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CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD DISTRIBUTION, OCTOBER, 1945

Indexes reflecting current trends in food distribution in Canada have been published for some years, indexes of retail grocery and wholesale grocery and fruits and vegetables 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 grocery and wholesale grocery and fruit and vegetables 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

Wholesale grocery sales increased 11 per cent in October of this year over 1944, and advanced 14 per cent over the dollar volume of sales transacted in September, 1945, according to returns received from 77 of the larger wholesale grocery establishments in Canada. A substantial gain of 22 per cent was recorded in British Columbia and Ontario sales were up 14 per cent. Smaller gains in the other regions were 10 per cent in the Prairie Provinces, 6 per cent in the Maritime Provinces and 2 per cent in Quebec. Aggregate figures for the year to date were 7 per cent greater than sales transacted in the same period of 1944.

October wholesale fruit and vegetable sales gained 31 per cent over sales of October, 1944 but declined 3 per cent from the September volume of trading. The 31 per cent increase reflects major gains in all regions of the country. Sales advanced 37 per cent in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec, 32 per cent in Ontario, and 27 per cent in the Western Provinces. Total sales for the year stand 16 per cent above the January - October period of 1944.

A decline of 11 per cent in wholesale grocery inventories was recorded between October 31, of this year and last, but stocks increased 8 per cent over the inventories reported on hand at the end of September. Stocks on hand at the beginning of October are normally 17 per cent in excess of the business transacted in that month. Stocks on hand at the beginning of October this year were 19 per cent below the volume of October sales, indicating that the inventory position at the beginning of October was considerably below the normal situation 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, 1945 Year-to- date, 1944
		October 1944	October 1945	October, 1945 over October, September, 1944 1945		
		\$	\$			
CANADA	77	21,728	24,034	+10.6	+13.8	+ 6.5
Maritimes	17	3,123	3,321	+ 6.3	+23.3	+ 7.6
Quebec	21	3,918	4,004	+ 2.2	+12.1	+ 4.8
Ontario	21	6,529	7,442	+14.0	+19.6	+ 7.6
Prairies	12	5,652	6,203	+ 9.8	+ 1.5	+ 4.7
British Columbia ...	6	2,506	3,064	+22.3	+ 5.1	+11.7

Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms reporting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change		Year-to- date, 1945 Year-to- date, 1944
		October 1944	October 1945	October, 1945 over October, September, 1944 1945		
		\$	\$			
CANADA	44	8,260	10,831	+31.1	- 2.9	+15.7
Maritimes and Quebec	15	1,794	2,453	+36.7	-12.8	+15.8
Ontario	17	3,047	4,036	+32.4	+ 5.9	+17.8
Western Provinces ..	12	3,419	4,342	+27.0	- 6.5	+13.9

Retail Sales
Chain Stores

October, 1945 sales of 912 chain store units operated by 24 chain companies in the food retailing field were 9 per cent higher than sales of 939 stores operated by the same 24 firms in October a year ago. Average sales per store in October of this year were \$17,552, 13 per cent higher than the \$15,576 average for the same month of 1944.

Increases for the various regions ranged from 7 per cent in Ontario to 12 per cent in British Columbia.

Comparison of Stores and Sales for October, 1944 and 1945

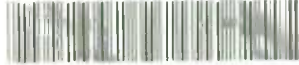
	October, 1944		October, 1945		Per cent change in sales
	No. Stores	Sales	No. Stores	Sales	
		\$		\$	
CANADA	939	14,626,162	912	15,855,976	+ 8.4
Maritimes	41	479,412	40	516,766	+ 7.8
Quebec	171	3,143,684	165	3,477,282	+10.6
Ontario	501	7,794,508	483	8,310,227	+ 6.6
Prairie Provinces ..	133	1,904,962	132	2,089,902	+ 9.7
British Columbia ...	93	1,303,596	92	1,461,799	+12.1

Independent Stores

Sales of independent food retailers averaged 8 per cent higher in October of this year than last. With the exception of the Maritime Provinces with a gain of 4 per cent, percentage increases over October a year ago were fairly uniform for all provinces, ranging from 7 per cent in Quebec and Alberta to 12 per cent in Saskatchewan.

Comparison of Sales Reported for October, 1944 and 1945

	No. stores reporting	No. reporting increase	Per cent change in sales
CANADA	1,248	875	+ 7.9
Maritimes	186	114	+ 3.7
Quebec	287	196	+ 7.4
Ontario	416	306	+ 9.9
Manitoba	90	71	+ 8.5
Saskatchewan	55	45	+11.9
Alberta	107	65	+ 6.8
British Columbia ...	107	78	+ 8.2



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