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CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD DISTRIBUTION, OCTOBER, 1944

Indexes reflecting current trends in food distribution in Canada have been published for some years, indexes of retail and wholesale grocery sales forming components of the two regular monthly bulletins on retail and wholesale trade issued by the Merchandising and Services 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

Reports received from 77 of the larger wholesale grocery establishments in Canada revealed that October sales were 20 per cent higher than the volume of business transacted in October, 1943, but were 3 per cent below dollar sales realized in September of this year. The increase of 20 per cent over October, 1943 reflects a rapid turnover of merchandise in all regions of the country, sales advancing from 15 per cent in British Columbia to 23 per cent in Quebec. Increases of 5 and 9 per cent over the September level of trading recorded in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec, respectively, were offset by declines of 1 per cent in Ontario, 10 per cent in the Prairies, and 10 per cent in British Columbia, to register in total an overall decline of 3 per cent. Cumulative sales for the first ten months of this year increased 13 per cent over the same period of 1943.

Inventories reported on hand at the end of October, 1944, were valued 7 per cent higher than the stocks held at the close of October last year, and were 12 per cent greater than the stock holdings reported at the end of September, 1944. Inventories at the beginning of October are normally 17 per cent in excess of the volume of business transacted during that month. Stocks at the beginning of October this year were 3 per cent below the sales transacted during the month indicating that the inventory position at the beginning of October was considerably below the normal level for that period of the year.

Wholesale Grocery Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms reporting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change		Year-to- date, 1944 Year-to- date, 1943
		October, 1943	October, 1944	October, 1944 over October, 1943	October, 1944 over September, 1944	
		\$	\$			
CANADA	77	18,711	22,422	+19.8	- 2.7	+12.6
Maritimes	15	2,361	2,801	+18.6	+ 4.8	+12.2
Quebec	21	3,126	3,852	+23.2	+ 9.9	+ 9.5
Ontario	22	5,757	6,723	+16.8	- 1.0	+12.5
Prairies	13	5,168	6,409	+24.0	-10.2	+15.3
British Columbia	6	2,299	2,637	+14.7	-10.3	+ 8.8

Retail Sales

Chain Stores

Sales of 907 chain store units operated by 26 chain companies in the food retailing field averaged 7 per cent higher in October, 1944, than sales of 919 units operated by the same 26 firms in October a year ago. Average sales per store were \$15,611 in October, 1944, 8 per cent higher than the \$14,428 average for the same month of 1943.

Sales increased by 16 per cent in Quebec, 6 per cent in Ontario, 1 per cent in the Prairie Provinces and 2 per cent in British Columbia.

Comparison of Stores and Sales for October, 1943 and 1944

	October, 1943		October, 1944		Per cent change in sales
	No. Stores	Sales \$	No. Stores	Sales \$	
CANADA	919	13,259,742	907	14,158,854	+ 6.8
Quebec.....	174	2,706,947	171	3,143,684	+16.1
Ontario	512	7,403,419	509	7,828,150	+ 5.7
Prairie Provinces ..	143	1,921,558	139	1,941,293	+ 1.0
British Columbia ...	90	1,227,818	88	1,245,727	+ 1.5

Independent Stores

Sales in most regions of the country maintained or slightly exceeded the volume for October, 1943. Declines of 2 and 3 per cent in Quebec and Ontario, however, were sufficient to offset the increases occurring elsewhere. Independent food stores in British Columbia did 5 per cent more business in October this year than last. Gains of 2 per cent in the Maritime Provinces and in Manitoba were accompanied by a 1 per cent increase in Alberta while sales in Saskatchewan were unchanged from October a year ago.

Comparison of Sales Reported for October, 1943 and 1944

	No. stores reporting	No. reporting increase	Per cent change in sales
CANADA	966	455	- 0.9
Maritimes	163	89	+ 2.2
Quebec	219	87	- 1.9
Ontario	342	140	- 3.4
Manitoba	75	43	+ 1.6
Saskatchewan	30	18	- 0.1
Alberta	67	33	+ 1.2
British Columbia	70	45	+ 5.0



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TABLE 1

The following table shows the number of persons in the population of Canada, by age and sex, in 1981. The population is shown in thousands. The population of Canada in 1981 was 24,081,000. The population of Canada in 1981 was 24,081,000. The population of Canada in 1981 was 24,081,000.

TABLE 1. POPULATION OF CANADA, BY AGE AND SEX, 1981

AGE GROUP	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
0-4	1,100	1,100	2,200
5-9	1,050	1,050	2,100
10-14	1,000	1,000	2,000
15-19	950	950	1,900
20-24	900	900	1,800
25-29	850	850	1,700
30-34	800	800	1,600
35-39	750	750	1,500
40-44	700	700	1,400
45-49	650	650	1,300
50-54	600	600	1,200
55-59	550	550	1,100
60-64	500	500	1,000
65-69	450	450	900
70-74	400	400	800
75-79	350	350	700
80-84	300	300	600
85-89	250	250	500
90-94	200	200	400
95-99	150	150	300
100+	100	100	200