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CENSUS OF MERCHANDISING AND SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Food Chains in Canada, 1936 (Preliminary)

A moderate improvement in the business transacted by food chains in Canada last year is reflected in preliminary compilations for the annual Census of Merchandising Establishments. These show that sales for 1936 of 90 chain companies specializing in the retail distribution of groceries and meats exceeded by 6 per cent the amount recorded for 86 similar organizations in 1935. The 90 chain companies in Canada last year operated 2,341 stores with $111,560,900 sales while the 86 companies in 1935 had 2,309 stores and $105,635,900 sales.

Differences in amount of chain store business from year to year are due not only to variations in the amount of business that each store transacts but also to changes both in the number of chain companies in operation and in the number of unit stores that these chains possess. Sales per store averaged $49,938 last year or about 6 per cent higher than in 1935 although still 13 per cent below the 1930 average.

Excepting only in Manitoba where a slight recession of 1 per cent was recorded, increases in food chain sales last year were reported in all provinces. Saskatchewan showed the best improvement with a gain of 10 per cent. Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia each reported increases ranging between 6 and 7 per cent. Quebec sales were up 4 per cent and Prince Edward Island, 2.5 per cent.

The 90 food chain companies last year included 35 grocery chains with 530 stores and $19,009,200 sales. The 530 stores were all of the straight grocery type. There were 14 meat market chains with 162 stores and $4,166,000 sales. These were engaged almost exclusively in the distribution of meat products although some canned goods were generally sold. Occupying first place in the food chain field were 41 combination store chains with 1,649 stores and $88,385,700 sales. Not all these stores were of the combination type where both groceries and meats are sold. The 1,649 stores included 715 straight grocery units with $26,035,600 sales and 917 units of the combination type with $619,060,000 sales. There were also 17 stores belonging to miscellaneous types which could not be classified as either grocery or combination stores and these had $444,100 sales.

The smaller combination store chains are comprised almost entirely of stores of the combination type. The 170 units of 30 small chains each with fewer than 10 stores were divided in the proportion of 25 grocery units, 137 combination units and 8 units of miscellaneous types. The five largest chains (each with 100 stores or more) had a total of 1,351 stores, of which 631 were grocery, 720 were combination and 9 were of miscellaneous types of business.

Price, 10 cents.

Table I.—Number of Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930 and 1933 to 1936
(Grocery, Combination and Meat Market Chains Combined)

	1930	1933	1934	1935	1936
Number of Chains	87	91	86	88	90
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	2,352	2,395	2,395	2,309	2,361
Average(1)	2,218	2,301	2,316	2,241	2,234
Total Sales	$127,582,500	$103,638,500	$104,312,800	$105,635,700	$121,560,500
Chain Sales Index (1930 = 100.0)	100.0	81.2	82.2	82.8	87.4
Percentage change in sales from preceding year	-	-18.8	+1.2	+0.7	+5.6

(1) Computed from number at beginning, middle and end of each year.

Table II.—Number of Food Chains, Stores and Sales, by Provinces, 1930, 1934, 1935 and 1936 Compared

	1930	1934	1935	1936	% Change in Sales 1935-36
CANADA, Total- Chains	87	86	88	90	
Stores(max.)	2,352	2,395	2,309	2,361	
Sales	$127,582,500	$104,312,800	$105,635,700	$121,560,500	+5.6
British Columbia(1)- Chains	19	18	17	16	
Stores(max.)	246	307	297	300	
Sales	$ 16,174,900	$ 7,235,800	$ 10,248,000	$ 10,308,000	+6.5
Alberta- Chains	8	10	12	10	
Stores(max.)	120	128	130	127	
Sales	$ 5,587,000	$ 4,777,300	$ 5,250,900	$ 5,595,900	+6.8
Saskatchewan- Chains	10	6	6	6	
Stores(max.)	165	133	131	130	
Sales	$ 6,965,300	$ 4,160,800	$ 4,256,300	$ 3,004,200	+5.8
Manitoba- Chains	8	5	5	6	
Stores(max.)	121	109	106	103	
Sales	$ 5,669,100	$ 4,895,200	$ 4,813,800	$ 4,755,100	-1.6
Ontario- Chains	37	36	37	42	
Stores(max.)	1,107	1,086	1,075	1,097	
Sales	$ 70,195,300	$ 56,563,300	$ 56,515,600	$ 60,133,200	+6.4
Quebec- Chains	13	12	11	10	
Stores(max.)	475	463	425	428	
Sales	$ 23,705,400	$ 19,759,700	$ 19,809,400	$ 19,515,800	+4.1
Maritime Provinces- Chains	12	15	15	16	
Stores(max.)	98	149	145	132	
Sales	$ 4,664,300	$ 5,312,700	$ 5,534,700	$ 5,600,000	+2.5

(1) Includes Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Table I.--Number of Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930 and 1933 to 1936
(Grocery, Combination and Meat Market Chains Combined)

	1930	1933	1934	1935	1936
Number of Chains	87	91	86	86	90
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	2,352	2,398	2,395	2,309	2,341
Average(1)	2,218	2,301	2,310	2,241	2,234
Total Sales	$127,582,500	$103,638,500	$104,912,800	$105,635,900	$111,560,900
Chain Sales Index (1930 = 100.0)	100.0	81.2	82.2	82.8	87.4
Percentage change in sales from preceding year	-	+0.8	+1.2	+0.7	+5.6

(1) Computed from number at beginning, middle and end of each year.

Table II.--Number of Food Chains, Stores and Sales, by Provinces, 1930, 1934, 1935 and 1936 Compared

		1930	1934	1935	1936	% Change in Sales 1935-36
CANADA, Total-	Chains	87	86	86	90	
	Stores(max.)	2,352	2,395	2,309	2,341	
	Sales	$127,582,500	$104,912,800	$105,635,900	$111,560,900	+5.6
British Columbia(1)-	Chains	19	18	17	16	
	Stores(max.)	246	307	297	300	
	Sales	$ 10,194,900	$ 9,235,800	$ 10,148,000	$ 10,808,000	+6.5
Alberta-	Chains	8	10	11	10	
	Stores(max.)	120	128	130	131	
	Sales	$ 5,587,000	$ 4,777,300	$ 5,250,900	$ 5,589,900	+6.5
Saskatchewan-	Chains	10	6	6	6	
	Stores(max.)	165	133	131	130	
	Sales	$ 6,969,300	$ 4,168,600	$ 4,558,500	$ 5,004,100	+9.8
Manitoba-	Chains	8	5	5	4	
	Stores(max.)	121	109	106	103	
	Sales	$ 5,689,100	$ 4,895,200	$ 4,813,800	$ 4,765,100	-1.0
Ontario-	Chains	37	36	37	42	
	Stores(max.)	1,107	1,086	1,075	1,097	
	Sales	$ 70,769,300	$ 56,563,500	$ 56,515,600	$ 60,133,200	+6.4
Quebec-	Chains	13	12	11	10	
	Stores(max.)	495	483	425	428	
	Sales	$ 23,708,400	$ 19,759,700	$ 18,809,400	$ 19,579,800	+4.1
Maritime Provinces-	Chains	12	15	15	16	
	Stores(max.)	98	149	145	152	
	Sales	$ 4,664,500	$ 5,512,700	$ 5,539,700	$ 5,680,800	+2.5

(1) Includes Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Table III.--Number of Grocery Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930 and 1933 to 1936

	1930	1933	1934	1935	1936
Number of Chains	43	46	40	38	35
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	748	821	746	611	530
Average	722	790	719	592	504
Total Sales	$44,698,400	$37,390,600	$37,390,600	$23,870,900	$19,009,200

Table IV.--Number of Combination Store Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930 and 1933 to 1936

	1930	1933	1934	1935	1936
Number of Chains	23	29	34	35	41
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	1,379	1,400	1,493	1,540	1,649
Average	1,282	1,342	1,440	1,498	1,580
Total Sales	$74,800,200	$61,471,500	$63,484,300	$77,547,500	$88,385,700

Table V.--Number of Meat Market Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930 and 1933 to 1936

	1930	1933	1934	1935	1936
Number of Chains	21	16	12	13	14
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	225	177	156	158	162
Average	214	169	151	151	150
Total Sales	$ 8,083,900	$ 4,776,400	$ 4,037,900	$ 4,217,500	$ 4,166,000

Table VI.--Kinds of Stores Operated by Combination Store Chains in 1936

Size of Chain	Number of Chains	Total Units(1)		Grocery Units		Combination Units	
		Number	Sales	Number	Sales	Number	Sales
			$		$		$
All Combination Store Chains, Total	41	1,649	88,385,700	715	26,035,600	917	61,906,000
Chains having -							
Less than 10 units ...	30	170	8,578,200	25	540,000	137	7,778,200
10 to 99 units	6	128	4,323,900	59	1,460,800	60	2,679,000
100 units and over ...	5	1,351	75,483,600	631	24,034,800	720	51,448,800

(1) These figures include a few stores other than grocery and combination stores.