

# Gov. Walker: Wisconsin exports up 6% in 2017

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*State sets new record in exports to Mexico and China as shipments of industrial machinery, electrical machinery, vehicles, and plastics are up worldwide*

MADISON – Wisconsin businesses exported \$22.3 billion in goods and services to 202 countries in 2017, a 6.1 percent increase over 2016, Governor Scott Walker announced today.

“Not only is Wisconsin becoming more attractive to global companies seeking to expand or establish operations in the U.S., but existing state businesses are experiencing more success in selling their products overseas,” Governor Walker said. “The boost in exports is yet another example of the economic success we experienced in 2017 and is a trend we expect to continue as more companies are accessing new markets and new customers through exporting.”

Wisconsin’s export growth in 2017 was generated by significant increases in shipments to Canada, Mexico, and China, the state’s three largest export destinations. Exports to Canada grew by 4.3 percent to \$6.9 billion, driven by increases in the export of miscellaneous mineral products and electrical machinery. Exports to Mexico were up 4.8 percent to a record \$3.2 billion, mostly because of an increase in the export of electrical machinery and oil seeds (primarily soybeans). Exports to China jumped by 21.6 percent to \$1.7 billion in 2017 – also a record for exports to that country. Driving the growth in exports to China were increases in the shipments of aircraft and parts; industrial machinery; dairy products; wood and wood products; and raw hides and skins.

State exports to Saudi Arabia surged by 71.1 percent to \$796 million due almost entirely to an increase in military vehicle exports. As a result, that country jumped from ninth place on the list of top export destinations in 2016 to fourth place in 2017.

Wisconsin exported more than \$3.5 billion in agriculture products to 147 countries in 2017, a 3.6 percent increase over 2016. The state saw increases agriculture exports to Canada (up 1.5 percent); Mexico (up 14.2 percent); China (up 27.6 percent) and Korea (up 0.3 percent).

Exports of dairy, eggs and honey products in 2017 were up 19.9 percent over 2016 to \$297 million. The state ranks fifth in the U.S. in exports of those products.

Overall, Wisconsin saw increases in numerous key product categories, including electrical machinery (up 12.4 percent to \$2.2 billion); vehicles and vehicle parts (up 21.7 percent to \$1.9 billion); industrial machinery (up 3.6 percent to \$5.4 billion); plastic products (up 2.8 percent to \$1.1 billion); aircraft and parts (up 27.8 percent to \$750 million); paper products (up 3.1 percent to \$881 million); prep vegetables, fruits and nuts (up 8.9 percent to \$341 million); oil seeds, miscellaneous grain, seed and fruit (up 35.7 percent to \$310 million; and wood and wood products (up 13.3 percent to \$254 million).

Industrial machinery continued to be Wisconsin's top export product category at \$5.4 billion, accounting for 24 percent of all state exports. Tied for second were electrical machinery and medical and scientific instruments, both coming in a \$2.2 billion – and each garnering 10 percent of the total exports.

“What’s significant about this year’s export figures is the across-the-board growth that we experienced. It wasn’t just one or two products or countries driving the growth,” Governor Walker said. “We saw exports rise in four of our five top countries, and in four of our five top product categories.”

The numbers released today are based on U.S. Census Bureau data analyzed by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

Other exporting highlights from 2017 include:

Wisconsin ranked 19th in the U.S. in total exports and 12th in agricultural exports.

The overall rank was up from 21st in 2016 (Oregon and Arizona fell below Wisconsin).

Wisconsin led the nation in exports of a wide variety of products in 2017, including prepared/preserved cranberries, prepared/preserved sweet corn, bovine semen, outboard marine engines, refrigeration/freezer equipment, tanks and other armored vehicles and parts; and lawnmowers.

Total U.S. exports increased 6.6 percent in 2017, with 41 states seeing a rise in exports.

Both WEDC and DATCP offer programs to assist Wisconsin companies seeking to start or expand their exporting efforts. That includes WEDC trade trips to China in April and Germany in June.

For information on other WEDC exporting programs, call 608-210-6856 or visit [wedc.org/goglobal](http://wedc.org/goglobal).

For details on DATCP programs aimed at agricultural companies, call 800-462-5237 or visit [AgExporting.wi.gov](http://AgExporting.wi.gov).