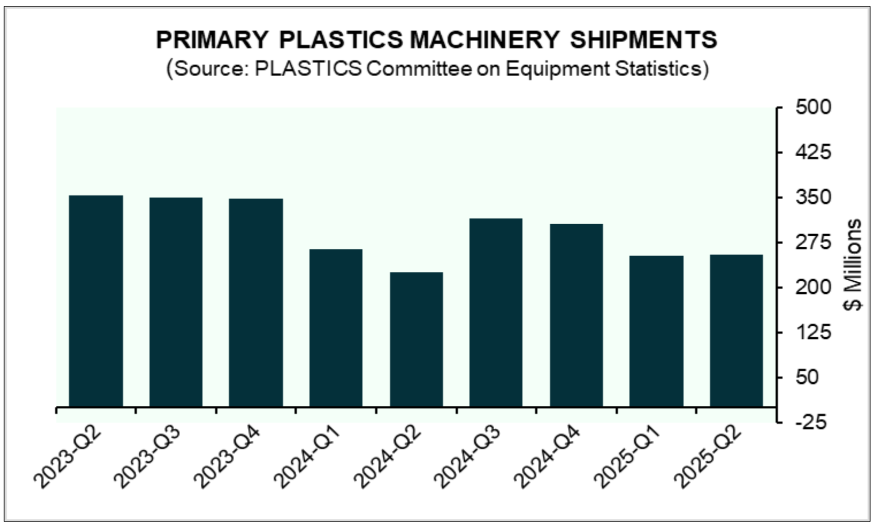
Plastics Equipment Shipments Increased in the First Half of 2025

The Plastics Industry Association's Committee on Equipment Statistics (CES) released Q2 2025 shipment data for primary plastics machinery in North America, covering injection molding and extrusion. The total shipment value was estimated at $253.8 million—up 0.7% from both the previous quarter and the same period last year.

The increase in plastics machinery shipments in the second quarter was driven by the 48.5% increase in twin-screw extruder shipment from the first quarter, which more than doubled (115.4%) from the second quarter last year. In contrast, single-screw extruder shipments decreased 11.1% quarterly, but increased 6.5% year-over-year. Injection molding shipment posted the same trend—down 3.1% from the previous quarter, but up 5.4% from the second quarter last year.



“Shipments stopped falling in the second quarter. In fact, comparing the first half of 2025 to the same period in 2024, shipments increased by 3.5%. It seems the plastics industry had a better handle on ongoing trade and tariff challenges across the value chain in the second quarter compared to the first,” said PLASTICS Chief Economist Perc Pineda, PhD.

Still, high tariff rates remain a concern. “If the overarching goal is to strengthen U.S. manufacturing competitiveness—a goal the plastics industry fully supports—then, in the short term, the industry should be able to import production inputs and equipment no longer made in the U.S. at lower tariff rates,” Pineda added.

On U.S. plastics machinery trade, imports fell 7.9% in the second quarter but rose 1.9% compared to the same period last year. Total exports, on the other hand, increased 0.4% from the previous quarter but declined 4.3% year-over-year.

In the second-quarter survey of CES members, 58% of respondents expected market conditions to remain steady or improve over the next 12 months—down from 62% in the previous quarter. However, the share reporting that quoting activity held steady or improved rose from 65% to 76%.

Pineda noted, “The advance estimate of U.S. real GDP showed a 3.0% increase in the second quarter, rebounding from the 0.5% decline in the previous quarter. This growth was largely driven by a sharp drop in imports, which are subtracted in the calculation of domestic output. However, the broad-based increase in household spending—across durable goods, nondurable goods, and services—also points to room for growth in plastics manufacturing, particularly as imports decline.”