

Published by Authority of the HON. JAMES A. MacKINNON, M.P.
Minister of Trade and Commerce

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
INTERNAL TRADE BRANCH
OTTAWA, CANADA

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Vol. 2 - No. 12

Year's Subscription, \$1.00
Single copies, .10

CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD DISTRIBUTION, DECEMBER, 1940

Introduction

Indexes reflecting current trends in food distribution in Canada have been published for some years, indexes of retail and wholesale grocery trading establishments forming components of the two regular monthly bulletins on retail and wholesale trade issued by the Internal Trade Branch of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. This series brings together in one report the information on retail and wholesale grocery sales contained in the other bulletins thus facilitating a comparison of the trends in monthly sales in the two stages of food distribution.

Wholesale Trade

Sales of 72 wholesale firms in the grocery trade averaged 17 per cent higher in December, 1940 than in December, 1939 but were 5 per cent below the level of November, 1940, unadjusted indexes on the base 1930 equals 100 standing at 120.0 for December, 1940, 125.8 for November, 1940 and 102.9 for December, 1939. The 17 per cent increase in sales over December of 1939 compares with gains of 15 per cent in November and 10 per cent in October over the same months of the previous year. Sales for the calendar year 1940 average 7 per cent higher than for the calendar year 1939.

All sections of the country shared in the substantial increase over December a year ago, results for the various economic divisions showing increases of 25 per cent in British Columbia, 20 per cent in Ontario, 16 per cent in the Maritimes, 14 per cent in Quebec and 11 per cent in the Prairies.

Wholesale Grocery Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms re- porting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change		
		December 1939	December 1940	December, 1940 over -		Calendar year <u>1940</u> <u>1939</u>
				December 1939	November 1940	
		\$	\$			
CANADA	72	12,655	14,754	+ 16.6	- 4.7	+ 7.0
Maritimes	15	1,460	1,693	+ 16.0	- 9.5	+ 12.5
Quebec	21	1,872	2,124	+ 13.5	- 25.6	+ 8.8
Ontario	21	3,967	4,764	+ 20.1	+ 4.9	+ 6.9
Prairies	9	3,642	4,038	+ 10.9	- 7.5	+ 4.4
British Columbia .	6	1,714	2,135	+ 24.5	+ 14.9	+ 6.2

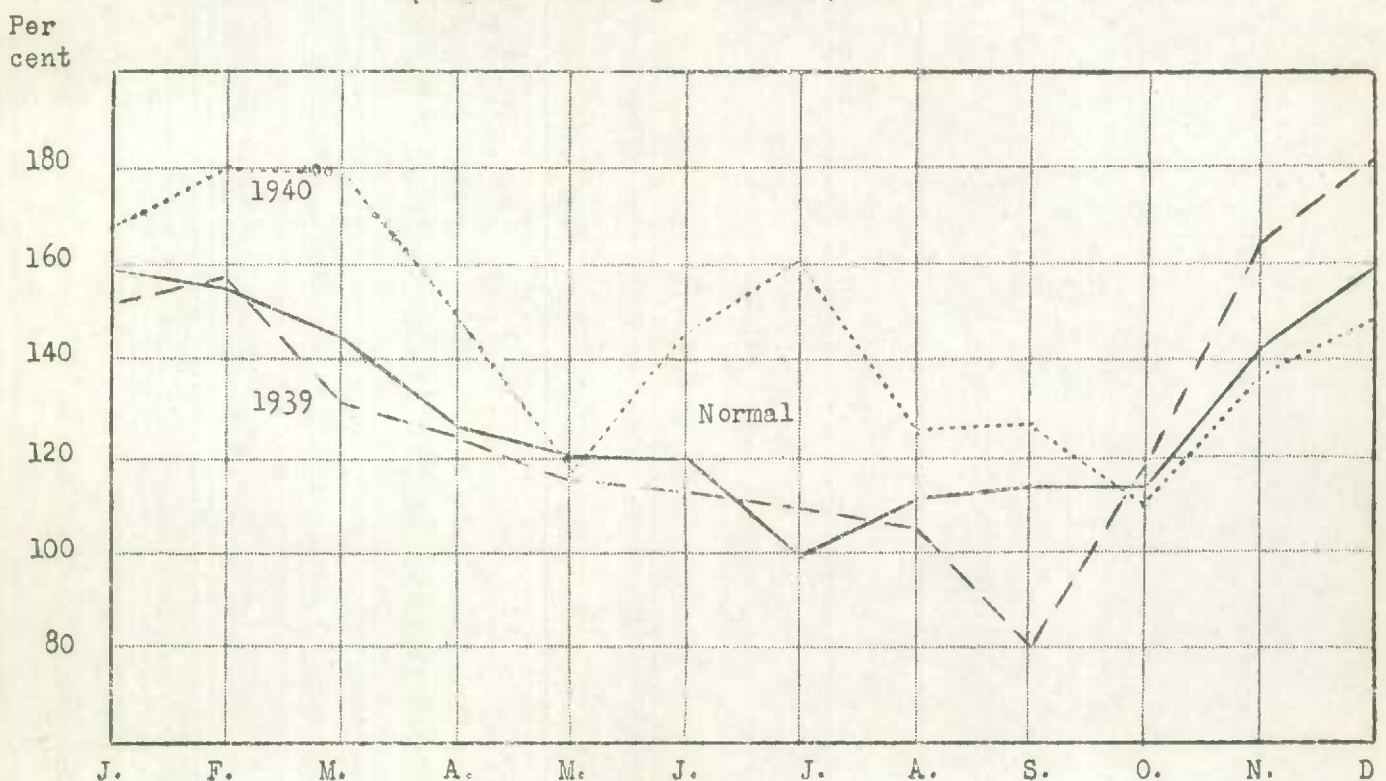
Stocks

Inventories carried by the wholesale grocery trade were 2 per cent higher at the end of December than on the corresponding date of 1939, but were 2 per cent lower than at the end of November, 1940. Stocks on hand at any period must be considered in relation to sales in the immediately following period. Stocks on hand at the beginning of December normally amount to approximately 159 per cent of the December turnover. Stocks on hand at the end of November formed 149 per cent of the December sales, indicating that stocks on hand at the beginning of the month were slightly lower than the normal inventory position for that time of year.

Wholesale Grocery Trade -- Percentage that Stocks on Hand

at Beginning of Month bear to Sales during Month

(Normal = Average for 1935, 1936)



Retail Trade

Chain Stores

Sales of 1,078 chain store units operated by 27 chain companies in the food retailing field averaged 6 per cent higher in December, 1940, than sales of 1,202 units operated by the same 27 firms in the corresponding month of 1939. Chain sales in the province of British Columbia were up 11 per cent. There was one more Saturday in December, 1939 than in 1940. On making allowance for this factor a decrease of one per cent occurred in Quebec. Average daily sales for grocery and meat chains were 17 per cent higher in December, 1940 than in December, 1939.

Comparison of Stores and Sales for December, 1939 and 1940
27 Chain Companies

	December, 1939		December, 1940		Per cent change in Sales
	No. Stores	Sales \$	No. Stores	Sales \$	
CANADA	1,202	10,818,000	1,078	11,476,964	+ 6.1
Quebec	240	2,254,742	209	2,239,479	- 0.7
Ontario	685	6,293,310	631	6,836,873	+ 8.6
Prairie Provinces ...	160	1,228,947	135	1,249,792	+ 1.7
British Columbia	117	1,041,001	103	1,150,820	+ 10.5

Independent Stores

Dollar sales of 1,041 independent grocery and combination stores were 3 per cent higher in December, 1940 than in December, 1939. Results on a geographical basis indicate sales increases in every section of the country except Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Maritimes were highest with a gain of 6 per cent, and Ontario and British Columbia showed an increase of 4 per cent. While Quebec increased 2 per cent, Manitoba and Alberta remained practically unchanged. Saskatchewan sales reported a decrease of 4 per cent.

Comparison of Sales Reported for December, 1939 and 1940

	No. stores reporting	No. reporting increase	Per cent change in sales
Maritimes	151	100	+ 6.1
Quebec	227	114	+ 1.6
Ontario	400	260	+ 4.2
Manitoba	72	38	+ 1.1
Saskatchewan	43	21	- 3.8
Alberta	66	35	- 0.7
British Columbia	82	49	+ 3.6
CANADA	1,041	617	+ 3.0



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THE CANADIAN STATISTICAL SERVICE
The Canadian Statistical Service is a part of the Statistics Canada
Department of Industry, Canada. It is responsible for the collection,
analysis and dissemination of statistical information for the Government
of Canada. The service is organized into three main branches: the
Data Collection Branch, the Data Analysis Branch, and the Data
Dissemination Branch. The Data Collection Branch is responsible for
the collection of data from various sources, including the Census of
Canada, the Survey of Consumer Expenditures, and the Survey of
Labour Market Conditions. The Data Analysis Branch is responsible for
the analysis of the data collected by the Data Collection Branch, and
the Data Dissemination Branch is responsible for the dissemination of
the results of the analysis to the public.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CANADIAN STATISTICAL SERVICE FOR THE YEAR 1977

Category	1977		1976		1975	
	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
Economy	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0
Environment	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
Health	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Education	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Transportation	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Other	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0

The Canadian Statistical Service has a long history of providing reliable and accurate statistical information to the Government of Canada and the public. In 1977, the service continued its commitment to excellence in data collection, analysis, and dissemination. The service's main achievements in 1977 were the completion of the 1976 Census of Canada, the release of the 1976 Survey of Consumer Expenditures, and the release of the 1976 Survey of Labour Market Conditions. The service also continued its work on the development of new statistical methods and the improvement of its data collection and dissemination systems. The service's commitment to excellence is reflected in its high standards of accuracy and reliability, and its commitment to providing timely and relevant statistical information to the public.

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Environment	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
Health	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Education	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Transportation	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Other	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0