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CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD DISTRIBUTION, NOVEMBER, 1941

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 75 of the larger wholesale grocery houses in Canada averaged 10 per cent higher in November, 1941, than 1940 but stood 15 per cent below October. The 10 per cent increase over November, 1940 is smaller than gains recorded during earlier months, sales for the first eleven months of 1941 averaging 18 per cent above the corresponding period of the preceding year.

Increases in sales were greater in the Maritime Provinces and in British Columbia than in other parts of the country, both in the November comparison and also for the first 11 months of the year. Percentage increases over November, 1940 for each of the five economic divisions with increases for the year to date in brackets are as follows: Maritime Provinces, 13 per cent (20 per cent); Quebec, 7 per cent (16 per cent); Ontario, 10 per cent (17 per cent); Prairie Provinces, 5 per cent (15 per cent); British Columbia, 24 per cent (23 per cent).

Inventories carried by wholesalers in the grocery trade were valued 27 per cent higher at the end of November, 1941 than on the corresponding date a year earlier and were 6 per cent higher than at the end of October, 1941. Stocks on hand at the beginning of November normally form approximately 145 per cent of November sales. Stocks carried by grocery wholesalers at the beginning of November, 1941 formed 157 per cent of the value of business transacted during the month indicating that inventories on hand on the first of November were higher than the usual situation at that time of year.

Wholesale Grocery Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms re-reporting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change		
		November 1940	November 1941	November, 1941 over		Year to date 1941 1940
				November 1940	October 1941	
CANADA.....	75	15,936	17,489	+ 9.7	-15.0	+17.0
Maritimes.....	14	1,674	1,886	+12.7	-13.0	+19.8
Quebec.....	22	3,125	3,338	+ 6.8	-13.8	+15.7
Ontario.....	21	4,598	5,039	+ 9.6	-15.6	+16.5
Prairies.....	12	4,725	4,971	+ 5.2	-14.9	+14.9
British Columbia..	6	1,814	2,255	+24.3	-16.7	+22.6

Retail Trade

Chain Stores

Sales of 958 chain store units operated by 23 chain companies in the food retailing field averaged 20 per cent higher in November, 1941, than sales of 1,035 units operated by the same 23 firms in November a year ago. Average sales per store were \$14,032 in November, 1941, 29 per cent greater than the \$10,847 average in the same month of 1940. A considerable reduction in the number of stores operated by the reporting chain companies is responsible, to some extent, for the increased sales volume per store.

Increases in various regions of the country were as follows: 23 per cent in Quebec, 19 per cent in Ontario and in British Columbia, and 18 per cent in the Prairie Provinces. Average daily sales for food chains increased 24 per cent in November of 1941 over 1940.

Comparison of Stores and Sales for November, 1940 and 1941

Division	November, 1940		November, 1941		Per cent change in Sales
	No. Stores	Sales	No. Stores	Sales	
CANADA.....	1,035	11,226,617	958	13,442,199	+19.7
Quebec.....	209	2,329,101	195	2,858,506	+22.7
Ontario	582	6,477,664	547	7,719,937	+19.2
Prairie Provinces	141	1,322,642	119	1,558,363	+17.8
British Columbia	103	1,097,210	97	1,305,393	+19.0

Independent Stores

Dollar sales of 983 independent grocery and combination grocery and meat stores were 10 per cent higher in November of 1941 than 1940, gains ranging from 12 per cent in the Maritime Provinces to 6 per cent in Alberta and British Columbia. Increases for other provinces were 8 per cent for Saskatchewan and 10 per cent for Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba.

Comparison of Sales Reported for November, 1940 and 1941

Division	No. stores reporting	No. reporting increase	Per cent change in sales
CANADA	983	729	+ 9.8
Maritimes	138	102	+12.4
Quebec	210	173	+ 9.9
Ontario	386	284	+10.2
Manitoba	71	47	+ 9.7
Saskatchewan	37	29	+ 7.9
Alberta	61	41	+ 5.8
British Columbia	80	53	+ 6.4



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TABLE 1	1981	1982	1983
1981	1982	1983	1984
1981	1982	1983	1984
1981	1982	1983	1984
1981	1982	1983	1984
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