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U.S. Starts Import Ban on Canadian Alcohol, Dairy and Some Motorcycles

Effective Tuesday, the measure shuts out selected goods that previously entered under 50% tariffs, deepening the trade fight with Ottawa.

Tuesday, September 29, 2026



The United States began enforcing a ban on a range of Canadian imports on Tuesday, blocking the entry of alcoholic beverages, certain dairy products, molasses, nonalcoholic beer, and some motorcycles in a new escalation of the trade fight between the two countries.

The measure took effect at 12:01 a.m. in Washington, following proclamations President Donald Trump announced on Sept. 8. It replaces the 50% tariffs the United States had imposed since August on some of those goods with a full import prohibition.

The products now barred include Canadian beer, wine, whiskey, vodka, and rum, as well as selected dairy derivatives, especially whey and protein concentrates. The ban also covers molasses and nonalcoholic beer. In the vehicle category, it applies to certain motorcycles and mopeds made in Canada with internal combustion engines larger than 800 cubic centimeters.

The move marks a sharper step than the tariff policy it replaces because it closes the U.S. market entirely to the targeted products instead of raising their cost at the border. For importers and exporters that still had cross-border business under the tariff regime, the change means shipments that could previously enter at a higher price can no longer come in at all.

For the beverage industry, the immediate halt to Canadian wine, beer, and spirits entering the United States could disrupt supply arrangements, contract terms, and pricing for importers, wholesalers, retailers, and restaurants that rely on those products. It could also increase the risk of further retaliation in a trade dispute that has already widened beyond one sector.

Washington said the action was a response to what it views as discriminatory Canadian trade practices and to Ottawa’s retaliation against U.S. tariffs. U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said the prohibitions stem from Canada’s treatment of American exports of alcohol, dairy products, and vehicles.

The motorcycle restrictions could hit specific Canadian manufacturers with business tied to U.S. buyers. Among the companies directly exposed is BRP, which makes Can-Am Spyder and Canyon three-wheeled vehicles in Quebec for the American market.

Those vehicles are among the products affected by the new rules if they fall within the engine category covered by the ban.

The economic effect is expected to be uneven. Analysts have said the broader damage to Canada’s economy may be limited, but the impact could be much heavier for companies that sell directly into the U.S. market in the affected categories. That is especially true in alcoholic beverages, where Canada exported about C$1.2 billion worth of products to the United States last year. Exports of the dairy derivatives and motorcycles covered by the ban were much smaller, though still important for the businesses involved.

The timing matters because the policy begins immediately, leaving little room for companies to adjust shipments already planned for the U.S. market. Businesses on both sides of the border now have to determine whether orders can be rerouted, delayed, or canceled and whether substitute supply can be found in other markets.

The latest measures add to pressure on a trade relationship that is one of the largest in the world and one that supports tightly linked supply chains. While the ban applies only to selected products, it broadens the dispute from tariffs into direct market closure and places a new burden on industries that depend on steady cross-border flows.

Canadian officials had already answered earlier U.S. tariff actions with countermeasures, and the new American restrictions are likely to deepen tensions between Washington and Ottawa. Whether the two sides move toward negotiations or new reprisals could determine how long the affected Canadian products remain shut out of the U.S. market.