



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

**Monday, November 20, 2000**

For release at 8:30 a.m.

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- **Wholesale trade, September 2000** 2  
Wholesale sales fell 0.9% in September; all the provinces and territories except Newfoundland reported lower sales.

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## MAJOR RELEASES

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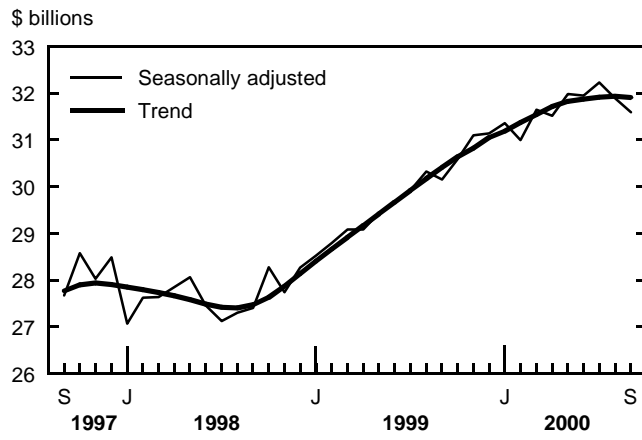
### Wholesale trade

September 2000 (preliminary)

Wholesale sales fell for the second consecutive month in September, down 0.9% from August. Declines were broadly based; 6 of the 11 trade groups, and all provinces and territories except Newfoundland, reported lower sales. Despite two months of declines, wholesale sales grew by a modest 0.3% during the third quarter of 2000 compared with the previous quarter. Wholesale sales have been generally rising since mid-1998.

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**Wholesale sales fell for second consecutive month**



Wholesalers reported sales valued at \$31.6 billion in September. The largest sectors to report declining sales were: the other products category (-3.2%); food products (-2.0%); motor vehicles, parts and accessories (-1.3%); and industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies (-0.1%). The other products category includes, for example, wholesalers of agricultural chemicals, seeds, newsprint and toys. Wholesalers of farm machinery, equipment and supplies also reported a notable decline (-4.8%).

Despite posting a 1.9% increase in September, metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies was one of only two wholesale sectors that saw falling sales for a second consecutive quarter. Third quarter sales were down 0.6%, following a drop of 0.7% in the second quarter.

With a fourth consecutive monthly decline (-1.6%), lumber and building materials was the other wholesale

sector that saw a second consecutive quarter of falling sales; -0.8% in the third quarter and -6.2% in the second. Price may be the contributing factor in these declines. Despite healthy demands for their products, these wholesalers have been hurt by falling lumber prices as a result of an oversupply of lumber. Wholesale sales of lumber and building materials have been dropping since late 1999, following a period of generally rising sales that began in the spring of 1998.

The brightest spot for wholesalers in September was apparel and dry goods (+7.8%).

### Newfoundland continues to shine among the provinces

Newfoundland was the only province where wholesalers reported higher sales in September (+0.3%). Healthy wholesale sales of industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies, as well as computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery contributed to the Newfoundland rise. At the national level, these sectors have performed modestly. In Newfoundland, wholesalers continue to benefit from that province's burgeoning petroleum industry. Despite moderating sales starting in mid-1999, Newfoundland wholesalers have enjoyed generally rising sales since mid-1998.

Alberta wholesalers may be starting to benefit from the current rise in oil and gas prices. While Alberta sales were off 0.4% in September, they rose 3.2% during the third quarter. This was the highest quarterly increase among all the provinces. Two wholesale sectors with strong links to the oil and gas industry — industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies; and metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies — were among the major contributors to this quarterly increase. Wholesale sales have generally been rising in Alberta since late 1998.

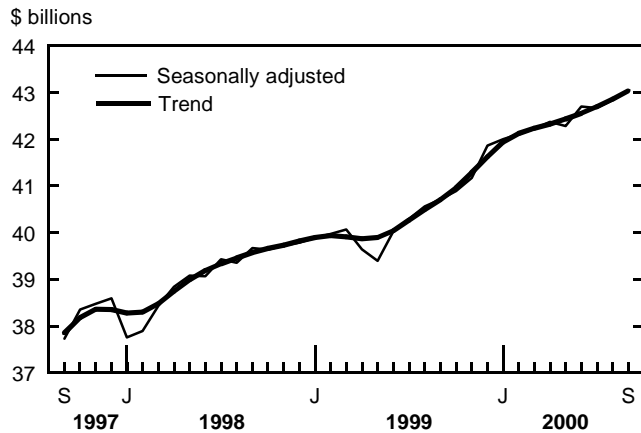
### Weaker wholesale sales in the motor vehicle sector affect Ontario's performance

Ontario wholesalers reported their third consecutive monthly decline in September (-0.2%). A large contributor to this decline was the 1.3% drop country-wide in the wholesaling of motor vehicles, parts and accessories. Ontario wholesalers account for approximately 75% of the total wholesale sales of motor vehicles, parts and accessories. Ontario wholesalers have seen their sales weaken since spring, following generally rising sales since mid-1998.

## Inventories continue to rise

Inventories held by wholesalers rose 0.5% in September to \$43.0 billion. All wholesale sectors reported increases except computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery (-2.0%) and motor vehicles, parts and accessories (-1.1%). Wholesale inventories have been generally climbing over the last several years.

Wholesale inventories rose for second consecutive month



The inventory-to-sales ratio rose from 1.34 in August to 1.36 in September. The ratio has generally levelled off since late 1999, after dropping since the fall of 1998.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 59, 61, 648 and 649.**

The September 2000 issue of *Wholesale trade* (63-008-XIB, \$14/\$140) will be available shortly. See *How to order products*.

Wholesale trade estimates for October will be released December 19.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; [wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca](mailto:wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca)). For more information, or to enquire about concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Alexander Hays (613-951-3552; [haysale@statcan.ca](mailto:haysale@statcan.ca)), Distributive Trades Division. □

## Wholesale merchants' sales and inventories

	Sept. 1999	June 2000 <sup>r</sup>	July 2000 <sup>r</sup>	Aug. 2000 <sup>r</sup>	Sept. 2000 <sup>p</sup>	Aug. to Sept. 2000	Sept. to Sept. 2000
seasonally adjusted							
	\$ millions					% change	
<b>Sales, all trade groups</b>	<b>30,149</b>	<b>31,944</b>	<b>32,229</b>	<b>31,887</b>	<b>31,590</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>4.8</b>
Food products	4,714	4,848	5,010	5,003	4,901	-2.0	4.0
Beverage, drug and tobacco products	1,909	2,059	2,064	2,117	2,121	0.2	11.1
Apparel and dry goods	547	543	537	503	542	7.8	-0.9
Household goods	826	849	844	844	852	1.0	3.2
Motor vehicles, parts and accessories	6,003	6,192	6,012	6,042	5,966	-1.3	-0.6
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies	1,991	2,099	2,057	2,042	2,080	1.9	4.5
Lumber and building materials	2,344	2,385	2,370	2,352	2,314	-1.6	-1.3
Farm machinery, equipment and supplies	605	598	610	642	611	-4.8	1.0
Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies	4,476	4,991	5,046	5,042	5,035	-0.1	12.5
Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery	2,769	2,975	3,003	2,902	2,906	0.1	5.0
Other products	3,965	4,405	4,675	4,400	4,260	-3.2	7.5
<b>Sales by province and territory</b>							
Newfoundland	216	220	224	226	227	0.3	5.0
Prince Edward Island	52	52	54	54	53	-1.8	2.4
Nova Scotia	548	566	574	577	544	-5.8	-0.8
New Brunswick	384	405	411	411	409	-0.4	6.4
Quebec	6,250	6,470	6,646	6,522	6,389	-2.0	2.2
Ontario	14,890	16,190	16,076	15,948	15,913	-0.2	6.9
Manitoba	873	865	869	908	901	-0.9	3.2
Saskatchewan	866	886	905	900	857	-4.8	-1.0
Alberta	2,745	3,037	3,216	3,086	3,073	-0.4	11.9
British Columbia	3,298	3,229	3,229	3,228	3,202	-0.8	-2.9
Yukon	12	9	10	11	9	-14.5	-19.7
Northwest Territories	12	12	13	13	11	-12.4	-4.8
Nunavut	2	2	2	2	2	-4.0	25.4
<b>Inventories, all trade groups</b>	<b>40,710</b>	<b>42,691</b>	<b>42,662</b>	<b>42,830</b>	<b>43,036</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>5.7</b>
Food products	2,759	2,900	2,885	2,887	2,929	1.4	6.2
Beverage, drug and tobacco products	2,359	2,538	2,522	2,633	2,691	2.2	14.1
Apparel and dry goods	1,272	1,066	1,048	1,093	1,116	2.0	-12.3
Household goods	1,483	1,543	1,547	1,576	1,591	1.0	7.3
Motor vehicles, parts and accessories	5,890	6,557	6,672	6,522	6,453	-1.1	9.6
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies	3,646	3,978	3,966	4,044	4,060	0.4	11.3
Lumber and building materials	3,813	3,958	3,972	3,987	3,996	0.2	4.8
Farm machinery, equipment and supplies	2,113	1,963	1,936	1,947	1,948	0.0	-7.8
Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies	9,847	10,470	10,503	10,563	10,647	0.8	8.1
Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery	2,449	2,397	2,278	2,343	2,295	-2.0	-6.3
Other products	5,078	5,323	5,331	5,235	5,311	1.5	4.6

<sup>r</sup> Revised figures.

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary figures.

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## OTHER RELEASES

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### Railway carloadings

Seven-day period ending October 21, 2000

Non-intermodal traffic loaded during the seven-day period ending October 21 totalled 4.9 million tonnes, a decrease of 3.1% compared with the same period of 1999. The number of cars loaded decreased 3.0%.

Intermodal traffic tonnage was 482 000 tonnes, a 3.6% increase from the same period of 1999. The year-to-date figures show a decrease of 0.3%.

Total traffic decreased 2.6% during the period. This brought the year-to-date total to 194.6 million tonnes, a decrease of 5.2% from the same period of 1999.

All year-to-date figures have been revised.

**Note:** Owing to operational constraints, the weekly railway carloadings survey will be discontinued with the release of data for the last week of December. Concerned users of these data should pass their comments to Jean-Robert Larocque no later than December 1.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; fax: 613-951-0009; [larocque@statcan.ca](mailto:larocque@statcan.ca)), Transportation Division. ■

### Stocks of frozen poultry meat

November 1, 2000 (preliminary)

Data on stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on November 1 are now available.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 5675-5677.**

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Sandra Gielfeldt (613-951-2505), or Gilles Beaudry (613-951-6480), Agriculture Division. ■

### Residential Care Facilities Survey

1996/97 and 1997/98

Data from the Residential Care Facilities Survey for the fiscal years 1996/97 and 1997/98 are now available from Health Statistics Division.

A release of Residential Care Facilities Survey data for fiscal year 1998/99 is scheduled for mid-January 2001.

For custom tabulations, contact Client Custom Services (613-951-1746; fax: 613-951-0792; [hd-ds@statcan.ca](mailto:hd-ds@statcan.ca)), Health Statistics Division. For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or quality of the data for 1996/97 and 1997/98, contact Richard Trudeau (613-951-8782; fax: 613-951-6078) or Mike Gagnon (613-951-8570; fax: 613-951-6078), Health Statistics Division. ■

## NEW PRODUCTS

**The Consumer Price Index, October 2000**  
**Catalogue number 62-001-XPB (\$11/\$103).**  
**Available at 7 am Tuesday, November 21.**

**New motor vehicle sales, September 2000**  
**Catalogue number 63-007-XIB (\$13/\$124).**

**All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.**

Catalogue numbers with an -XIB or an -XIE extension are Internet versions; those with -XMB or -XME are microfiche; -XPB or -XPE are paper versions; -XDB are electronic versions on diskette and -XCD are electronic versions on compact disc.

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Document 1 - 224E (F) (1401/1) (504-637-5445)



Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997  
For release at 8:30 a.m.

**MAJOR RELEASES**

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2  
Changes the methodology on taking urban transit. Canadians are using it less and less. In 1995, each Canadian took an average of about 20 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4  
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1995, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

**OTHER RELEASES**

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Statistics Canada

### Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

Published each working day by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10-H, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

To access *The Daily* on the Internet, visit our site at <http://www.statcan.ca>. To receive *The Daily* each morning by E-mail, send an E-mail message to [listproc@statcan.ca](mailto:listproc@statcan.ca). Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type "subscribe daily firstname lastname".

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