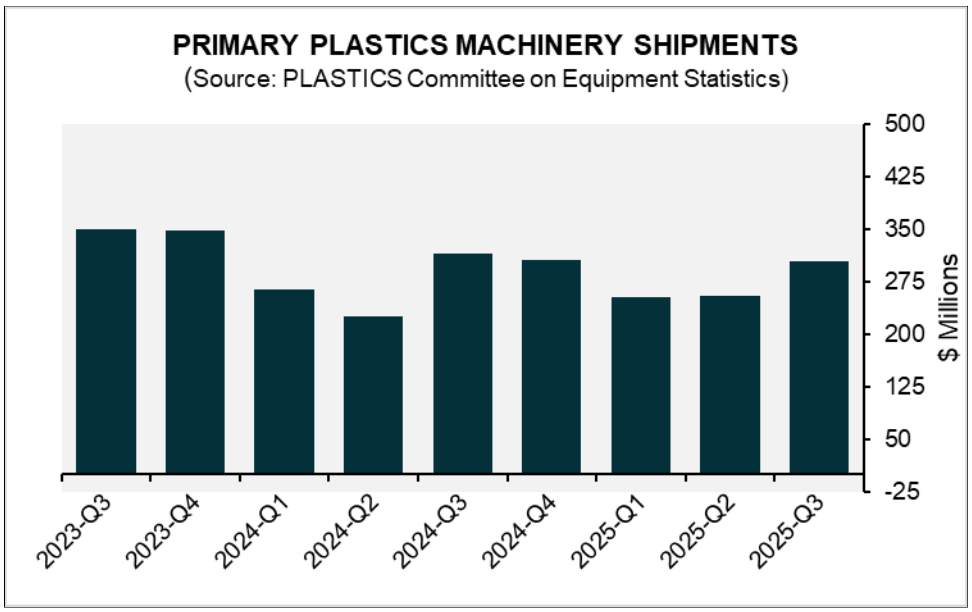
Plastics Equipment Shipments Up in Q3 2025

The Plastics Industry Association's Committee on Equipment Statistics (CES) released the third quarter shipment data for primary plastics machinery in North America, covering injection molding and extrusion. The total shipment value was estimated at $303.2 million—up 19.5% from both the previous quarter and the same period last year.

The increase in plastics machinery shipments in the third quarter was driven by the robust increase in injection molding shipments of 30.0% from the previous quarter and 4.2% from a year earlier. Shipments of extrusion equipment, however, decreased quarter-over-quarter and year-over-year. Single-screw extruders decreased 4.9% from the previous quarter and dropped 24.2% year-over-year. Twin-screw extruders fell 28.9% and 38.6% Q/Q and Y/Y, respectively.



"Although shipments continued to increase in the third quarter, it is obvious that both processes faced different headwinds during the quarter. Sector-specific drivers were at play, causing injection molding shipments to rise while those for extrusion fell. Both equipment types were in different cycles," said The Plastics Industry Association Chief Economist Dr. Perc Pineda.

Residential construction has remained flat to slightly down due to high interest rates, which have continued to cap growth in plastics production for extruded construction supplies. Over the past twelve months, industrial production of construction supplies peaked in April with a 2.4% year-over-year increase before declining. In contrast, motor vehicles and parts production have been trending upward since January. “The 50-basis-point interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve this year—and the market pricing in additional cuts in 2026—have set the tone for lower borrowing costs ahead, which will eventually feed into plastics manufacturing and lead to higher equipment demand,” Pineda added.

On U.S. plastics machinery trade, based on July data—the latest available due to the government shutdown—exports totaled $112.5 million, while imports totaled $336.1 million, resulting in a $223.5 million trade deficit. Compared to a year earlier, exports decreased by 1.6%, while imports fell by 39.1%. The trade deficit rose 75.6% in July from the same month last year.

In the third-quarter survey of CES members, 52% of respondents expected market conditions to remain steady or improve over the next 12 months—slightly lower than 58% in the previous quarter. However, the share reporting that quoting activity held steady or improved rose from 76% to 81% - the second consecutive quarter of an increase.

Pineda noted, “While the government shutdown has delayed the release of economic data, the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta’s GDPNow estimate for third-quarter growth—as of November 5—stands at 4.0%. Trade and tariff issues remain a concern, yet markets appear to be adapting to this evolving landscape, which hinges on U.S. policy shifts and outcomes from trade talks with key partners.”