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Releases

Wholesale trade, August 2013

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New products and studies

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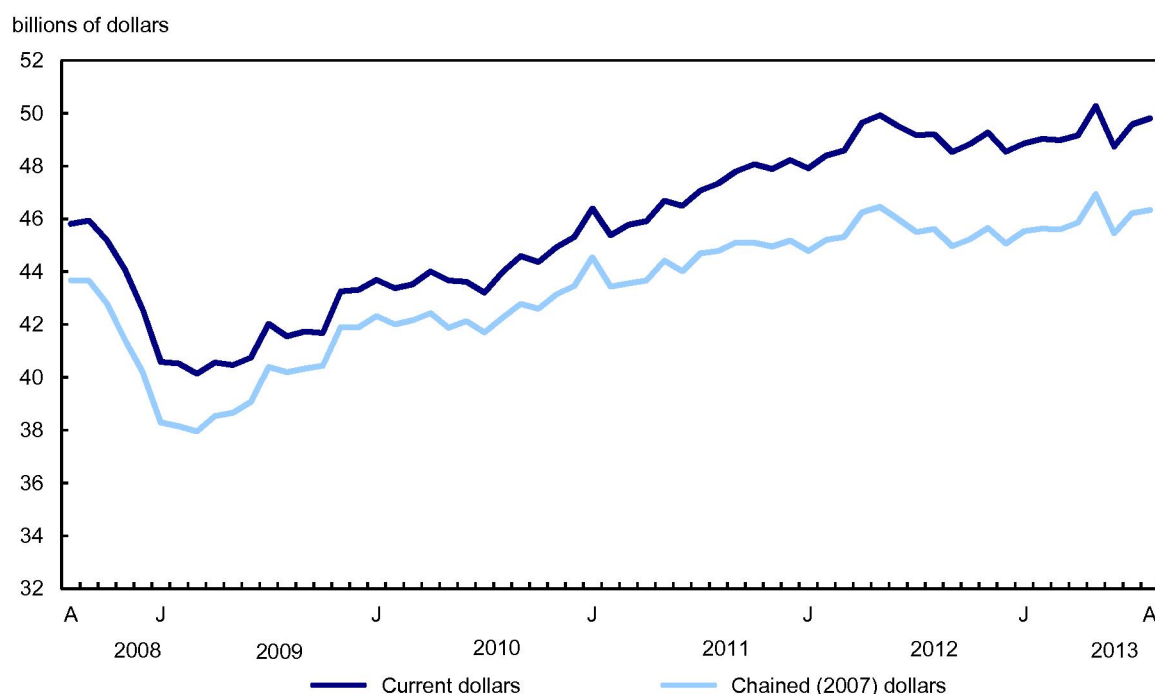
Releases

Wholesale trade, August 2013

Wholesale sales rose 0.5% to \$49.8 billion in August, the fourth increase in five months. The motor vehicle industry was the largest contributor to the gain in August.

In volume terms, wholesale sales were up 0.3%.

Chart 1
Wholesale sales increase in August



Motor vehicle industry leads growth

In August, five of the seven subsectors reported gains, accounting for about two-thirds of wholesale sales. Excluding the motor vehicle and parts subsector, wholesale sales were down 0.1%.

The largest increase in dollar terms was in the motor vehicle and parts subsector, with sales rising 3.2% to \$8.5 billion, its highest level since June 2012. The advance largely reflected higher sales in the motor vehicle industry (+4.5%), which posted its largest month-over-month gain since July 2011.

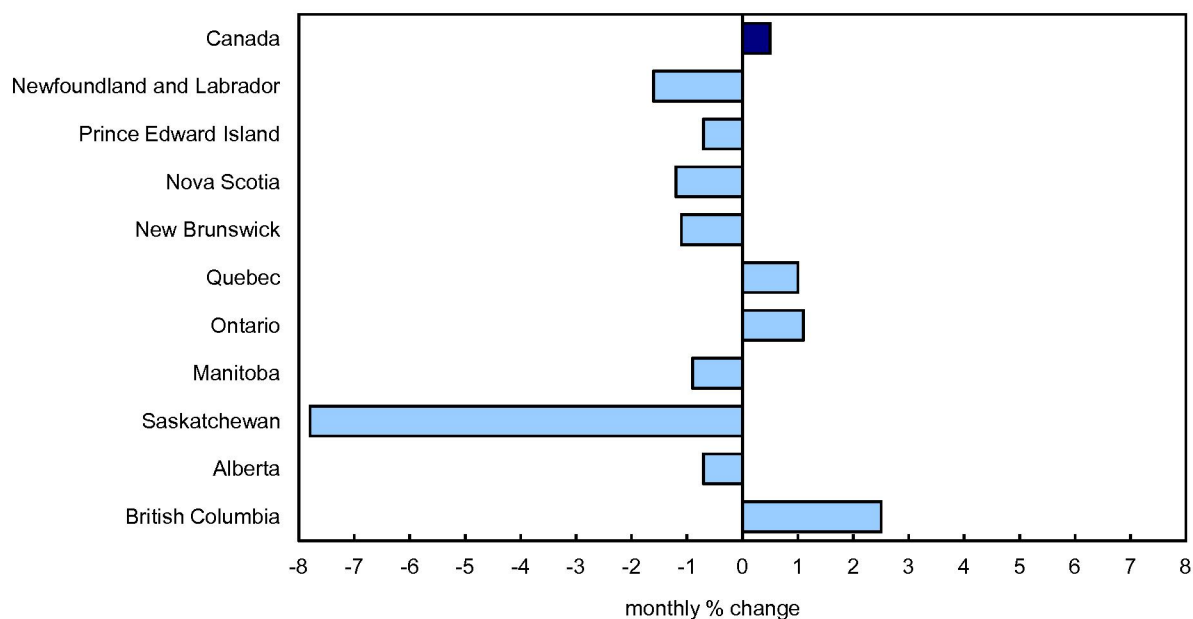
Sales rose 1.8% in the personal and household goods subsector, with five of the six industries posting gains. The toiletries, cosmetics and sundries industry (+6.2%) as well as the textile, clothing and footwear industry (+3.2%) led the advance.

The largest decline in dollar terms was in the miscellaneous subsector (-4.0%), mainly as a result of a 12.9% decrease in the agricultural supplies industry. This was the third consecutive decline, fueled by the uncertainty of global fertilizer prices.

Sales up in three provinces

Wholesale sales were up in Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec in August, while the other seven provinces posted declines.

Chart 2
Wholesale sales up in three provinces in August



Wholesale sales in Ontario were up 1.1% in August, the fifth increase in six months. The gain was mainly a result of higher sales in the motor vehicle industry.

Sales in British Columbia (+2.5%) rose for the seventh time in eight months. The growth can be attributed to higher sales in the food industry.

In Quebec, wholesale sales increased 1.0%, led by higher sales in the food industry as well as the textile, clothing and footwear industry.

Lower sales in the agricultural supplies industry led to a 7.8% drop in Saskatchewan, as well as to the declines in Manitoba and Alberta.

In the Atlantic provinces, lower sales by food wholesalers contributed to the decrease.

Inventory levels down in August

Wholesale inventories were down 0.5% to \$61.9 billion in August, with three of the seven subsectors posting declines.

Inventories fell in the building material and supplies subsector (-2.1%), machinery, equipment and supplies subsector (-1.3%), and the miscellaneous subsector (-0.8%).

The largest gains in dollar terms were in the motor vehicle and parts subsector (+1.8%), and the personal and household goods subsector (+0.6%).

The inventory-to-sales ratio edged down to 1.24 in August.

The inventory-to-sales ratio is a measure of the time in months required to exhaust inventories if sales were to remain at their current level.

Note to readers

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted and in current dollars, unless otherwise noted. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonal adjustment and identifying economic trends](#).

Total wholesale sales expressed in volume are calculated by deflating current dollar values using the relevant price indexes. The wholesale sales series in chained (2007) dollars is a chained Fisher volume index with 2007 as the reference year. For more information, see [Sales in volume for Wholesale Trade](#).

Table 1
Wholesale merchants' sales by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	August 2012	July 2013 ^r	August 2013 ^p	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale sales (current dollars)	49,194	49,573	49,811	0.5	1.3
Total, wholesale sales (2007 chained dollars)	45,621	46,210	46,331	0.3	1.6
Total (current dollars), excluding motor vehicle parts and accessories merchant wholesalers	40,760	41,297	41,271	-0.1	1.3
Farm product	551	551	556	0.9	1.0
Food, beverage and tobacco	9,583	9,715	9,837	1.3	2.6
Food	8,595	8,734	8,842	1.2	2.9
Beverage	477	488	491	0.6	2.9
Cigarette and tobacco product	511	493	503	2.1	-1.5
Personal and household goods	6,946	6,988	7,115	1.8	2.4
Textile, clothing and footwear	949	929	958	3.2	1.0
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	675	678	645	-4.8	-4.4
Home furnishings	469	465	471	1.5	0.5
Personal goods	732	687	698	1.5	-4.7
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	3,486	3,552	3,623	2.0	3.9
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	635	677	719	6.2	13.2
Motor vehicle and parts	8,434	8,276	8,540	3.2	1.3
Motor vehicle	6,405	6,224	6,505	4.5	1.6
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	1,983	1,996	1,982	-0.7	-0.1
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	46	56	54	-4.3	17.5
Building material and supplies	6,832	7,050	7,058	0.1	3.3
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	2,151	2,172	2,160	-0.6	0.4
Metal service centres	1,535	1,587	1,621	2.1	5.6
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	3,146	3,291	3,277	-0.4	4.2
Machinery, equipment and supplies	10,658	10,602	10,571	-0.3	-0.8
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	1,252	1,367	1,256	-8.1	0.3
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	3,716	3,531	3,641	3.1	-2.0
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	3,171	3,280	3,205	-2.3	1.1
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	2,519	2,425	2,469	1.8	-2.0
Miscellaneous	6,191	6,391	6,134	-4.0	-0.9
Recyclable material	667	649	650	0.1	-2.6
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	869	897	893	-0.5	2.7
Agricultural supplies	1,568	1,790	1,559	-12.9	-0.6
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,172	1,156	1,140	-1.3	-2.7
Other miscellaneous	1,914	1,899	1,892	-0.4	-1.2

^r revised

^p preliminary

Note(s): Figures may not add up to total as a result of rounding.

Table 2
Wholesale merchants' sales by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	August 2012	July 2013 ^r	August 2013 ^p	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	49,194	49,573	49,811	0.5	1.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	335	343	337	-1.6	0.6
Prince Edward Island	50	50	49	-0.7	-1.1
Nova Scotia	717	697	689	-1.2	-4.0
New Brunswick	487	509	503	-1.1	3.3
Quebec	9,491	9,302	9,399	1.0	-1.0
Ontario	23,940	24,010	24,271	1.1	1.4
Manitoba	1,292	1,352	1,340	-0.9	3.7
Saskatchewan	1,807	1,951	1,798	-7.8	-0.5
Alberta	6,437	6,586	6,540	-0.7	1.6
British Columbia	4,560	4,701	4,817	2.5	5.6
Yukon	14	12	11	-3.6	-16.8
Northwest Territories	59	54	52	-3.5	-11.1
Nunavut	7	8	5	-32.2	-22.2

^r revised

^p preliminary

Note(s): Figures may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Table 3
Wholesale merchants' inventories by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	August 2012	July 2013 ^r	August 2013 ^p	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale inventories	61,198	62,239	61,924	-0.5	1.2
Farm product	149	164	166	1.7	11.7
Food, beverage and tobacco	5,526	5,557	5,564	0.1	0.7
Food	4,991	4,994	5,000	0.1	0.2
Beverage	309	335	339	1.1	9.8
Cigarette and tobacco product	227	228	225	-1.3	-0.6
Personal and household goods	10,496	10,893	10,958	0.6	4.4
Textile, clothing and footwear	1,840	2,111	2,042	-3.3	11.0
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	736	747	725	-3.0	-1.6
Home furnishings	980	1,039	1,067	2.7	8.9
Personal goods	1,535	1,449	1,458	0.6	-5.0
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	4,712	4,821	4,894	1.5	3.9
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	694	725	772	6.5	11.3
Motor vehicle and parts	8,482	8,360	8,507	1.8	0.3
Motor vehicle	4,558	4,470	4,583	2.5	0.6
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	3,817	3,776	3,809	0.9	-0.2
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	107	114	115	0.9	7.5
Building material and supplies	11,359	11,627	11,385	-2.1	0.2
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	3,155	3,034	2,957	-2.6	-6.3
Metal service centres	3,391	3,477	3,596	3.4	6.0
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	4,813	5,116	4,832	-5.5	0.4
Machinery, equipment and supplies	17,770	17,962	17,726	-1.3	-0.2
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	3,624	3,994	3,977	-0.4	9.7
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	9,127	9,013	8,883	-1.4	-2.7
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	1,639	1,638	1,590	-2.9	-2.9
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	3,381	3,318	3,275	-1.3	-3.1
Miscellaneous	7,415	7,675	7,616	-0.8	2.7
Recyclable material	590	511	536	4.9	-9.1
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	713	694	690	-0.7	-3.3
Agricultural supplies	2,663	2,903	2,819	-2.9	5.9
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,103	990	989	-0.1	-10.4
Other miscellaneous	2,346	2,577	2,581	0.2	10.1

^r revised

^p preliminary

Note(s): Figures may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Available in CANSIM: tables 081-0011, 081-0012 and 081-0015.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2401.

The August 2013 issue of *Wholesale Trade* (63-008-X) will soon be available.

Wholesale trade data for September will be released on November 20.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Tamara Webb (613-951-3999); tamara.webb@statcan.gc.ca, Distributive Trades Division.

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