

What if tariffs are imposed?

Higher Costs & Supply Chain Disruption

Increased upfront cost of goods sold, increased shipping costs & delays.

Books are a highly inelastic consumer good meaning publishers would have to absorb costs.

Increased Book Prices & Reduced Availability

If costs are passed on to consumers, higher prices could discourage U.S. readers from purchasing Canadian books, reducing their availability on U.S. bookstore shelves, libraries, and classrooms.

Loss of U.S. Market Share & Reduced Profitability

Canadian titles become less competitive in the U.S. market, pushing Canadian books out of American stores and libraries. Publishers may find that their existing business model becomes economically unviable.

Negative Impact on Authors

Fewer opportunities for Canadian authors to reach the key U.S. market. Authors may lose a major revenue stream if their books become harder to sell in the U.S., affecting both their financial stability and exposure.

Did you know?

BC publishers are significant exporters

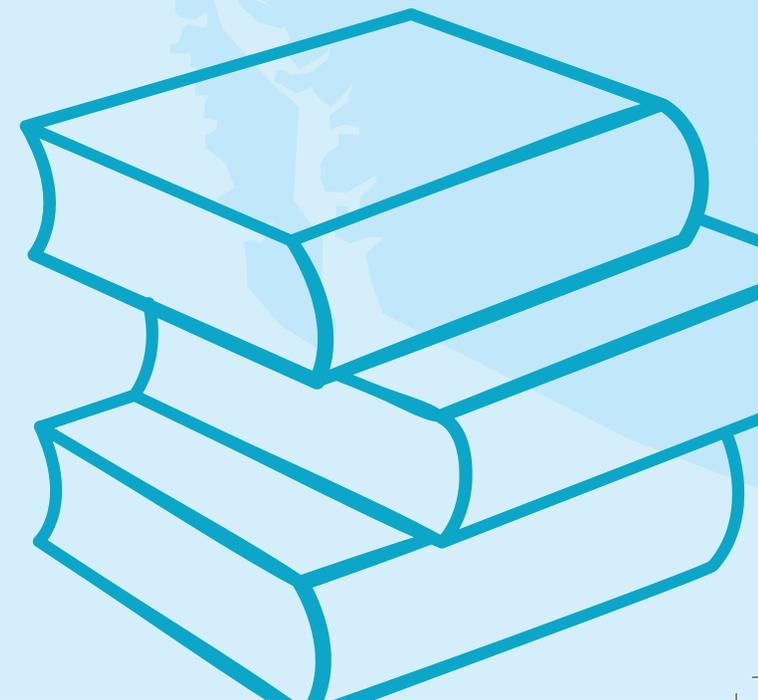
In 2023-2024, Canadian publishers exported a total of \$37 million of finished products (books) into the US market.

BC publishers exported a total of \$9 million books, representing 24% of total Canadian book exports.

BC publishers export figures range from \$10,000-\$50,000 (small exporters) to \$1-\$5 million (major exporters) annually.

BC Books and the US Market

Lessons Learned from the Threats of Tariffs on the BC Book Publishing Industry



Tariffs and the book publishing industry: Where things stand

On February 1, 2025, the Trump Administration issued three executive orders imposing significant tariffs at the rate of 25% on all imports from Canada and Mexico. In response, the Canadian government drafted a list of “retaliatory” tariffs, slated for April 2, which initially included books and paper. While targeting specific industries, ultimately, the Trump Administration’s anticipated April 2 announcement did not tariff CUSMA-compliant goods and retained the exemption for culture and media under “informational materials.” In response, the Canadian government announced new tariffs that only target the auto industry.

For now, culture is off the table in this evolving trade war.

While the book industry has dodged the latest trade-war crossfire, **Canadian-owned publishers will still face economic challenges.** Publishers are bracing for rising costs of input materials such as paper, ink, glue, and plastic, disruptions to supply chains, border delays, and a reduction in consumer purchasing power.

The threat of U.S. tariffs served as a wake-up call, exposing how vulnerable Canada’s publishing industry has become due to its reliance on foreign markets, foreign suppliers, and offshore printing.

An opportunity to evolve

Canada’s book publishing industry stands at a pivotal moment.

For years, strategic investments have focused on growing exports to the United States. These efforts have helped Canadian books gain valuable traction abroad.

But the recent threat of the potential imposition of U.S. tariffs has exposed a deeper structural vulnerability and underscored the urgent need to diversify international sales, strengthen our domestic market, and invest in a more resilient publishing infrastructure here at home.

What’s needed now is a coordinated, long-term vision — driven by both industry and government — to ensure Canadian books and voices don’t just survive but thrive in an increasingly volatile global landscape.

By working together to expand the reach of Canadian books in schools, libraries, and bookstores, and by introducing tools like a domestic printing tax credit, we can create a more sustainable, self-sufficient industry — one that ensures Canadian stories are not only published, but seen, read, and celebrated both at home and around the world.

Our vision for a new path forward

Diversify export markets.



To reduce reliance on the U.S., Canadian publishers should explore opportunities in international markets that are more politically and economically stable in their trade relationships with Canada. Government funding

initiatives could support this expansion by prioritizing market development efforts in regions with strong demand for Canadian literature.

Expand the reach of Canadian books in schools, libraries, and bookstores.



The majority of books stocked by Canadian bookstores, libraries, and schools still come from U.S. suppliers and publishers. This highlights a critical gap — and an opportunity — for Canadian publishers to establish a

stronger presence in these key markets. Government funding and a targeted policy framework can help encourage the acquisition and promotion of Canadian titles by public institutions and strengthen domestic sales infrastructure.

Reduce reliance on offshore printing.



Canadian publishers also face mounting challenges due to the high cost and limited availability of domestic book printing — especially for full-colour titles like guidebooks, children’s books, and photography books. Many publishers are forced to print offshore, which

increases exposure to fluctuating exchange rates, supply chain disruptions, and environmental impact. Reducing reliance on offshore printing will require strategic investment and support from government partners to create more affordable and reliable printing options at home.