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CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD DISTRIBUTIONJanuary, 1949

This bulletin brings together the information on retail grocery and wholesale grocery and fruit and vegetable sales contained in other monthly bulletins on the retail and wholesale trade, thus facilitating a comparison of the trends in monthly sales in the two stages of food distribution.

WHOLESALE TRADEGrocers' Sales

Wholesale grocers' sales in January, 1949 were practically unchanged from the dollar sales volume in January, 1948 and were 5% lower than in December, 1948 according to statements submitted by 73 of the larger wholesalers across Canada. There was, however, some variation in the results for the different regions of the country. Sales in the Maritime Provinces registered practically no change from the volume recorded for January a year ago. Gains of one per cent were recorded in Ontario and the Prairie Provinces while sales in British Columbia were up 5%. Quebec wholesalers, on the other hand, recorded a drop of 11% in dollar volume of sales.

Fruit and Vegetable Wholesalers' Sales

Fruit and vegetable dealers' sales in January, 1949 were 9% higher than in January, 1948 but 18% below the December, 1948 volume according to statements received from 46 of the larger wholesalers across the country. Gains were recorded in all regions. Sales in Ontario were up 7%; in the Maritimes and Quebec combined, 9%; and in the Western Provinces, 11%.

Grocers' Stocks

Stocks in the hands of wholesale grocers at January 31st, 1949 were 5% higher in dollar value than at the same date a year ago and one per cent below the value at the end of December, 1948. Inventories at the beginning of January are normally 63% in excess of sales in that month (based on the average of 1935-1942) and stocks at the beginning of January this year were valued 54% higher than the sales volume for that month.

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Wholesale Grocery Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms reporting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change	
		January, 1948	January, 1949	January, 1949 over January, December, 1948 1948	
		\$	\$		
CANADA .....	73	23,179	23,135	- 0.2	- 4.7
Maritime Provinces	16	3,492	3,487	- 0.1	-10.2
Quebec .....	19	2,492	2,227	-10.6	-32.8
Ontario .....	20	8,572	8,639	+ 0.8	- 3.6
Prairie Provinces.	12	6,340	6,375	+ 0.6	+ 8.3
British Columbia .	6	2,283	2,407	+ 5.4	- 2.0

Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms reporting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change	
		January, 1948	January, 1949	January, 1949 over January, December, 1948 1948	
		\$	\$		
CANADA .....	46	7,131	7,760	+ 8.8	-18.3
Maritimes & Quebec .	17	1,531	1,674	+ 9.3	-17.1
Ontario .....	16	2,947	3,138	+ 6.5	- 7.6
Western Provinces ..	13	2,653	2,948	+11.1	-31.0

# RETAIL TRADE

Due to a change in the method of computing retail sales estimates the summary appearing below includes grocery, and grocery and combination stores, but does not give representation to meat markets.

Chain Stores - January, 1949 sales of 943 chain store units operated by 21 chain companies in the food retailing field were 2% higher than sales of 943 stores operated by the same 21 firms in January, 1948. Average sales per store were \$31,108 in January, 1949 and \$30,403 in the same month of the previous year.

British Columbia recorded an increase of 13%, while all other regions showed minor changes.

## Comparison of Stores and Sales for January, 1948 and 1949

	January, 1948		January, 1949		% Change in Sales <u>January, 1949</u> <u>January, 1948</u>
	No. of Stores	Sales	No. of Stores	Sales	
		\$		\$	
CANADA .....	943	28,669,900	943	29,334,900	+ 2.3
Maritime Provinces .....	60	1,129,500	56	1,112,500	- 1.5
Quebec .....	161	5,892,200	158	6,178,700	+ 4.9
Ontario .....	465	15,869,300	464	15,844,600	- 0.2
Prairie Provinces .....	108	2,909,500	104	2,968,500	+ 2.0
British Columbia .....	149	2,869,400	161	3,230,600	+12.6

Independent Stores - Sales of Independent food stores increased 3% in January, 1949 compared with January, 1948.

## Comparison of Sales Reported for January, 1948 and 1949

	No. of Stores Reporting	No. Reporting An Increase	% Change in Sales <u>January, 1949</u> <u>January, 1948</u>
CANADA .....	646	323	+ 2.9
Maritime Provinces .....	128	54	- 2.6
Quebec .....	154	79	+ 4.6
Ontario .....	168	73	+ 0.1
Manitoba .....	43	25	+ 6.8
Saskatchewan .....	24	13	+ 0.6
Alberta .....	49	35	+22.1
British Columbia .....	80	44	+ 2.6

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