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CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD DISTRIBUTION, APRIL, 1942

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 76 of the larger wholesale houses in Canada averaged 2 per cent higher in April of this year than last but declined by 4 per cent from March. Sales for the first four months of the current year stand 14 per cent over the corresponding period a year ago. The 2 per cent increase is considerably smaller than the gains recorded for the first three months of the year. The Maritime Provinces showed an increase of 6 per cent over April a year ago, while smaller gains were reported for other regions as follows: Quebec, 3 per cent; Prairie Provinces and British Columbia each 2 per cent. The volume of business transacted by grocery wholesalers in Ontario remained unchanged from the corresponding month last year.

Inventories carried by the wholesale grocery trade were valued 9 per cent higher at the end of April, 1942, than on the corresponding date of last year and were 2 per cent higher than the value of stocks reported on March 31, 1942. Stocks on hand at the beginning of April are normally 33 per cent in excess of the volume of business transacted in that month. Stocks on hand at the beginning of April this year were 44 per cent in excess of the amount of business transacted during the month indicating that the stock position at the beginning of April, 1942, was above the normal position for this period of the year.

Wholesale Grocery Trade By Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms re- porting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change		
		April 1941	April 1942	April, 1942 over		Year to date 1942 1941
				April 1941	March 1942	
CANADA	76	16,859	17,196	+ 2.0	- 4.4	+14.3
Maritimes	16	1,904	2,023	+ 6.3	- 4.3	+13.3
Quebec	22	2,628	2,705	+ 2.9	- 7.2	+15.7
Ontario	20	5,020	5,033	+ 0.2	- 6.5	+13.2
Prairies	12	5,038	5,120	+ 1.6	+ 0.7	+13.7
British Columbia .	6	2,269	2,315	+ 2.0	+ 8.2	+17.2

Retail Trade

Chain Stores

Sales of 983 chain store units operated by 25 chain companies in the food retailing field averaged 22 per cent higher in April, 1942, than sales of 1,037 units operated by the same 25 firms in April a year ago. Average sales per store were \$14,212 in April, 1942, 28 per cent greater than the \$11,090 average for the same month of 1941.

Increases in various regions of the country were as follows: 29 per cent in Quebec, 20 per cent in Ontario, 23 per cent in the Prairie Provinces, and 16 per cent in British Columbia.

Comparison of Stores and Sales for April, 1941 and 1942

	April, 1941		April, 1942		Per cent change in sales
	No. Stores	Sales	No. Stores	Sales	
CANADA	1,037	11,499,976	983	13,970,447	+21.5
Quebec	190	2,276,892	185	2,929,788	+28.7
Ontario	571	6,641,340	538	7,940,513	+19.6
Prairie Provinces	174	1,432,683	164	1,765,144	+23.2
British Columbia	102	1,149,061	96	1,335,002	+16.2

Independent Stores

Sales of 990 independent grocery or grocery and meat stores averaged 16 per cent higher in April of this year than last, all sections of the country contributing to the increase. Increases for the provinces ranged from 21 per cent for Quebec, 16 per cent for the Maritime Provinces, 15 per cent in Ontario, 13 per cent in Manitoba, 12 per cent in Alberta, 10 per cent in British Columbia, and 5 per cent in Saskatchewan.

Comparison of Sales Reported for April, 1941 and 1942

	No. Stores reporting	No. reporting increase	Per cent change in sales
CANADA	990	813	+16.0
Maritimes	141	116	+16.1
Quebec	218	195	+21.1
Ontario	389	315	+15.2
Manitoba	70	54	+13.0
Saskatchewan	36	29	+ 5.2
Alberta	59	46	+12.3
British Columbia	77	58	+ 9.6



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Year	Population	Area	Population Density
1950	1,000,000	1,000,000	1.00
1955	1,050,000	1,050,000	1.05
1960	1,100,000	1,100,000	1.10
1965	1,150,000	1,150,000	1.15
1970	1,200,000	1,200,000	1.20
1975	1,250,000	1,250,000	1.25
1980	1,300,000	1,300,000	1.30
1985	1,350,000	1,350,000	1.35
1990	1,400,000	1,400,000	1.40
1995	1,450,000	1,450,000	1.45
2000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1.50
2005	1,550,000	1,550,000	1.55
2010	1,600,000	1,600,000	1.60
2015	1,650,000	1,650,000	1.65
2020	1,700,000	1,700,000	1.70