

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
MERCHANDISING AND SERVICES BRANCH
OTTAWA, CANADA

Dominion Statistician;
Chief, Merchandising and Services Branch;
Vol. 8 - No. 1

Herbert Marshall, B.A., F.S.S.
A.C. Steedman, B.A.

16-4050

CURRENT TRENDS IN FOOD DISTRIBUTION, JANUARY, 1946

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 vegetable 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

January wholesale grocery sales advanced 13 per cent over January, 1945 sales and 9 per cent over the volume of business transacted in December, 1945. These data are based on returns received from 74 of the larger wholesale grocery establishments operating in Canada. The 13 per cent increase reflects an active market in all regions of the country, sales increasing 13 per cent in the Maritime Provinces, 8 per cent in Quebec, 16 per cent in Ontario, and 12 per cent in both the Prairie Provinces and British Columbia.

Wholesale fruit and vegetable sales were 23 per cent greater in January, 1946 than 1945 but January sales declined 22 per cent from the December, 1945 volume of trading. January sales were up 5 per cent in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec, 39 per cent in Ontario, and 19 per cent in the western provinces.

Wholesale grocers valued their stocks on hand at the end of January, 1946, 4 per cent lower than inventories held on the same date of last year, and 1 per cent below their stock holdings at the end of December. Inventories at the beginning of January are normally 63 per cent in excess of the business transacted during that month. Stocks on hand at the beginning of January, 1946, were 7 per cent greater than the volume of January sales, indicating that the inventory position at the beginning of January was decidedly below the normal situation for that period of the year.

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

Wholesale Grocery Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms reporting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change	
		January, 1945	January, 1946	January, 1946 over January, 1945	December, 1945
		\$	\$		
CANADA	74	19,583	22,045	+12.6	+ 8.9
Maritimes	16	2,715	3,059	+12.6	+ 9.6
Quebec	21	2,856	3,083	+ 8.0	- 9.4
Ontario	20	6,327	7,333	+15.9	+ 8.3
Prairies	11	4,951	5,523	+11.5	+19.8
British Columbia	6	2,734	3,047	+11.5	+ 5.3

Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Trade by Economic Divisions

Division	Number of firms reporting	Dollar Sales (add 000)		Per cent change	
		January, 1945	January, 1946	January, 1946 over January, 1945	December, 1945
		\$	\$		
CANADA	44	6,604	8,103	+22.7	-21.9
Maritimes and Quebec ..	16	1,632	1,708	+ 4.7	-34.7
Ontario	15	2,363	3,284	+39.0	-10.6
Western Provinces	13	2,609	3,111	+19.2	-26.8

Retail Sales
Chain Stores

January, 1946 sales of 903 chain store units operated by 24 chain companies in the food retailing field were 11 per cent higher than sales of 879 stores operated by the same 24 firms in January, 1945. Average sales per store in January, 1946 were \$17,907, 14 per cent above the \$15,748 average for the same month of the previous year.

Sales of chain food stores increased by 16 per cent in the Prairie Provinces. The 9 per cent gain in Ontario between January of this year and last was lower than increases recorded elsewhere. Results for other sections of the country revealed gains of 12 or 13 per cent in each case.

Comparison of Stores and Sales for January, 1945 and 1946

	January, 1945		January, 1946		% Change In Sales January, 1946 January, 1945
	No. of Stores	Sales \$	No. of Stores	Sales \$	
CANADA	903	14,220,069	879	15,740,088	+10.7
Maritimes	41	455,921	40	508,202	+11.5
Quebec	168	3,046,107	163	3,414,281	+12.1
Ontario	507	7,833,387	491	8,516,252	+ 8.7
Prairie Provinces ...	94	1,569,366	93	1,815,700	+15.7
British Columbia	93	1,315,288	92	1,485,653	+13.0

Independent Stores

Independent food retailers recorded a 9 per cent increase in sales for January, 1946 compared with January, 1945. Sales increases in the January comparison were much lower in eastern Canada than in Ontario and the western provinces. The Maritime Provinces and Quebec recorded gains of 8 and 5 per cent respectively. Apart from an outstanding increase of 19 per cent for Saskatchewan, sales moved uniformly upward in other provinces, increases over January, 1945 ranging from 10 per cent in Manitoba to 13 per cent in Alberta.

Comparison of Sales reported for January, 1945 and 1946

	No. of Stores Reporting	No. Reporting An Increase	% Change In Sales January, 1946 January, 1945
CANADA	1,201	877	+ 9.4
Maritimes	174	115	+ 7.7
Quebec	283	183	+ 5.2
Ontario	382	285	+11.4
Manitoba	89	73	+10.4
Saskatchewan	59	53	+18.7
Alberta	107	83	+12.5
British Columbia ..	107	85	+11.5

STATISTICS CANADA LIBRARY
BIBLIOTHÈQUE STATISTIQUE CANADA



1010708580