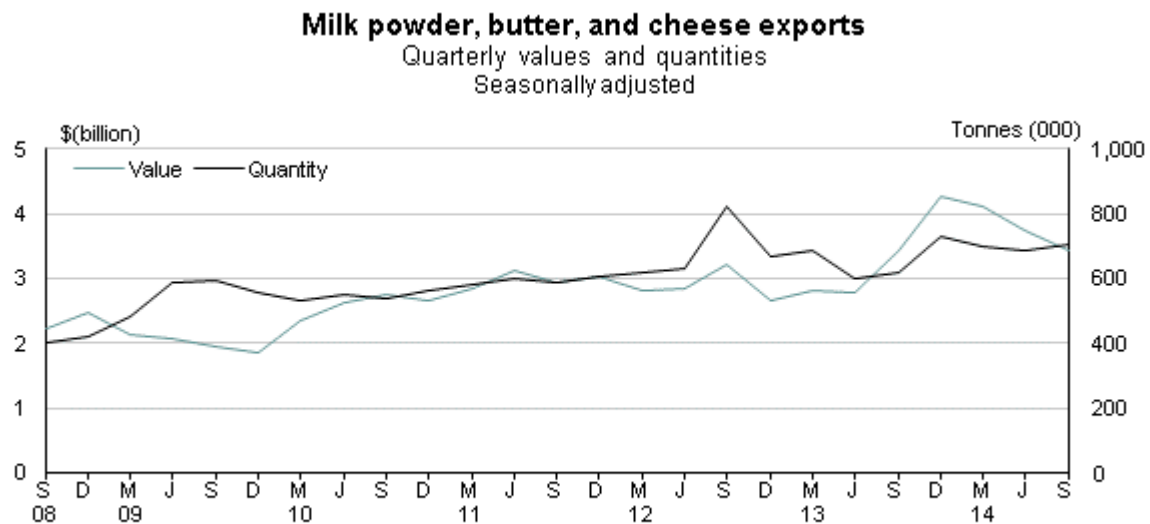


Milk powder, butter, and cheese group leads fall in seasonally adjusted exports

Milk powder, butter, and cheese (New Zealand's largest export commodity group) led the fall in seasonally adjusted exports in the September 2014 quarter, with the value down 8.8 percent

(\$330 million). This fall was price driven as the quantity rose 2.7 percent. This is the third consecutive fall in values for a quarter, following falls of 8.6 percent in the June 2014 quarter, and 3.7 percent in March.

The trend for milk powder, butter, and cheese values has fallen, and is now 18 percent lower than the series high in the March 2014 quarter. It is now at a similar level as the September 2013 quarter.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Other key changes in commodity export values

The value of exports in the September 2014 quarter, compared with the June 2014 quarter, also fell for:

- **crude oil** (not seasonally adjusted) – down 21 percent (\$96 million), with the quantity down 23 percent
- **logs, wood, and wood articles** – down 10 percent (\$90 million), with the quantity down 9.4 percent.

By commodity group, the value of exports rose for:

- **live animals** (not seasonally adjusted) – up 181 percent (\$114 million), due to cattle
- **fish, crustaceans, and molluscs** – up 12 percent (\$39 million), with the quantity up 22 percent
- **meat and edible offal** (our second-largest export commodity group) – up 2.5 percent (\$34 million), with the quantity unchanged.

Quarterly imports rise 3.7 percent

The seasonally adjusted value of imported goods increased 3.7 percent (\$460 million) to \$13 billion in the September 2014 quarter. This rise was influenced by aircraft imported in the latest quarter.

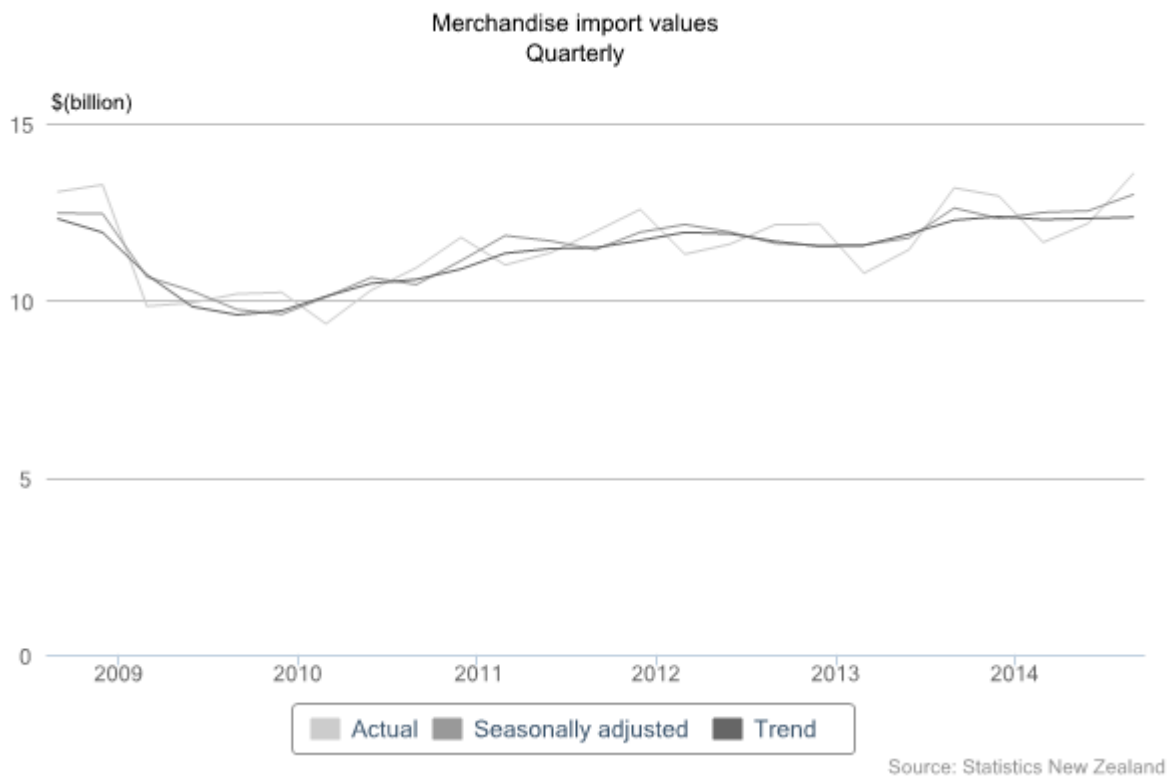
The value of two aircraft was imputed in the latest quarter, due to commercial sensitivity of the value (this includes the previously excluded aircraft in the July 2014 month).

See [Data influencers](#) in the data quality section for more information.

Imports had risen 0.4 percent (\$46 million) in the June 2014 quarter, which included the import of a drilling platform.

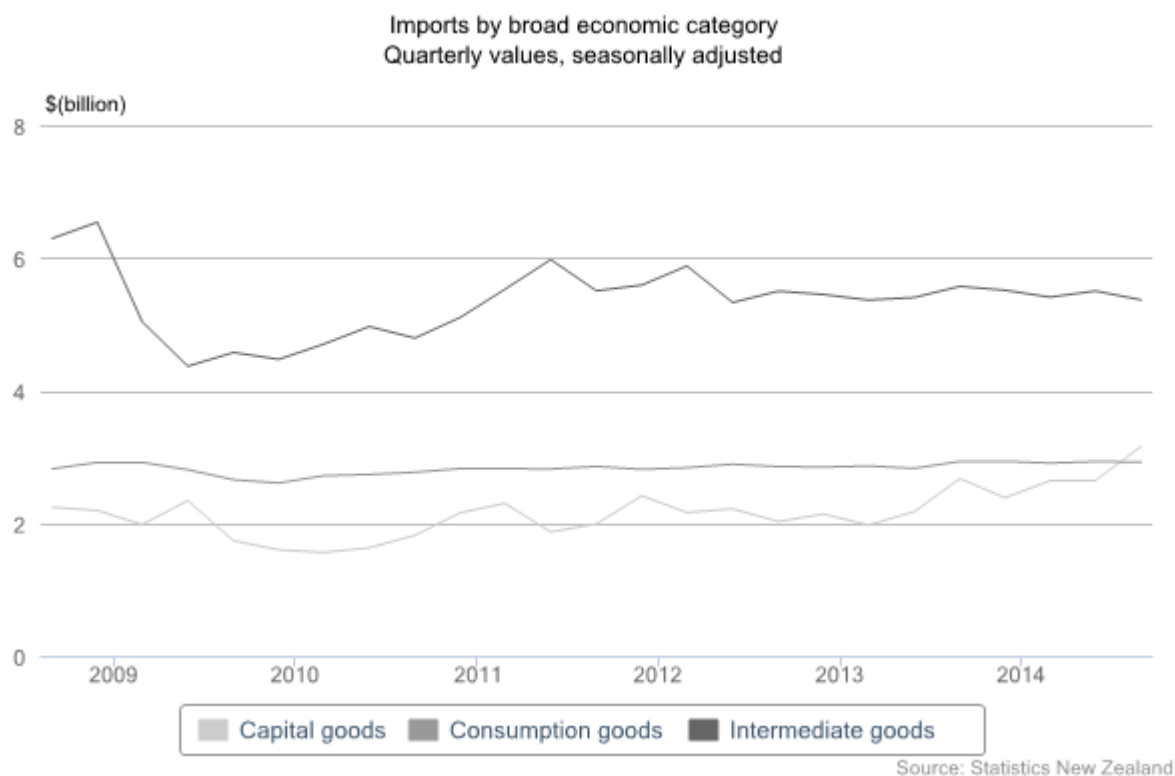
Excluding the large imports in both quarters, the seasonally adjusted value of imported goods rose just 0.2 percent to (\$12.4 billion) in the September 2014 quarter.

The trend for imports remained at a high level and was slightly below the recent high point in the December 2013 quarter.



Capital goods lead the increase in seasonally adjusted imports

For the three main broad economic categories, capital goods increased in value in the September 2014 quarter, while intermediate goods and consumption goods both decreased.



Capital goods (not seasonally adjusted) increased 27 percent (\$711 million) in the September 2014 quarter, led by imports of aircraft in the September 2014 quarter. In the June 2014 quarter, imports increased 7.3 percent (\$176 million). Machinery and plant imports fell 2.4 percent (\$45 million). This fall was influenced by the import of a large drilling platform in the June 2014 quarter.

Intermediate goods decreased 2.4 percent (\$134 million) in the September 2014 quarter, after increasing 1.7 percent (\$93 million) in the June 2014 quarter. Crude oil (not seasonally adjusted) fell 5.8 percent (\$77 million), which was partly offset by parts and accessories of capital goods (such as gas turbines), up 4.8 percent (\$50 million).

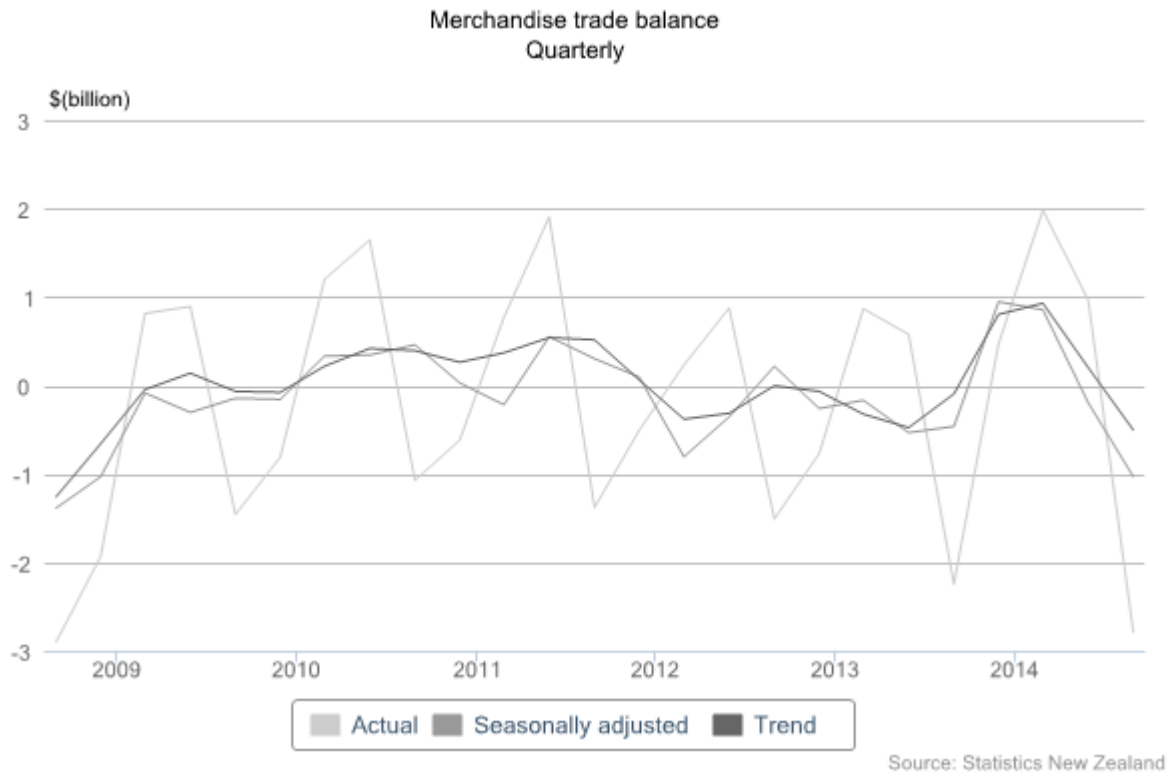
Consumption goods decreased 0.2 percent (\$7.1 million) in the September 2014 quarter, following a 0.8 percent (\$24 million) increase in the June 2014 quarter.

For other categories of goods in the September 2014 quarter:

- **passenger motor cars** increased 6.4 percent (\$66 million), following a 2.4 percent rise in the June 2014 quarter. Imports in this series have been rising for two years.
- **petrol and avgas**, which is not seasonally adjusted, decreased 8.0 percent (\$30 million), following an 11 percent decrease in the June 2014 quarter.

Trade deficit in the September 2014 quarter

In the September 2014 quarter, there was a seasonally adjusted trade deficit of \$1.0 billion, equivalent to 8.6 percent of exports. This followed a trade deficit of \$190 million in the June 2014 quarter.

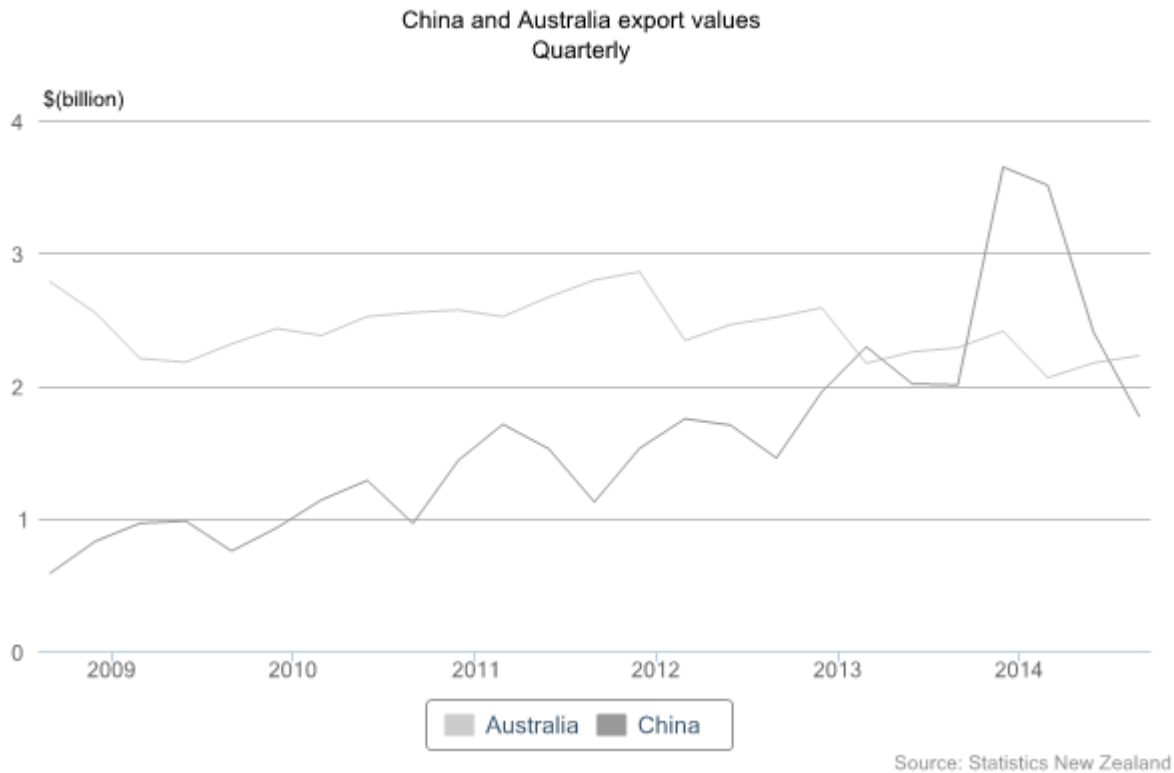


Australia top destination for exports

Data for exports by destination, and imports by origin, is not seasonally adjusted. Comparisons are between the September 2014 quarter and the September 2013 quarter.

In the September 2014 quarter, the top three export destinations (ranked by total annual exports) for New Zealand were:

- **China** – down \$237 million to \$1.8 billion, led by whole milk powder and pine logs.
- **Australia** – down \$59 million to \$2.2 billion, led by iron and steel, and electrical machinery and equipment. The last quarter where exports to Australia were higher than to China was September 2013.
- **European Union (EU)** – \$1.1 billion, unchanged from 2013.



Other top movements were:

- **United States** – up \$139 million to \$995 million, led by beef and natural milk constituents.
- **Singapore** – down \$87 million to \$240 million, led by crude oil.

In the September 2014 quarter, the top three import sources (ranked by total annual imports) for New Zealand were:

- **EU** – up \$8.4 million to \$2.4 billion, due to vehicles.
- **China** – down \$99 million to \$2.3 billion, reflecting high imports in the September 2013 quarter, which were led by railway vehicles.
- **Australia** – up \$607 million to \$1.7 billion, due to crude oil.

Other top movements were:

- **United States** – up \$607 million to \$1.3 billion, due to aircraft.
- **Kuwait** – up \$87 million to \$158 million, due to crude oil.

Monthly exports fall 5.3 percent

In September 2014, merchandise exports were valued at \$3.6 billion for the month, down \$203 million (5.3 percent) from September 2013.

Fall in exports led by whole milk powder and pine logs to China

Logs, wood, and wood article exports fell \$112 million (31 percent) to \$250 million, led by pine logs, down \$85 million (39 percent). Milk powder, butter, and cheese fell \$110 million (12 percent) to \$798 million. This fall was due to whole milk powder, down \$134 million (28 percent).

The quantity of whole milk powder was down 6.1 percent, and pine logs were down 31 percent. China led the fall in both these commodities, with the whole milk powder quantity down 58 percent, and pine logs down 34 percent.

Other key changes in commodity export values

- **crude oil** – down \$93 million (37 percent), led by Australia and Singapore
- **aluminium and aluminium articles** showed the largest increase – up \$61 million to \$96 million, led by unwrought aluminium to Japan
- **meat and edible offal** – up \$32 million to \$331 million, led by beef to the United States

Monthly imports rise 23 percent

In the September 2014 month, imported goods were valued at \$5.0 billion, up \$927 million (23 percent) from September 2013. The rise in monthly imports was across the board, and led by large capital items due to imports of aircraft.

Excluding large aircraft, goods imported were valued at \$4.5 billion in September 2014, up \$534 million (13 percent) from September 2013.

Key movements in commodity import values

By commodity group, key changes for imports were:

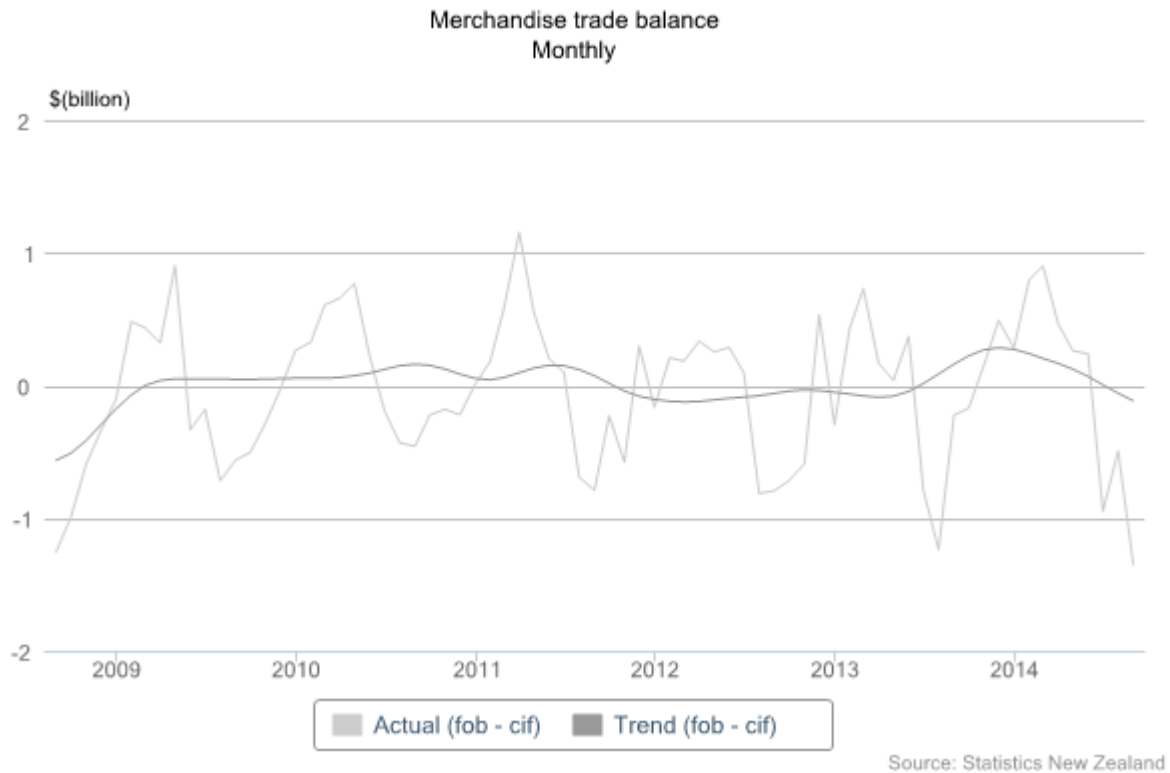
- **aircraft and parts** – up \$432 million, to \$459 million, due to aircraft from the United States
- **vehicles, parts, and accessories** – up \$149 million, to \$609 million, led by cars and trucks from Japan
- **mechanical machinery and equipment** – up \$79 million, to \$613 million, led by Germany and the United States.

Petroleum and products, our main import commodity, rose \$69 million to \$625 million. This rise was led by petrol, while crude oil fell.

September 2014 trade balance in deficit

In the September 2014 month, there was a trade deficit of \$1.4 billion (37 percent of exports). The average deficit was \$563 million (17 percent of exports) over the previous five September months.

Excluding irregular imports, the monthly trade balance was a deficit of \$919 million (25 percent of exports) in the September month – the largest for a September month since 2008. September months have been in deficit since 1991.



Exchange rate movements

According to the Reserve Bank's trade weighted index (TWI), in September 2014 the New Zealand dollar was 1.1 percent lower than in August 2014, and 2.8 percent higher than in September 2013.

The TWI fell 0.9 percent in the September 2014 quarter, compared with the June 2014 quarter. The TWI was 5.6 percent higher in the September 2014 quarter than in the same quarter in 2013.



For more detailed data, see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

Definitions

About the overseas merchandise trade statistics

Overseas merchandise trade statistics provide statistical information on the importing and exporting of merchandise goods between New Zealand and other countries.

Data is obtained from export and import entry documents lodged with the New Zealand Customs Service. The data is processed and passed to Statistics NZ for further editing and compilation.

More definitions

Billion: is 1,000 million.

Capital goods: are produced assets that are used repeatedly or continuously, for longer than one year, in industrial production processes. Examples are machinery, trucks, and aircraft.

cif: is the cost of goods, including insurance and freight to New Zealand.

Consumption goods: are goods used (without further transformation in industrial production processes) by households, government, or non-profit institutions serving households.

Exports (including re-exports): are goods of domestic origin exported from New Zealand to another country. Exports in this release are valued fob and are shown in New Zealand dollars. Estimated values may be used for goods that are not already sold at the time of export entry lodgement.

fob: is free on board (the value of goods at New Zealand ports before export).

Imports: are goods imported into New Zealand. Imports in this release are valued at cif and are shown in New Zealand dollars. However, imports in table 1 are also shown at the vfd level, which excludes the insurance and freight component.

Infoshare: is Statistics NZ's free online tool that gives you access to a range of time-series data.

Intermediate goods: are goods used up, or transformed in, industrial production processes.

Merchandise trade: covers exports or imports of goods that alter the nation's stock of material resources. It includes goods leased for a year or more and excludes goods for repair.

Provisional: statistics for the latest three months are provisional, to allow late data and amendments to be included.

Re-exports: are merchandise exports that were earlier imported into New Zealand and have less than 50 percent New Zealand content by value.

Seasonal adjustment: removes the estimated impact of regular seasonal events, such as pre-Christmas purchasing, from time series. This makes the figures for adjacent periods more comparable.

Trade balance: is calculated by deducting imports (cif) from exports (fob). These two valuations are not entirely comparable, because the cif valuation includes insurance and freight to New Zealand, while the fob valuation excludes insurance and freight from New Zealand.

Trade deficit: occurs when the value of imports is more than the value of exports.

Trade surplus: occurs when the value of exports is more than the value of imports.

Trend: estimates reveal the underlying direction of movement in a series and are used to identify turning points.

Two-way trade: is the sum of goods exported from New Zealand and goods imported into New Zealand (exports + imports).

vfd: is value for duty (the value of imports before insurance and freight costs are added).

Related links

Upcoming releases

Overseas Merchandise Trade: October 2014 will be released on 27 November 2014.

[Subscribe to information releases](#), including this one, by completing the online subscription form.

[The release calendar](#) lists all our upcoming information releases by date of release.

Past releases

[Overseas Merchandise Trade](#) has links to past releases.

Related information

[Global New Zealand](#) contains comprehensive annual trade statistics.

[Overseas Trade Indexes](#) measure the change in the level of prices and volumes of New Zealand's imports and exports.

[Balance of Payments and International Investment Position](#) measures the value of New Zealand's transactions with the rest of the world, and provides a snapshot of the country's international financial assets and liabilities.

[National Accounts](#) measure the values of a range of economic aggregates such as gross domestic product, capital formation, and government and private consumption.

[Economic Survey of Manufacturing](#) provides an economic indicator of how the manufacturing sector is performing.

[New Zealand Customs Service](#) is the government agency that ensures the security of our borders.

[Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) is the Government's principal adviser and negotiator on foreign and trade policy issues.

Data quality

Period-specific information

This section contains data information that has changed since the last release.

- [Number of working days](#)
- [Data influencers](#)
- [Foreign currency conversions](#)

General information

This section contains information that does not change between releases.

- [Merchandise trade – data source](#)
- [Crude oil imports – effects of timing of recording](#)
- [Exports – timing of recording and undercoverage](#)
- [Seasonally adjusted series](#)
- [Trend series](#)
- [Broad economic category groups](#)
- [New Zealand Harmonised System Classification](#)
- [Standard International Trade Classification](#)
- [Confidential items](#)
- [More information](#)

Period-specific information

Number of working days

There were 22 working days in September 2014, compared with 21 in September 2013.

Data influencers

In this release we have imputed the value for some commercially sensitive aircraft imports. Two of these aircraft were Dreamliner passenger aircraft, and their imputed value was based on that of other twin-aisle aircraft imports.

This treatment reverses the prior decision to exclude them in the July 2014 release – the imputed value has now been included. The treatment of these aircraft also applies for the overseas trade indexes information releases to be published on 1 December 2014. However, the change in approach does not affect either the balance of payments and international investment position release on 17 December 2014 or the quarterly GDP release on 18 December 2014.

Foreign currency conversions September 2014

Import values are converted from foreign currencies when import documents are processed by New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS).

We convert values given in foreign currencies into New Zealand dollars, using weekly exchange rates, when we compile the statistics.

Currency conversions				
Foreign currencies to New Zealand dollars				
Currency	Number of exports	Value in foreign currency \$(million)	Value in NZD \$(million)	Average exchange rate
USD	33,271	1,657	1,997	0.8296
AUD	53,464	284	316	0.9008
EUR	4,535	133	210	0.6354
GBP	2,889	33	66	0.5030
JPY	864	3,527	40	87.96
Other currencies	1,696	...	51	...
Total in foreign currency	96,719	...	2,679	...
NZD	73,425	...	935	...
Total	170,144	...	3,614	...
Symbol: ... not applicable				

In September 2014, we converted 170,144 export line entries worth \$3.6 billion into New Zealand dollars.

See the [Merchandise trade – data source](#) for more information on the use of exchange rates.

General information

Merchandise trade – data source

We obtain data from export and import entry documents lodged with NZCS. Once processed by NZCS, we receive this data.

We convert export values given in foreign currencies into New Zealand dollars, using weekly exchange rates when the statistics are compiled. For exports, a rise in the New Zealand dollar has a downward influence on prices and, as a consequence, quantities and values reduce.

Import values are converted from foreign currencies when import documents are processed by NZCS. NZCS set the exchange rates each fortnight. These rates are prepared 11 days before the start of the fortnight, so have a lag of 11 to 25 days compared with the daily rates published by the Reserve Bank. For imports, a rise in the New Zealand dollar has a downward influence on prices and an upward influence on quantities. The combined influence on values can be either positive or negative.

Crude oil imports – effects of timing of recording

Imports are generally compiled by date-of-entry clearance by NZCS. NZCS entries are required from up to five days before, to 20 working days after, arrival of goods into New Zealand. The exception to this rule is for crude oil imports, which can have entries lodged later than 20 working days after entry into New Zealand.

We estimate crude oil values for the latest month using actual quantities and country-of-origin data (provided by NZCS, based on information from the refinery at Marsden Point), together with estimated prices. These estimates for crude oil are replaced once actual entries are lodged with NZCS.

While all entries are provisional for the latest three months, and have the potential to be changed by the importer/exporter within this period, changes are not common, and generally do not have a material impact on the results. However, New Zealand has only a few ships carrying crude oil arriving each month, and each ship represents a high proportion of the monthly total of imported crude oil. Any variation in the data for crude oil resulting from a later lodgement date can result in a significant revision to the value. Once we receive actual lodgements from NZCS, the value for crude oil can be regarded as robust.

Exports – timing of recording and undercoverage

From 1 March 2004, NZCS has not allowed goods to be loaded for export until an export entry has been lodged and cleared. A study undertaken in 2001/02 indicated that export entries not being lodged might account for between 1 and 3 percent of exports at that time. There is a possibility that the change in NZCS processes may have reduced this undercoverage, although this has not been quantified.

Seasonally adjusted series

We calculate seasonally adjusted series monthly and for calendar quarters using X-12-ARIMA, which adjusts for outlying values and uses a centred moving average.

Seasonal adjustment removes the estimated impact of regular seasonal events, such as pre-Christmas purchasing, from time series. This makes the figures for adjacent periods more comparable. Seasonally adjusted figures are estimates and are subject to revision each period, with the largest changes generally occurring in the latest periods.

Seasonal adjustment in Statistics New Zealand has more information.

Trend series

Time series can be split into trend, seasonal, and irregular components. Seasonal adjustment removes the seasonal component, while trend estimation removes the seasonal and irregular components. Trend estimates reveal the underlying direction of movement in a series and are used to identify turning points.

We calculate the trend series using X-12-ARIMA. The length of the centred moving average is selected automatically and can be 9, 13, or 23 months, depending on the relative variability of the irregular component compared with the trend. A long moving average has the effect of smoothing the trend series but slowing the response to underlying changes in growth rates. A short moving average produces a trend series that is less smooth but quicker to identify turning points.

To improve estimation of the underlying movement, we calculate the imports trend after removing individual import items that have cif values of \$100 million or more, such as large aircraft and ships. The trade balance trend is calculated by subtracting the imports trend from the exports trend.

We recalculate trend figures each month. Using new monthly data means that previously published trend estimates are revised. These revisions mainly affect the latest months and can be large if a trade value is initially treated as an outlier but is later found to be part of the underlying trend.

Broad economic category groups

Broad economic category (BEC) groups are arranged, as far as practicable, to align with the System of National Accounts' three basic classes: capital goods, intermediate goods, and consumption goods. We categorise commodities in BEC groups on the basis of their main end use. This means, for example, that all video recorders are treated as consumption goods even though some are used in business. Similarly, all helicopters are treated as transport equipment even though some are military goods (and are treated as such in the national accounts).

New Zealand Harmonised System Classification

From January 2012, we compile overseas merchandise trade data using the Harmonised System classification (HS2012). Before January 2012, HS2007 applies.

See the Excel supplementary table in the 'Downloads' box for a summary of the effect of this change on the overseas merchandise trade data.

The classification change means data users need to take care when analysing time-series data, although changes from this review are not as significant as when HS2007 was introduced. The supplementary table uses the HS2012 classification to estimate January 2011 values for comparison. We made some assumptions to do this, so the results are not perfect, but the process removes most of the effect of the classification change from the data.

We will use HS2012 within overseas merchandise trade statistics until the next five-yearly review in 2017. Minor amendments may still occur on a quarterly basis.

Although the classification change potentially affects the published seasonally adjusted and trend series, our investigations so far show a negligible effect. We will communicate any effects we find when conducting our normal seasonal adjustment or trend series review processes.

HS2012 changes have been implemented in overseas trade indexes (OTI).

See [Harmonised System 2012 and trade statistics](#) for more information on how HS2012 has affected overseas merchandise trade data.

See [Harmonised System 2012](#) for information about the HS2012 classification.

Standard International Trade Classification

The Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) is an output classification that uses Harmonised System (HS) codes at the six-digit level as building blocks. It was designed by the United Nations as an analytical tool for economic analysis, and includes some simple implications regarding level of processing. Published figures are at a high level of aggregation; more disaggregated information is available on [Infoshare](#).

Contact customer services at: info@stats.govt.nz for customised jobs using the SITC Rev 4 classification.

We compile overseas merchandise trade (OMT) statistics in close accordance with the United Nations' International Merchandise Trade Statistics Concepts and Definitions. OMT data, after adjustment, is used in the balance of payments and national accounts. The adjustments are for coverage, timing, valuation, and classification.

See [Balance of Payments – Sources and Methods 2004](#) for more explanation.

Confidential items

Under Section 37A (d) of the Statistics Act, the Government Statistician may disclose details of external trade, movement of ships, and cargo handled at ports. However, we understand that the release of merchandise trade commodity information can, in some cases, place commercially sensitive information in the public domain. We can provide a limited form of confidential status for commodity items (at the discretion of the Government Statistician), on application by a company or business.

In practice, all confidential HS codes are aggregated into the code 9809.00.00.00 in order to protect their confidentiality and to maintain total export and import values. Any aggregations of HS codes below this level, which encompass confidential 10-digit codes, exclude the confidential value(s) for these codes.

The only aggregates that include the confidential codes are total exports, total imports, and the total exports and imports by country.

More information

See [more information about Overseas Merchandise Trade](#)

Statistics in this release have been produced in accordance with the [Official Statistics System principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics](#) for quality. They conform to the Statistics NZ Methodological Standard for Reporting of Data Quality.

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Revisions

Provisional values published on 24 September 2014 were updated. Merchandise trade statistics for the latest three months are provisional so we can include late data and amendments.

Trade data can be revised for many reasons. For more information see:

[Why overseas merchandise trade data can change](#)

[Investigating how overseas merchandise trade data can change after publication](#)

Updates to overseas merchandise trade statistics

	Published on 24 September 2014			Published on 24 October 2014			Change		
	\$(million) ⁽¹⁾								
	Exports (fob)	Imports (cif)	Balance (fob-cif)	Exports (fob)	Imports (cif)	Balance (fob-cif)	Exports (fob)	Imports (cif)	Balance (fob-cif)
Month:									
Jun 2014	4,177 P	3,935 P	242 P	4,175 F	3,935 F	240 F	-2	0	-2
Jul 2014	3,687 P	4,412 P	-724 P	3,681 P	4,626 P	-946 P	-7	215	-221
Aug 2014	3,524 P	3,996 P	-472 P	3,510 P	4,000 P	-489 P	-13	4	-17
Year ended:									
Jun 2014	51,163 P	49,972 P	1,191 P	51,161 F	49,972 F	1,189 F	-2	0	-2
Jul 2014	51,023 P	49,768 P	1,254 P	51,014 P	49,983 P	1,031 P	-8	215	-223
Aug 2014	51,250 P	49,232 P	2,018 P	51,228 P	49,450 P	1,778 P	-22	218	-240
1. Figures are calculated on unrounded data.									
Symbols:									
F final									
P provisional									
Source: Statistics New Zealand									

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Tables

The following tables are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box. If you have problems viewing the files, see [opening files and PDFs](#).

1. Overseas merchandise trade, actual values
2. Overseas merchandise trade, seasonally adjusted and trend values – monthly
3. Exports by destination
4. Imports by country of origin
5. Exports of main commodities
6. Imports of main commodities
7. Imports by broad economic category (BEC) group
8. Exchange rates
9. Related series, livestock, cars, and crude oil
10. Exports and imports by Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)
11. Exports by top 10 HS categories, values – seasonally adjusted
12. Exports by top 10 HS categories, quantities – seasonally adjusted
13. Imports by selected HS categories, values – seasonally adjusted
14. Exports by top 10 HS categories, values – trend
15. Exports by top 10 HS categories, quantities – trend
16. Imports by selected HS categories, values – trend
17. Overseas merchandise trade, seasonally adjusted and trend values – quarterly
18. Exports by top 10 HS categories, values – seasonally adjusted – quarterly
19. Exports by top 10 HS categories, quantities – seasonally adjusted – quarterly
20. Imports by broad economic category (BEC) group, values – seasonally adjusted – quarterly

Access more data on Infoshare

Infoshare allows you to organise data in the way that best meets your needs. You can view the resulting tables onscreen or download them.

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