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CENSUS OF MERCHANDISING AND SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

Food Chains in Canada, 1940 (Preliminary)

Dollar sales for 1940 of 80 chain store companies in the food retailing field in Canada were up 13 per cent over the amount of business transacted by 87 chains in 1939. The 80 chains operated a total of 1,808 individual stores in 1940 and had sales of \$144,943,500 while the 87 chains in the earlier period had 2,044 stores and \$127,945,900 sales. The decline in number of stores in operation between the two years results from the continuation of the policy adopted by retail food chains in recent years of closing out the smaller branches and developing the larger stores. Further evidence of this trend may be seen in a comparison of the average sales per store as determined from the total annual sales and the average number of stores operated each year. Average sales per store for food chains increased by 26 per cent from \$68,500 in 1939 to \$86,500 in 1940.

Increased sales compared with 1939 were reported for all regions of the country, the percentage gains ranging from 2 per cent in the Maritime Provinces to 24 per cent in Manitoba with increases for other provinces as follows: British Columbia, 18 per cent; Ontario, 14 per cent; Alberta, 11 per cent; Saskatchewan, 11 per cent and Quebec, 8 per cent.

Of the 80 chain companies included in this survey, 21 were grocery chains operating grocery units only and these had 379 stores and \$16,605,600 sales. There were 44 combination store chains with 1,267 stores and \$124,092,700 sales. Not all the units of combination chains sell both groceries and meat. Of the 1,267 stores operated by these chains 405 were purely grocery stores and these had sales of \$18,362,500; 850 were units of the combination meat and grocery type with sales of \$105,477,200, while 12 were classified under other lines of business. The schedules used for the 1940 survey asked for separate details regarding meat sales only in combination stores but unfortunately a considerable number of the smaller chains were unable to furnish a breakdown between meat and grocery receipts. The four largest chains, each with more than 100 stores, were able to give this breakdown. These 4 chains operated a total of 847 stores with \$97,525,200 sales of which 287 units were straight grocery stores with sales of \$13,362,900. The 847 stores also included 559 units of the combination type whose sales totalled \$84,159,500 and of which meat sales amounted to \$17,645,000 or approximately 21 per cent.

The 1940 figures given in this report represent results of preliminary compilations for the Census of Merchandising and Service Establishments and relate to groups of four or more stores under the same ownership or management and dealing in grocery or meat products or in both groceries and meats. They do not include candy chains, restaurant chains or chains specializing in the sale of bakery products. Voluntary chains consisting of individual stores grouped for buying or advertising purposes are not included.

Table I.--Number of Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930, 1934 and 1938 to 1940
(Grocery, Combination and Meat Market Chains Combined)

	1930	1934	1938	1939	1940
Number of Chains	87	86	91	87	80
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	2,352	2,395	2,212	2,044	1,808
Average(1)	2,218	2,310	2,093	1,867	1,675
Total Sales	\$127,582,500	\$104,912,800	\$121,371,500	\$127,945,900	\$144,943,500
Chain Sales Index (1930 = 100.0)	100.0	82.2	95.1	100.3	113.6
Percentage change in sales from preceding year	-	+ 1.2	+ 0.3	+ 5.4	+13.3

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

Table II.--Number of Food Chains, Stores and Sales, by Provinces,
1930, 1938, 1939 and 1940 Compared

	1930	1938	1939	1940	% Change in Sales
CANADA, Total Chains	87	91	87	80	
Stores (max.)	2,352	2,212	2,044	1,808	
Sales	\$127,582,500	\$121,371,500	\$127,945,900	\$144,943,500	+ 13.3
British Columbia(1) Chains	19	14	13	13	
Stores (max.)	246	283	266	254	
Sales	\$ 10,194,900	\$ 11,326,000	\$ 12,653,300	\$ 14,974,300	+ 18.3
Alberta Chains	8	8	8	9	
Stores (max.)	120	124	119	122	
Sales	\$ 5,587,000	\$ 6,296,500	\$ 6,564,600	\$ 7,309,600	+ 11.3
Saskatchewan Chains	10	6	6	6	
Stores (max.)	165	130	127	124	
Sales	\$ 6,969,300	\$ 5,193,700	\$ 5,685,100	\$ 6,291,800	+ 10.7
Manitoba Chains	8	5	5	5	
Stores (max.)	121	109	106	96	
Sales	\$ 5,689,100	\$ 4,974,500	\$ 5,814,000	\$ 7,186,700	+ 23.6
Ontario Chains	37	48	47	44	
Stores (max.)	1,107	1,076	1,002	874	
Sales	\$ 70,769,300	\$ 68,503,400	\$ 73,459,400	\$ 83,967,900	+ 14.3
Quebec Chains	13	9	8	7	
Stores (max.)	495	358	289	223	
Sales	\$ 23,708,400	\$ 19,031,600	\$ 17,259,200	\$ 18,673,400	+ 8.2
Maritime Provinces Chains	12	15	15	12	
Stores (max.)	98	132	133	115	
Sales	\$ 4,664,500	\$ 6,045,800	\$ 6,396,300	\$ 6,539,800	+ 2.2

(1) Includes Yukon and Northwest Territories

Table III.--Number of Grocery Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930, 1934 and 1938 to 1940

	1930	1934	1938	1939	1940
Number of Chains ...	43	40	31	30	21
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	748	746	484	452	379
Average	722	719	460	433	367
Total Sales	\$44,698,400	\$37,390,600	\$19,655,500	\$18,040,100	\$16,605,600

Table IV.--Number of Combination Store Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930, 1934 and 1938 to 1940

	1930	1934	1938	1939	1940
Number of Chains ...	23	34	46	43	44
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	1,379	1,493	1,570	1,435	1,267
Average	1,282	1,440	1,478	1,285	1,163
Total Sales	\$74,800,200	\$63,484,300	\$97,194,300	\$105,786,100	\$124,092,700

Table V.--Number of Meat Market Chains, Stores and Total Sales, by Years, 1930, 1934 and 1938 to 1940

	1930	1934	1938	1939	1940
Number of Chains ...	21	12	14	14	15
Number of Stores:					
Maximum	225	156	158	157	162
Average	214	151	155	149	145
Total Sales	\$ 8,083,900	\$ 4,037,900	\$ 4,521,700	\$ 4,119,700	\$ 4,245,200

Table VI.--Kinds of Stores Operated by Combination Store Chains in 1940

Size of Chain	Number of Chains	Total Units(1)		Grocery Units		Combination Units	
		Number	Sales	Number	Sales	Number	Sales
All Combination Store Chains, Total	44	1,267	124,092,700	405	18,362,500	850	105,477,200
Chains having --							
Less than 10 units	31	175	12,690,300	29	1,433,300	136	11,006,800
10 to 99 units ...	9	244	13,877,200	89	3,566,300	155	10,310,900
100 units and over	4	847	97,525,200	287	13,362,900	559	34,159,500

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

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