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MAY 13 1950

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
Industry and Merchandising Division
OTTAWA

Published by Authority of the Rt. Hon. C. D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce

Vol. 3 - No. 3



16-4090

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Price .10

CHAIN STORE
SALES AND STOCKS
MARCH 1950

Food store chains recorded a 16% increase in sales in March 1950 compared with March 1949. This gain was outstanding when compared with results for the other five trades represented. Hardware and variety stores had minor sales increases, while decreases in the other trades ranged from 2% for drug stores to 7% for shoe stores.

All six trades covered in this bulletin reported stocks higher on March 1st 1950 compared with the same date last year. Shoe and hardware store stocks were up 16% and 17% respectively. Drug store stocks showed the largest gain in the past two years (+10%). For the first time in some months, grocery and meat store stocks reported an increase (+3%) over the corresponding date a year earlier. Variety and women's wear store stocks were both up 5%.

Note: The number of stores shown in the last table of this report relate to the sample of chain companies used to determine trends. They constitute at least 85%, by volume, of the total chain store sales in each of the six different trades covered by this bulletin.

Prepared in Merchandising and Services Section.

Table 1.-- Sales and Stocks, March 1950

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Six Trades

(In Thousands of Dollars)

Trade	1949		1950		% Change	
	Sales	Stocks	Sales	Stocks	March 1950/1949	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	%	%
Grocery Stores	36,253	29,987	41,894	30,989	+15.6	+ 3.3
Women's Clothing Stores ...	2,638	6,562	2,474	6,880	- 6.2	+ 4.9
Shoe Stores	2,163	13,847	2,014	16,034	- 6.9	+15.8
Hardware Stores	645	3,075	664	3,595	+ 2.9	+16.9
Drug Stores	2,386	7,136	2,341	7,810	- 1.9	+ 9.5
Variety Stores	9,281	31,711	9,408	33,295	+ 1.4	+ 5.0

Table 2.-- Sales/Stocks Relationships, March 1950

Trade	Stocks/Sales Ratio		Stock Turnover Rate
	March 1949	March 1950	March 1950
	Grocery Stores	0.8	0.7
Women's Clothing Stores	2.5	2.8	5.2
Shoe Stores	6.4	8.0	2.0
Hardware Stores	4.8	5.4	2.9
Drug Stores	3.0	3.3	3.0
Variety Stores	3.4	3.5	4.3

Stock/Sales Ratios--are obtained by dividing Stocks at Selling Value as at the beginning of the month by Sales made during the month.

Stock Turnover Rates--are obtained by dividing Sales in the 12 months ending with the report month by Stocks at Selling Value at the beginning of the report month.

Table 3.--Number of Stores Operated by Sample Firms

	Number of Stores	
	March 1949	March 1950
Grocery Stores	785	771
Women's Clothing Stores	250	271
Shoe Stores	463	467
Hardware Stores	38	37
Drug Stores	249	249
Variety Stores	486	495