MONTHLY
WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

JANUARY 1955

FOR RELEASE
MARCH 10, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 10,000 merchant wholesalers representing firms in all parts of the country and various kinds of business. The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census in order to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business. These dollar volume estimates are now being compiled and will be introduced in the Monthly Wholesale Trade Report in the near future. Beginning with this publication, reports included in these tabulations are weighted to reflect their probability of selection (see note on page 4).

Sales

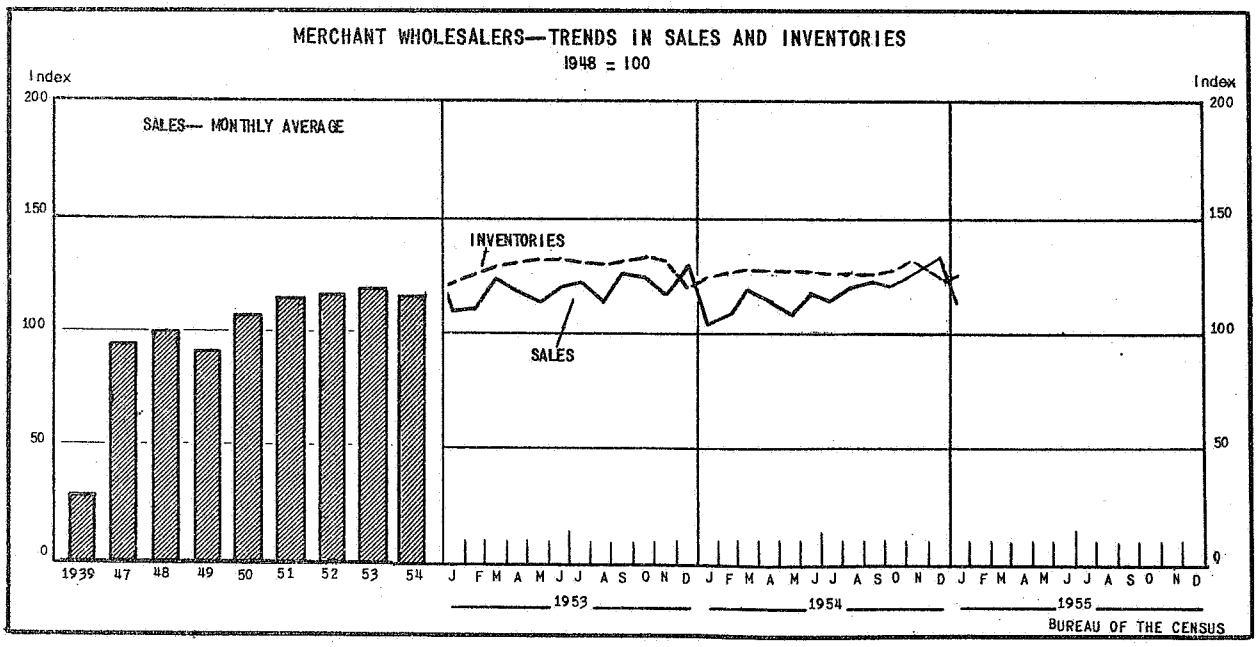
January 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers showed a seasonal decline of 12 percent below the previous month, but were up 6 percent above sales a year ago.

All geographic divisions experienced decreases in sales from December 1954, but showed increased sales over a year ago. Declines from the previous month varied from 9 to 17 percent, with the Middle Atlantic Division noting the sharpest drop. Compared with a year ago, the Pacific Division, up 12 percent, noted the principal increase.

Most trades shown in this report indicated declines from December 1954 sales. The most substantial decreases were noted for wines and distilled spirits wholesalers (53%), amusement and sporting goods wholesalers (46%), and jewelry wholesalers (44%). The only large increase over December 1954 sales was reported by farm supplies wholesalers (28%). Compared with January 1954, only seven trades--mostly nondurable goods--reported declines. However, substantial increases were noted by iron and steel scrap dealers (62%); lumber and construction materials distributors (31%); waste materials dealers (31%); book, periodical, and newspaper wholesalers (29%); air conditioning and refrigeration equipment distributors (21%); and motor-vehicle distributors (19%).

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of January were up 1 percent as compared with December 31 stocks and showed no change from inventories on hand January 31, 1954. By trade, inventory changes were, for the most part, small. Inventories held by fresh fruit and vegetable wholesalers, up 12 percent, registered the only substantial change over previous month inventories. Compared with stocks on hand a year ago, the most notable changes were increases of 32 percent for iron and steel scrap dealers and 34 percent for air conditioning and refrigeration equipment distributors; and a decline of 29 percent for waste materials dealers. Based on reports of establishments submitting inventory figures in conjunction with sales data, the January stock-sales ratio of 130 percent was 19 points above the previous month but 8 points lower than the ratio for January 1954.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

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Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1955

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Jan. 1955 from--		Jan. 1955 panel-- Number of establishments reporting	Percent change, Jan. 1955 from--		Jan. 1955 panel-- Number of establishments reporting	Jan. 1955	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954
	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954		Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954				
Merchant wholesalers	+6	-12	10,095	0	+1	7,536	130	138	111
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-4	-5	1,045	-6	+1	844	82	79	78
General-line grocery wholesalers	+1	+1	565	-2	+2	513	110	117	114
Nonaffiliated[2]	+2	0	389	0	+3	378	130	138	129
Voluntary groups	-3	0	158	-8	+2	122	108	110	106
Retailer-cooperative	+11	+7	18	+4	-2	13	68	66	82
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-12	-10	252	-14	-1	176	70	61	62
Confectionery wholesalers	-4	-19	89	-2	-1	50	83	87	66
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-1	-10	139	-9	+4	105	20	21	18
Edible farm products distributors	0	-11	890	-4	+6	711	31	29	26
Dairy, poultry products distributors	-2	-12	567	-7	+4	465	33	31	28
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+5	-9	323	+5	+12	246	26	24	21
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	0	-44	472	-3	0	385	128	128	74
Beer distributors	0	-26	125	-6	+3	109	63	66	48
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	0	-53	347	-2	-1	276	177	171	86
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+10	+1	617	+5	+3	447	138	142	137
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+12	+1	298	+9	+3	239	143	146	142
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+4	-2	174	-10	+4	113	97	108	92
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+9	+4	145	-4	+4	95	196	207	231
Tobacco distributors	+3	-23	266	-5	+2	170	61	66	46
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+7	-1	404	-4	+2	185	180	225	164
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+16	-17	100	-3	+3	55	195	214	151
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-2	+6	173	-8	+2	67	170	247	166
Piece goods converters	+16	+5	131	0	+1	63	179	207	177
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+16	-11	232	+4	+3	164	164	215	132
Furniture wholesalers	+16	0	109	+1	-1	72	153	182	143
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+15	-17	123	+6	+4	92	171	234	127
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+6	-4	440	+4	-1	216	124	108	118
Paper wholesalers	+6	-4	288	+4	0	139	115	104	109
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+5	-8	152	+4	-3	77	196	149	190
Inedible farm products merchants	+3	-18	275	-3	-4	210	134	132	120
Automotive wholesalers	+15	-7	497	-2	0	338	205	227	190
Motor-vehicle distributors	+19	+8	63	-12	0	60	95	127	102
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+14	-12	434	0	0	278	267	284	230
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+10	-18	809	-1	+1	744	147	166	120
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+13	-19	552	-4	0	530	150	168	119
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+3	-15	257	+4	+6	214	142	161	121
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+10	-10	522	0	+6	412	259	290	220
Hardware wholesalers	+8	-12	211	-1	+7	180	300	315	246
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+13	-7	311	+3	+3	232	207	252	185
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+31	-7	492	+12	+2	350	102	128	93
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+32	-4	282	+11	+7	197	95	125	85
Construction materials distributors	+28	-11	210	+13	0	153	120	141	109
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+7	-5	1,486	0	-2	1,202	158	196	178
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+21	-8	89	+34	+3	71	269	292	248
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+13	-20	186	-1	-2	131	209	169	177
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+3	-6	551	-2	-3	476	180	194	183
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+2	-10	319	-6	+2	200	217	194	192
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+3	-9	66	0	+2	23	204	197	181
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+12	-3	107	+8	+2	71	159	169	148
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+12	+7	234	-5	-2	253	220	272	239
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+14	-6	359	-5	+4	301	163	198	154
Iron, steel and products distributors	+12	-3	288	-7	+4	241	199	263	198
Nonferrous metals distributors	+19	-10	71	+4	+8	60	79	71	62
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+48	-8	278	+15	-4	190	70	90	65
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+62	-10	155	+32	-5	112	77	102	72
Waste materials dealers	+31	-4	123	-29	0	78	56	74	51
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+8	-14	1,011	+10	-1	667	97	132	83
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	-7	-46	117	-2	+7	88	302	277	159
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+29	-11	122	+7	-1	66	78	79	73
Coal wholesalers	+3	-4	253	+11	-11	134	38	38	39
Farm supplies wholesalers	+2	+28	215	+5	+4	184	140	146	183
Jewelry wholesalers	+11	-44	134	+8	-7	71	222	306	125

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales		Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Jan. 1955 from--		Percent change, Jan. 1955 from--				
	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954	Jan. 1955	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+6	-12	0	+1	130	138	111
New England	+10	-10	-1	+2	131	130	118
Middle Atlantic	+7	-17	-4	-1	102	113	92
East North Central	+4	-13	+3	+2	122	127	104
West North Central	+6	-14	-2	+2	140	150	113
South Atlantic	+7	-9	+2	+2	144	162	128
East South Central	+4	-12	-4	+2	153	167	132
West South Central	+4	-12	+1	-1	185	188	164
Mountain	+9	-13	+1	+3	154	179	126
Pacific	+12	-12	+3	+2	118	133	104
General-line grocery wholesalers	+1	+1	-2	+2	110	117	114
New England	-1	-8	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	-9	-3	-12	+5	109	132	103
East North Central	-6	+4	-4	-4	103	108	112
West North Central	+11	+2	+2	-3	89	113	94
South Atlantic	0	+4	+4	+2	128	122	132
East South Central	0	0	+5	+3	151	141	144
West South Central	+18	-3	-1	+9	122	139	108
Mountain	+1	+4	+3	+1	196	204	197
Pacific	+1	+5	-8	+6	81	84	102
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-12	-10	-14	-1	70	61	62
New England	+19	-8	+17	+7	75	86	61
Middle Atlantic	-13	-4	-21	-12	51	44	54
East North Central	-16	-18	+11	+10	99	73	73
West North Central	-28	-19	-31	+4	152	150	119
South Atlantic	-14	-13	-15	-3	85	121	79
South Central	-9	-13	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+3	-16	-10	+15	53	74	40
Dairy, poultry products distributors	-2	-12	-7	+4	33	31	28
New England	-2	+1	-44	+9	30	19	28
Middle Atlantic	-1	-13	+1	+3	21	19	17
East North Central	-5	-17	-17	+7	25	25	20
West North Central	-20	-17	-11	-4	71	42	60
South Atlantic	-2	-4	-5	-21	34	36	41
South Central	-5	-4	+42	+21	59	43	47
Mountain	+7	-8	-3	+13	53	58	43
Pacific	+12	-16	-28	+8	39	60	31
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+5	-9	+5	+12	26	24	21
New England	-7	-10	+22	+13	21	16	17
Middle Atlantic	+9	-15	+28	+20	16	14	11
East North Central	+16	-12	-1	+9	24	28	19
West North Central	-3	-4	+1	+6	32	36	29
South Atlantic	+6	-13	+30	+4	39	34	33
South Central	-11	-16	-32	+16	21	24	15
Pacific	+5	0	-1	+17	27	24	23
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+12	+1	+9	+3	143	146	142
New England	+7	-12	+1	+4	131	148	116
Middle Atlantic	+10	+1	0	+5	114	108	112
East North Central	+18	+11	+19	+3	115	117	127
West North Central	+5	-3	+3	+3	188	194	177
South Atlantic	+15	-8	+3	+3	168	189	159
East South Central	+12	-5	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
West South Central	+5	-1	-1	+3	186	189	173
Mountain	+8	+7	-3	+4	183	200	189
Pacific	+17	+4	+27	+2	138	127	139
Tobacco distributors	+3	-23	-5	+2	61	66	46
New England	+24	-26	-27	-26	28	40	31
Middle Atlantic	0	-26	-10	+5	73	73	49
East North Central	-2	-29	-2	-1	64	69	45
West North Central	+6	-23	0	+15	57	59	38
South Atlantic	-1	-18	-6	+3	76	82	60
East South Central	-6	-15	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
West South Central	+14	-10	-11	+12	59	80	47
Pacific	-3	-14	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+7	-1	-4	+2	180	225	164
New England	+34	+5	+5	+2	191	280	214
Middle Atlantic	+3	-1	-10	0	168	207	145
East North Central	+5	-29	+5	+7	162	187	110
West North Central	+21	+11	-12	-1	226	282	317
South Atlantic	+16	+16	+7	+9	162	231	157
West South Central	+13	+28	+10	+19	267	273	289
Pacific	+30	+4	+17	-2	239	271	235
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+16	-11	+4	+3	164	215	132
New England	+27	-50	+15	+7	193	207	83
Middle Atlantic	+13	-10	+13	+2	140	205	104
East North Central	+16	-4	+1	0	145	170	143
West North Central	+20	-3	+2	0	201	207	172
South Atlantic	+5	-5	-5	+7	250	297	231
West South Central	+28	-12	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+25	+3	0	+6	170	264	155

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

JANUARY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales		Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Jan. 1955 from--		Percent change, Jan. 1955 from--		Jan. 1955	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954
	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954	Jan. 1954	Dec. 1954			
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+14	-2	0	0	267	284	230
New England	-9	-28	+15	+1	256	221	227
Middle Atlantic	+17	-26	+2	-4	188	225	137
East North Central	+28	-11	-2	0	251	339	206
West North Central	-3	-13	-5	+4	320	358	265
South Atlantic	+15	+4	-3	+2	210	242	221
East South Central	+2	+9	+7	+5	293	228	293
West South Central	-9	+1	-7	0	365	232	378
Mountain	+45	-16	+12	-1	270	323	216
Pacific	+38	-15	+34	-1	217	339	154
Electrical equipment and supplies wholesalers[3]	+13	-19	-4	0	150	168	119
New England	-5	-28	+3	+2	123	89	128
Middle Atlantic	+12	-18	-13	-4	138	158	116
East North Central	+4	-24	-7	-3	139	160	107
West North Central	+10	-21	+1	0	165	179	132
South Atlantic	+6	-19	0	+3	159	161	115
East South Central	+20	-17	-12	+21	155	210	107
West South Central	+42	-8	0	-2	202	256	192
Pacific	+25	-21	+4	+6	131	146	97
Electrical appliances and electronic parts distributors	+3	-15	+4	+6	142	161	121
New England	+21	+15	+13	+4	117	180	131
Middle Atlantic	+1	-19	-9	-4	128	147	114
East North Central	-8	-25	+16	+14	139	134	93
West North Central	+11	-24	+11	+9	171	194	127
South Atlantic	+20	-7	+1	-3	148	184	147
West South Central	+23	+35	+7	+19	132	200	151
Mountain	+13	0	+10	+1	171	171	169
Pacific	+22	0	-2	-3	146	178	136
Hardware wholesalers	+8	-12	-1	+7	300	315	246
Middle Atlantic	+12	+11	+9	+1	208	213	234
East North Central	+2	-20	+2	+14	308	313	225
West North Central	+3	-9	-2	+11	333	331	281
South Atlantic	+3	-19	-6	+3	378	381	280
East South Central	+11	-14	-3	+5	260	282	214
West South Central	+8	-6	-11	+4	253	325	230
Mountain	+41	-21	+8	+1	467	611	357
Pacific	+16	-13	0	+8	327	367	249
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+13	-7	+3	+3	207	252	185
New England	+25	-3	-19	0	301	344	296
Middle Atlantic	+13	-3	+7	+2	208	241	187
East North Central	+6	-11	+1	+1	196	200	174
West North Central	+4	-18	-1	+3	291	294	222
South Atlantic	+27	-9	+10	+14	164	238	131
East South Central	+6	-11	+6	+2	246	217	213
West South Central	+15	+4	+8	+3	187	233	193
Pacific	+16	0	+2	-3	259	469	274
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+31	-7	+12	+2	102	128	93
New England	+46	-7	+11	+14	89	111	77
Middle Atlantic	+31	-15	+17	+3	126	180	106
East North Central	+25	0	+6	+7	93	121	85
West North Central	+13	-13	+28	+5	66	67	55
South Atlantic	+24	+17	+18	0	103	107	123
East South Central	+45	-6	-11	-8	91	120	97
West South Central	+33	+13	+18	+1	145	174	169
Mountain	+40	-14	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+43	-9	+9	-1	89	94	85
ndustrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+3	-6	-2	-3	180	183	194
New England	+14	+7	-6	-8	84	91	105
Middle Atlantic	+3	-12	-21	-4	136	129	151
East North Central	-9	-5	-6	+1	185	155	187
West North Central	+4	+8	+1	+2	111	143	117
South Atlantic	+37	-2	-14	-1	157	239	157
East South Central	+5	+13	+7	+15	215	188	199
West South Central	+1	-12	-1	-11	232	247	222
Pacific	-8	-5	+21	+5	358	255	337

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials, and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon size, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight.

Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage. The number of establishments reporting by geographic division, usually shown in table 2, are not available for January 1955 but will be included in future reports.

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

FEBRUARY 1955

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APRIL 8, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 merchant wholesalers representing firms in all parts of the country and various kinds of business. (See note on page 4.) The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census in order to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

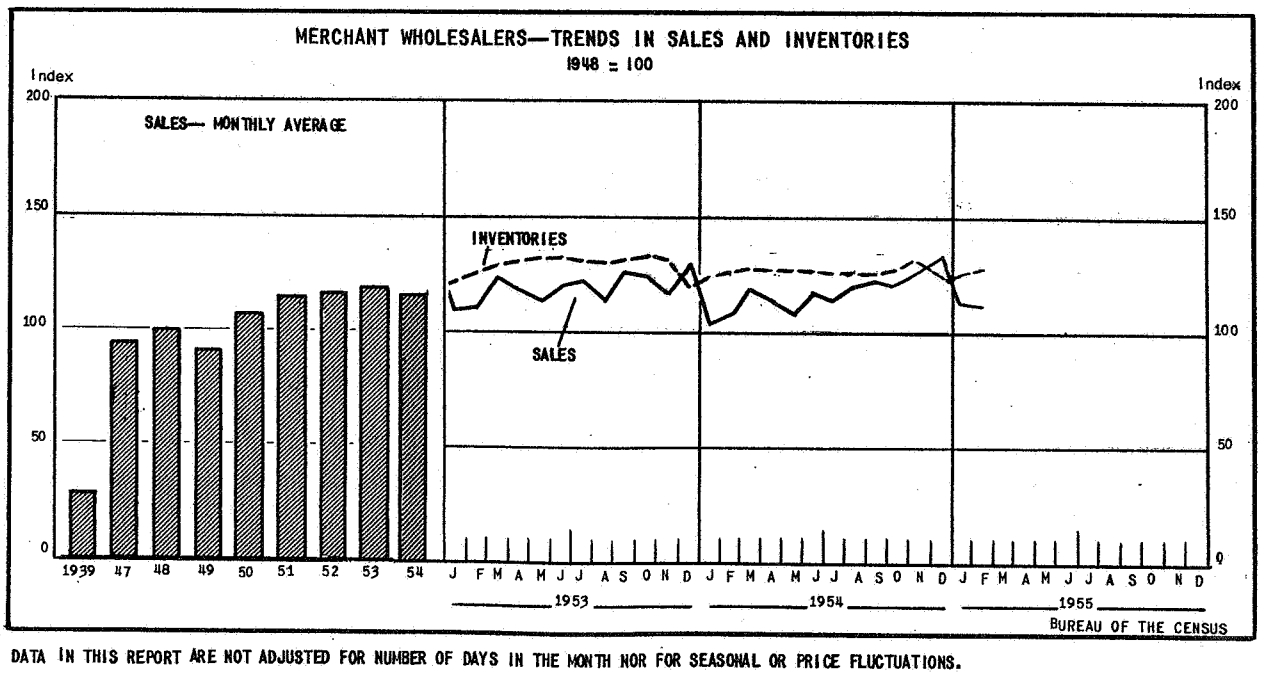
February 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers were off 1 percent from the previous month, but were up 5 percent over sales a year ago. For the first two months of 1955, sales were 6 percent higher than during the comparable period of 1954.

By geographic division, changes in sales from the previous month were moderate, ranging from a decline of 4 percent in the South Atlantic Division to a gain of 3 percent in the Mountain Division. Compared with a year ago, only one division--the West South Central (-1%)--reported a decline. All other divisions experienced increased sales, the principal year-ago gain (12%), being noted in the Pacific Division.

Most trades showed little change in sales from January 1955. Significant increases were indicated by amusement and sporting goods (19%), home furnishings and floor coverings (13%), and wines and distilled spirits (11%). Compared with February 1954, most trades reported sales increases. Iron and steel scrap, up 59 percent, and coal, up 33 percent, noted the largest year-ago gains.

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of February showed no change from January 31 stocks and were also at the same level as inventories on hand February 28, 1954. By trade, the only substantial changes from previous month inventories were decreases of 21 and 22 percent, respectively, for coal and for industrial chemicals wholesalers, and an increase of 10 percent for lumber and millwork wholesalers. Compared with stocks on hand a year ago, notable changes were increases reported by iron and steel scrap dealers (15%), and farm supplies wholesalers (14%); and declines shown by furniture wholesalers (14%), book and periodical wholesalers (13%), and coal wholesalers (13%). Based on reports of establishments submitting inventory figures in conjunction with sales data, the February stock-sales ratio of 133 percent was the same as the previous month but 10 points lower than the ratio for February 1954.



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FEBRUARY 1955

Kind of business	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Feb. 1955 from--		2 mo. 1955 from 2 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Feb. 1955	Percent change, Feb. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Feb. 1955	Feb. 1955	Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955
	Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955			Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers	+5	-1	+6	11,156	0	0	8,252	133	144	133
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-2	-6	-3	1,331	-4	-2	1,022	83	94	80
General-line grocery wholesalers	+4	-6	+3	757	-3	-1	610	115	120	110
Nonaffiliated[2]	+1	-9	+1	565	0	-1	465	127	125	116
Voluntary groups	+5	-2	+1	177	-11	0	135	94	114	96
Retailer-cooperative	+12	+2	+12	15	+5	-1	10	114	115	120
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-11	-8	-11	318	-5	-5	232	79	89	75
Confectionery wholesalers	+4	+1	+1	98	+4	+3	58	72	81	72
Meat, meat products wholesalers	0	-3	0	158	+1	-5	122	21	23	22
Edible farm products distributors	+3	-2	+2	965	-2	-1	663	30	32	29
Dairy, poultry products distributors	0	-2	-1	636	-5	-1	416	30	32	30
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+11	-4	+8	329	+6	0	247	29	34	28
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+2	+8	+1	485	+3	-3	433	117	117	130
Beer distributors	-3	+2	-2	109	0	-1	94	75	71	76
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+5	+11	+3	376	+4	-4	339	144	155	167
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+9	-3	+10	664	+2	-4	472	124	160	124
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+7	-8	+10	309	+2	+2	249	161	165	146
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+18	+4	+12	200	+3	-22	122	60	129	77
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+1	-5	+5	155	+2	+1	101	233	223	230
Tobacco distributors	-1	-2	+1	250	+3	-1	156	66	61	67
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	0	+2	+4	442	+2	+1	225	197	219	196
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+2	+8	+8	106	+1	+4	51	175	209	176
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	0	+1	-1	198	+7	+1	101	222	219	224
Piece goods converters	-2	-4	+7	138	-4	-2	73	188	229	180
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+9	+9	+12	256	+2	+4	176	189	181	208
Furniture wholesalers	+1	-1	+9	96	-14	+4	63	178	186	186
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+11	+13	+13	160	+10	+4	113	195	179	219
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+1	+1	+3	485	-1	-1	359	118	122	122
Paper wholesalers	0	+1	+3	312	0	0	255	113	112	117
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+9	-5	+7	173	-4	-4	104	192	247	187
Inedible farm products merchants	+15	-9	+10	243	+8	-6	180	141	152	142
Automotive wholesalers	+7	+3	+11	600	-4	+1	417	184	205	188
Motor-vehicle distributors	+10	+2	+13	59	-9	+4	54	101	112	101
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+6	+4	+9	541	-3	+1	363	244	289	252
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+5	+2	+8	915	-1	+5	828	147	152	143
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+2	+1	+7	576	+1	+7	557	151	150	144
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+10	+3	+8	339	-3	+3	271	142	156	142
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+6	0	+8	559	+1	+3	426	270	292	263
Hardware wholesalers	0	+1	+4	224	0	+4	180	300	322	304
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+13	0	+13	335	+2	+2	246	229	249	214
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+12	-3	+20	517	+9	+8	365	140	166	123
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+16	-3	+23	296	+11	+10	225	143	184	123
Construction materials distributors	+5	-3	+12	221	+2	+2	140	128	132	122
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+4	+4	+5	1,737	0	+2	1,403	207	218	213
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	-5	+6	-4	105	-4	+1	69	162	140	183
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+2	+4	+6	120	-11	+1	91	166	167	170
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+4	+5	+4	731	+1	+1	645	206	221	213
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+4	+2	+3	375	+1	+2	268	222	212	213
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+7	+2	+5	68	-8	+4	34	155	148	152
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+3	-4	+7	153	-12	-3	120	196	219	185
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+8	+7	+10	253	+3	+4	210	233	245	246
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+13	+1	+14	395	-8	0	305	177	234	177
Iron, steel and products distributors	+12	0	+12	305	-8	+1	243	219	308	212
Nonferrous metals distributors	+14	+1	+16	90	-6	-7	62	77	99	86
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+37	+3	+41	288	+5	-2	190	79	80	80
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+59	+4	+61	158	+15	-2	111	82	84	82
Waste materials dealers	+15	+2	+21	130	-6	0	79	75	74	76
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+8	+3	+8	1,024	0	-4	632	122	122	138
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+16	+19	+6	146	+6	+2	106	194	201	222
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	-4	-6	+9	109	-13	-2	39	73	73	67
Coal wholesalers	+33	+2	+19	239	-13	-21	114	41	53	54
Farm supplies wholesalers	-8	+7	-4	214	+14	-8	165	111	85	135
Jewelry wholesalers	-5	+5	+2	137	-5	+1	71	268	249	316

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

FEBRUARY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change Feb. 1955 from—		2 mo. 1955 from 2 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Feb. 1955	Percent change Feb. 1955 from—		Number of establishments reporting Feb. 1955	Feb. 1955	Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955
	Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955			Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+5	-1	+6	11,156	0	0	8,252	133	144	133
New England	+4	+1	+7	553	0	+3	345	156	163	153
Middle Atlantic	+2	-1	+4	2,559	-4	+1	1,573	112	126	112
East North Central	+5	+1	+5	2,256	0	0	1,722	132	139	135
West North Central	+3	-2	+5	1,067	+6	+1	859	153	153	150
South Atlantic	+15	-1	+12	1,174	+5	-1	877	136	161	134
East South Central	+3	-1	+3	468	+1	0	375	151	155	152
West South Central	-1	-2	+1	1,233	+4	+2	1,094	168	159	161
Mountain	+9	+3	+9	385	+5	+5	330	194	193	191
Pacific	+12	-1	+12	1,461	+1	-5	1,073	114	134	121
General-line grocery wholesalers	+4	-6	+3	757	-3	-1	610	115	120	110
Middle Atlantic	0	-4	-5	89	-11	-1	79	120	134	122
East North Central	+7	-2	+1	84	-3	-1	63	118	140	115
West North Central	+2	-8	+7	141	-5	+1	130	108	113	104
South Atlantic	-2	-6	-1	49	-16	-1	26	120	118	114
East South Central	+10	-4	+3	32	+21	+4	30	132	115	120
West South Central	+3	-5	+9	118	+5	+3	103	138	133	128
Mountain	-2	-11	+1	44	-8	+7	34	184	196	154
Pacific	+7	-8	+5	188	-3	-11	140	82	87	82
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-11	-8	-11	318	-5	-5	232	79	89	75
New England	-1	-19	+8	18	+22	-4	11	105	79	88
Middle Atlantic	-21	-15	-17	137	-24	-8	95	61	68	61
East North Central	+1	+9	-8	40	+3	-8	31	94	85	114
South Atlantic	+11	+5	+6	30	-9	+7	18	139	176	84
South Central	-10	+1	-7	37	+15	-2	31	78	106	83
Pacific	-6	-2	-2	43	+41	-12	35	56	37	62
Dairy, poultry products distributors	0	-2	-1	636	-5	-1	416	30	32	30
Middle Atlantic	-6	0	-4	128	-22	+5	66	25	29	24
East North Central	-3	-4	-4	133	-1	+5	83	32	35	30
West North Central	+12	+8	-2	30	+12	+3	23	86	77	87
South Atlantic	+10	+1	+3	105	-38	-4	79	22	40	22
West South Central	+3	-4	-2	57	+10	-4	31	32	29	32
Pacific	-3	-5	+4	130	+13	-7	97	29	19	30
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+11	-4	+8	329	+6	0	247	29	34	28
New England	-2	+12	-5	22	+8	-5	16	13	13	15
Middle Atlantic	+20	-4	+15	45	-8	+2	28	25	28	24
East North Central	+10	+2	+12	54	+5	-3	39	24	25	25
West North Central	+13	-7	0	47	+20	+5	42	37	34	32
South Atlantic	+7	-8	+6	35	+31	+6	20	39	37	34
West South Central	+12	0	+8	27	+19	+10	20	34	36	32
Mountain	+19	+5	+11	28	-2	+6	24	35	46	32
Pacific	+7	-11	+6	68	-1	-6	58	37	62	34
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+7	-8	+10	309	+2	+2	249	161	165	146
New England	+10	-2	+9	18	+2	+6	12	153	167	140
Middle Atlantic	+13	-9	+11	78	-1	+1	46	163	180	151
East North Central	+5	-11	+11	57	+18	+6	51	149	133	126
West North Central	+7	-12	+6	25	+4	+2	22	140	143	121
South Atlantic	0	-7	+6	44	-8	+1	37	151	159	141
East South Central	+4	+7	+8	12	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
West South Central	+9	-4	+7	31	+1	+1	28	216	236	204
Mountain	+19	-3	+13	13	+6	+9	13	219	231	195
Pacific	+4	-11	+12	31	-6	-1	29	148	166	134
Tobacco distributors	-1	-2	+1	250	+3	-1	156	66	61	67
New England	-7	0	+9	23	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	-5	0	-3	49	-3	+1	24	65	64	66
East North Central	+3	-3	+1	50	+10	-1	30	75	56	78
West North Central	-1	-4	+1	24	-4	+4	16	60	59	55
South Atlantic	-3	-1	-2	30	-4	-1	22	76	85	76
East South Central	+9	-4	+4	11	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	0	+2	+4	442	+2	+1	225	197	219	196
New England	+8	-7	+18	27	+5	+1	12	249	257	216
Middle Atlantic	-1	+2	+1	278	-2	+1	125	176	216	181
East North Central	-6	-1	-2	52	-6	+5	33	266	249	219
West North Central	-13	+17	+4	18	+4	0	15	237	212	280
South Atlantic	+7	-2	+11	19	+14	+4	14	208	194	192
West South Central	+11	+27	+12	12	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+15	+3	+22	30	+9	-9	14	125	199	154
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+9	+9	+12	256	+2	+4	176	189	181	208
Middle Atlantic	+1	+7	+5	92	-7	+4	49	184	145	206
East North Central	+9	+9	+13	54	+6	+2	41	174	226	180
West North Central	+7	+6	+15	21	+8	+8	19	258	272	259
South Atlantic	+11	-5	+8	33	+28	+6	20	341	242	316
West South Central	+26	+41	+27	21	0	+3	21	174	226	239
Pacific	+68	+24	+44	17	+4	+1	12	149	186	163

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

FEBRUARY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change Feb. 1955 from--		2 mo. 1955 from 2 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Feb. 1955	Percent change Feb. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Feb. 1955	Feb. 1955	Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955
	Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955			Feb. 1954	Jan. 1955				
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+6	+4	+9	541	-3	+1	363	244	289	252
Middle Atlantic	-9	+3	+1	74	-21	+3	41	240	425	233
East North Central	+12	+7	+19	90	-1	+2	66	197	198	198
West North Central	0	+7	-2	75	-2	0	23	274	306	309
South Atlantic	+16	+8	+15	67	+12	+2	50	245	267	273
East South Central	+13	+11	+8	72	+4	+2	71	303	272	319
West South Central	+4	-11	-4	31	-12	-4	29	219	279	206
Mountain	+5	+1	+25	40	0	-1	35	297	338	299
Pacific	+15	-1	+21	78	-4	+1	44	236	294	228
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+2	+1	+7	576	+1	+7	557	151	150	144
New England	-2	-12	-12	35	+10	+2	32	142	129	123
Middle Atlantic	-4	-7	+3	76	-4	+5	69	118	134	106
East North Central	-4	+6	-1	160	-2	+5	156	180	160	185
West North Central	+7	+10	+9	60	+6	+13	57	182	168	168
South Atlantic	+9	+5	+7	80	-2	+17	79	169	181	152
East South Central	+28	+13	+24	32	+1	+13	32	137	173	137
West South Central	+15	+4	+27	59	+16	+8	58	144	137	142
Mountain	-12	-9	-1	21	-18	+17	21	151	162	117
Pacific	+19	+4	+23	53	+5	0	53	145	162	151
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+10	+3	+8	339	-3	+3	271	142	156	142
New England	-16	-4	-10	28	-11	+3	22	140	148	122
Middle Atlantic	+3	-2	+2	69	+5	+3	45	186	149	179
East North Central	+17	-1	+6	70	-5	+4	64	118	139	112
West North Central	+18	+9	+15	32	-4	+5	28	133	168	145
South Atlantic	+16	+4	+18	57	-6	+2	41	170	177	176
East South Central	+39	+23	+30	11	+4	+8	11	109	165	124
West South Central	+14	+8	+15	24	-9	+12	24	159	181	154
Pacific	+15	+9	+18	41	-6	-10	30	121	146	146
Hardware wholesalers	0	+1	+4	224	0	+4	180	300	322	304
Middle Atlantic[5]	+6	-1	+9	28	-2	+3	21	279	296	270
East North Central	-7	+4	-3	43	-4	+4	36	303	291	300
West North Central	-4	+10	0	16	+3	+7	16	313	292	321
South Atlantic	-4	-3	0	25	0	+3	20	383	375	361
East South Central	+4	-4	+7	24	+8	+4	20	263	247	238
West South Central	+3	+2	+6	33	-1	+5	31	285	363	276
Pacific	+11	-2	+13	25	+4	+5	15	239	371	310
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+13	0	+13	335	+2	+2	246	229	249	214
New England	+4	+3	+11	16	+10	-1	10	276	271	264
Middle Atlantic	+1	-11	+7	90	-2	+4	53	320	355	260
East North Central	+9	-7	+7	57	-12	+4	43	253	288	213
West North Central	+1	-8	+2	31	+18	+7	29	244	207	204
South Atlantic	+18	+7	+22	52	+4	+4	45	220	258	237
West South Central	+25	+12	+22	39	0	+1	37	241	289	223
Pacific	+20	+9	+19	27	+15	-6	10	122	142	134
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+12	-3	+20	517	+9	+8	365	140	166	123
New England	+28	-8	+40	17	-11	+5	16	210	282	188
Middle Atlantic	+3	-4	+15	98	-1	+15	70	107	209	89
East North Central	+14	-1	+19	128	-6	+3	67	133	147	127
West North Central	+11	-2	+12	55	+12	+31	41	207	179	137
South Atlantic	+19	-4	+21	49	+20	+8	40	112	126	104
East South Central	+23	+5	+37	23	+1	0	21	127	158	135
Pacific	+27	-2	+32	98	+25	-3	68	156	163	159
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+4	+5	+4	731	+1	+1	645	206	221	213
Middle Atlantic	+19	+9	+11	51	+4	+3	33	226	319	239
East North Central	+16	+6	+5	93	0	+1	77	221	282	228
West North Central	-12	-2	-4	40	+5	+1	38	222	207	213
South Atlantic	-8	+6	+8	38	-12	0	33	153	173	163
East South Central	-3	-13	-1	32	+1	-1	20	211	213	195
West South Central	-2	+1	0	344	+8	+2	332	197	179	192
Mountain	-22	+40	+7	44	+9	+6	40	244	206	348
Pacific	+8	+7	+5	80	-9	-3	67	154	185	177

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials, and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

[5] Percent change in sales for Jan. 1955 from Dec. 1954 shown for this region in the Jan. 1955 report should be changed from +11 to -18.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon size, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight.

Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

MARCH 1955

FOR RELEASE
MAY 6, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 10,000 merchant wholesalers representing firms in all parts of the country and various kinds of business (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

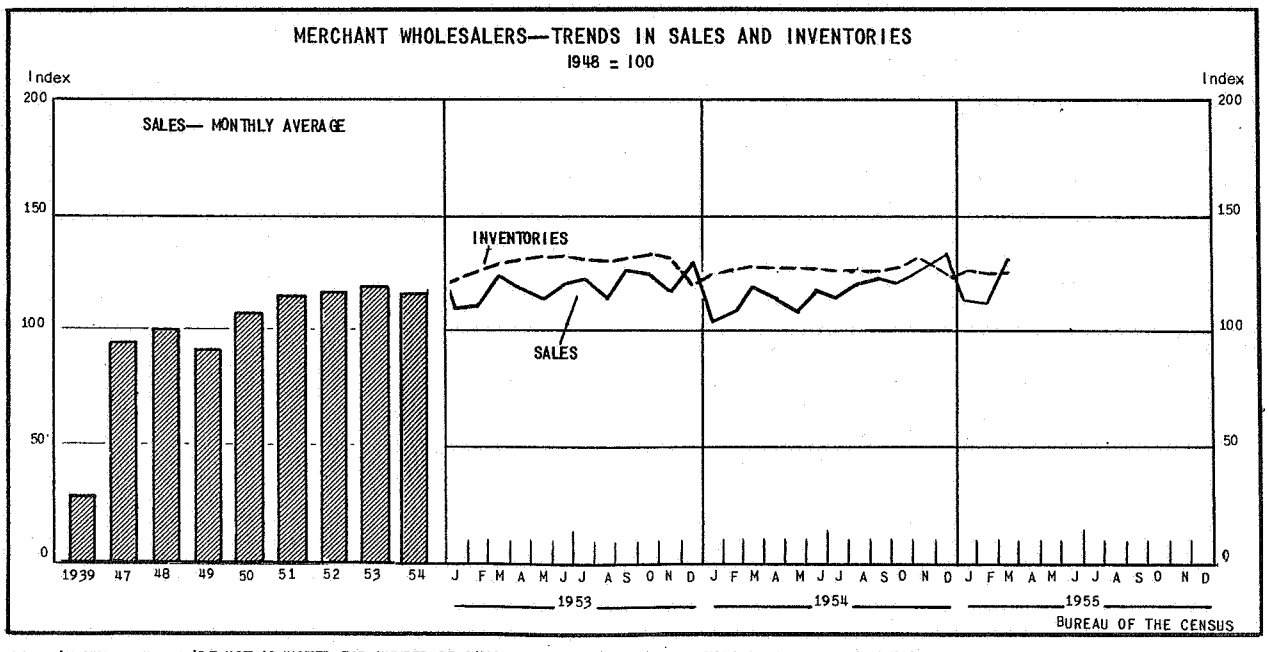
March 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers were up 17 percent over February and were 8 percent higher than in March a year ago. For the first quarter of 1955, sales were 7 percent higher than during the comparable three-month period of 1954.

All geographic divisions showed increased sales over the previous month as well as over a year ago. Gains over the previous month were substantial, ranging from 10 percent in the Mountain Division to 19 percent in the West North Central Division. Increases over a year ago were more moderate, the smallest (2%) occurring in the East South Central Division, the largest (13%) in the South Atlantic Division.

Almost all trades reported higher sales in March 1955 than in February 1955 and March 1954. Coal, which was down 11 percent, indicated the only decrease from February, while three trades--grocery specialty lines (16%); clothing, furnishings, and footwear (3%); and industrial chemicals (1%)--were down from a year ago. Principal increases over February were shown in air conditioning and commercial refrigeration (48%); industrial chemicals (32%); paints and varnishes (32%); clothing, furnishings, and footwear (29%); and farm supplies (29%). Compared with a year ago, substantial increases were reported in iron and steel scrap (101%), nonferrous metals (31%), waste materials (29%), and motor vehicles (26%). First quarter sales in 1955 were well ahead of 1954 in all but three trades--grocery specialty lines (-13%), dairy-poultry products (-1%), and beer, which was at about the same level as in first quarter 1954.

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of March were at the same level as on February 28, but were 1 percent below inventories on hand March 31, 1954. Three trades, however, showed marked declines in inventories from the previous month--coal, down 20 percent; inedible farm products, off 16 percent; and farm supplies, down 15 percent. The largest increase (10%) was reported for beer. Compared with stocks on hand a year ago, the sharpest increase was noted in iron and steel scrap (34%); the heaviest decline (22%), in coal. Based on reports of establishments submitting inventory figures in conjunction with sales data, the March stock-sales ratio of 115 percent was 20 points below the previous month and 9 points lower than the ratio for March 1954.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

MARCH 1955

Kind of business	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Mar. 1955 from--		3 mo. 1955 from 3 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Mar. 1955	Percent change, Mar. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Mar. 1955	Mar. 1955	Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955
	Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955			Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers	+8	+17	+7	10,693	-1	0	7,979	115	124	135
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-3	+13	-3	1,192	-6	-1	901	87	89	100
General-line grocery wholesalers	+5	+14	+3	666	-2	0	547	108	114	122
Nonaffiliated[2]	+5	+14	+3	475	-4	0	390	127	139	144
Voluntary groups	+3	+8	+2	173	0	-2	145	103	108	112
Retailer-cooperative	+7	+20	+9	18	+4	+3	12	72	67	85
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-16	+10	-13	288	-14	-3	199	85	86	99
Confectionery wholesalers	+9	+17	+4	86	+6	-3	43	81	89	95
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+4	+15	+2	152	-6	-1	112	23	25	27
Edible farm products distributors	+2	+19	+2	980	-3	+4	656	29	31	34
Dairy, poultry products distributors	0	+17	-1	672	-1	+6	426	32	31	35
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+8	+25	+8	308	-7	+1	230	25	30	32
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+5	+21	+3	377	+5	+5	338	107	109	120
Beer distributors	+1	+20	0	111	-2	+10	99	57	59	63
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+9	+22	+5	266	+8	+4	239	139	154	157
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+3	+15	+7	711	0	+1	494	127	134	144
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+4	+5	+8	313	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-1	+32	+5	255	-5	+5	196	76	87	96
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+13	+32	+9	143	+1	-1	70	169	186	223
Tobacco distributors	+7	+15	+3	240	0	-2	158	53	57	64
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+3	+18	+3	421	-1	-1	238	174	179	207
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-3	+29	+3	94	0	-3	48	199	164	255
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+3	+18	+1	180	-7	-1	100	150	183	181
Piece goods converters	+9	+9	+8	147	+5	0	90	185	192	201
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	+19	+14	262	+1	0	187	164	163	191
Furniture wholesalers	+17	+22	+12	100	-6	-1	62	145	167	179
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+18	+17	+15	162	+4	+1	125	171	161	196
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+14	+16	+7	457	+2	-1	336	110	118	131
Paper wholesalers	+14	+17	+7	297	+1	-1	254	105	114	126
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+10	+9	+8	160	+5	+1	82	167	162	183
Inedible farm products merchants	+2	+12	+7	239	+7	-16	171	120	100	155
Automotive wholesalers	+16	+9	+13	556	-2	+1	414	151	184	165
Motor-vehicle distributors	+26	+13	+19	68	-8	+3	60	75	107	84
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+10	+7	+9	488	0	+1	354	211	248	225
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+5	+9	+6	876	-3	+7	797	147	158	150
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[4]	+2	+10	+5	561	-2	+6	540	153	158	157
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+7	+9	+8	315	-4	+7	257	141	159	143
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+11	+19	+9	422	+6	+2	329	221	239	261
Hardware wholesalers	+8	+23	+5	183	+2	+3	157	251	267	298
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+15	+15	+14	239	+16	+1	172	173	190	203
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+15	+25	+17	517	+11	+2	367	103	110	127
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+17	+25	+20	310	+10	+3	234	109	128	133
Construction materials distributors	+9	+26	+11	207	+16	+2	133	92	80	114
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+9	+22	+7	1,886	-3	0	1,566	159	179	197
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+25	+48	+10	110	-3	+9	83	112	140	157
Commercial machines, equipment, distributors	+4	+7	+5	150	-4	-3	95	146	173	175
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+8	+19	+5	829	-4	0	764	148	165	180
Professional equipment, supplies houses[5]	+3	+11	+3	384	+7	0	295	213	198	232
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+4	+7	+5	62	+9	-1	31	160	148	170
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+13	+18	+10	163	+5	+2	128	155	169	179
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+9	+33	+9	250	-6	-2	201	186	214	242
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+24	+21	+19	297	-11	+1	217	123	205	171
Iron, steel and products distributors	+22	+23	+18	202	-12	+1	148	140	250	207
Nonferrous metals distributors	+31	+12	+22	95	-5	+1	69	67	91	73
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+65	+24	+51	267	+17	+1	181	49	68	62
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+101	+28	+77	145	+34	+5	98	41	59	54
Waste materials dealers	+29	+17	+24	122	+3	-3	83	61	76	73
Other merchant wholesalers[6]	+16	+14	+12	993	-1	-6	629	91	103	111
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+15	+21	+11	142	+8	+5	103	161	175	189
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+3	+4	+6	112	-5	0	45	117	106	115
Coal wholesalers	+1	-11	+12	225	-22	-20	113	36	52	39
Farm supplies wholesalers	+18	+29	+7	199	+16	-15	159	69	63	106
Jewelry wholesalers	+21	+6	+9	120	+6	+3	65	342	356	356

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

MARCH 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change Mar. 1955 from--		3 mo. 1955 from 3 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Mar. 1955	Percent change Mar. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Mar. 1955	Mar. 1955	Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955
	Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955			Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers, total[5]	+8	+17	+7	10,693	-1	0	7,979	115	124	135
New England	+9	+18	+8	549	+6	+2	359	131	137	152
Middle Atlantic	+9	+17	+6	2,423	-3	+1	1,438	100	109	121
East North Central	+11	+14	+7	1,997	-3	+1	1,552	99	114	112
West North Central	+5	+19	+5	1,052	+1	-6	883	132	132	167
South Atlantic	+13	+17	+12	1,079	-2	-2	829	127	150	149
East South Central	+2	+16	+3	544	-1	+1	434	140	146	166
West South Central	+4	+19	+2	1,229	+3	-1	1,085	144	146	174
Mountain	+8	+10	+9	385	+7	+3	331	144	143	155
Pacific	+4	+17	+9	1,435	-2	+3	1,068	109	115	124
General-line grocery wholesalers	+5	+14	+3	666	-2	0	547	108	114	122
Middle Atlantic	+2	+19	-2	46	-1	0	35	100	95	117
East North Central	+4	+7	+2	52	-16	-1	41	109	140	117
West North Central	0	+4	+5	134	-7	+2	130	101	113	104
South Atlantic	+7	+20	+2	39	+4	-3	28	119	127	146
East South Central	-1	+13	+1	43	-5	-2	35	117	126	137
West South Central	+5	+13	+7	125	+5	-2	111	114	113	131
Mountain	+13	+4	+5	39	-8	0	32	99	120	102
Pacific	+7	+16	+6	177	+6	+9	132	84	83	88
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-16	+10	-13	288	-14	-3	199	85	86	99
New England	+6	+18	+3	20	+11	-3	11	94	81	106
Middle Atlantic	-25	+14	-20	115	-19	+1	78	54	55	68
East North Central	+1	+3	-3	58	-13	-2	38	99	104	101
West North Central	-2	+1	-9	9	-12	-4	7	109	120	106
South Atlantic	-4	+10	0	32	-23	-9	22	127	157	146
South Central	-25	+10	-10	14	+3	-8	11	109	84	130
Pacific	-8	+14	-4	38	-8	+2	31	109	114	119
Dairy, poultry products distributors	0	+17	-1	672	-1	+6	426	32	31	35
New England	-24	+25	-10	19	-37	+3	11	31	41	38
Middle Atlantic	0	+2	-2	132	+2	+4	75	30	32	36
East North Central	-5	+16	-5	142	+2	+2	90	26	22	30
West North Central	-7	+4	-4	32	+4	+1	27	64	56	65
South Atlantic	+33	+15	+13	115	-17	+17	93	30	39	29
West South Central	+17	+19	+4	55	-3	+1	28	40	46	53
Mountain	+2	+7	+7	15	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	-6	+9	0	141	-7	+10	80	33	32	33
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+8	+25	+8	308	-7	+1	230	25	30	32
New England	+17	+24	+5	23	-15	0	21	41	73	51
Middle Atlantic	+7	+21	+12	38	-14	+5	25	20	20	24
East North Central	+3	+23	+9	35	+5	-5	25	13	13	17
West North Central	+9	+29	+4	50	-21	+3	46	19	32	24
South Atlantic	+15	+26	+9	32	-6	+11	13	30	32	33
West South Central	+2	+26	+5	27	-3	-8	17	39	46	55
Mountain	+14	+32	+13	29	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+14	+28	+7	65	+1	+4	55	34	47	43
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+4	+5	+8	313	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
New England	+2	+4	+6	17						
Middle Atlantic	+5	+7	+9	65						
East North Central	0	0	+7	55						
West North Central	+2	+9	+5	23						
South Atlantic	+9	+3	+7	40						
East South Central	+2	-1	+5	18						
West South Central	+4	+5	+6	47						
Mountain	+18	+11	+16	17						
Pacific	+5	+9	+10	31	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Tobacco distributors	+7	+15	+3	240	0	-2	158	53	57	64
New England	-1	+13	+6	24	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+3	+13	0	46	-4	-1	26	51	54	59
East North Central	+16	+13	+7	44	+17	+2	29	36	37	42
West North Central	+4	+15	+2	29	-4	-1	24	65	69	76
South Atlantic	+14	+23	+4	30	+3	-6	25	56	65	74
East South Central	+11	+19	+8	11	+1	+1	9	59	70	71
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+3	+18	+3	421	-1	-1	238	174	179	207
New England	-17	+12	+3	16	+10	+3	12	226	168	241
Middle Atlantic	+4	+19	+2	282	-5	-1	149	176	187	208
East North Central	+15	+23	+3	30	+16	+5	19	126	150	145
West North Central	-10	+14	-2	19	-6	-1	15	218	206	259
South Atlantic	+10	+15	10	27	-3	-16	18	133	155	180
South Central	+19	+30	+19	24	0	-7	12	132	161	190
Pacific	+26	+14	+23	20	+12	+5	12	176	197	185
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	+19	+14	262	+1	0	187	164	163	191
New England	+1	+8	+10	13	-10	0	11	192	206	202
Middle Atlantic	+15	+19	+8	77	+2	-1	40	167	106	200
East North Central	+25	+20	+19	56	-3	-1	46	141	180	169
West North Central	+11	+19	+14	18	+8	+1	15	217	186	259
South Atlantic	+16	+35	+11	27	+3	+1	16	211	213	293
South Central	+14	+15	+21	44	+6	+4	42	159	192	175
Pacific	+35	+15	+39	22	+18	+2	13	132	136	138

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

MARCH 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change Mar. 1955 from--		3 mo. 1955 from 3 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Mar. 1955	Percent change Mar. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Mar. 1955	Mar. 1955	Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955
	Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955			Mar. 1954	Feb. 1955				
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+10	+7	+9	488	0	+1	354	211	248	225
Middle Atlantic	+4	+1	+2	42	-7	-2	21	200	233	200
East North Central	+13	+14	+17	101	-8	+1	84	175	214	199
West North Central	+13	+5	+3	60	-4	+4	20	265	326	273
South Atlantic	+34	+13	+20	46	-1	+4	36	200	336	226
East South Central	+12	+10	+10	62	+9	+1	62	227	283	248
West South Central	+3	+10	0	53	+6	+3	47	276	289	295
Mountain	+13	+2	+18	33	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+6	+3	+13	78	+2	-5	47	181	179	198
Electrical equipment and supplies wholesalers[4]	+2	+10	+5	561	-2	+6	540	153	158	150
New England	+7	0	-9	32	-2	-1	31	145	157	145
Middle Atlantic	-2	+19	+1	70	-1	+1	63	146	139	174
East North Central	-5	+5	-3	150	-17	+12	149	142	157	134
West North Central	-2	+15	+3	69	+1	+6	66	184	174	195
South Atlantic	+13	+4	+9	80	+1	+5	77	167	190	167
East South Central	+11	+19	+17	37	+7	+8	36	153	172	155
West South Central	+10	+6	+22	54	+3	+9	51	162	180	159
Mountain	+3	+2	0	20	+2	+7	20	142	143	135
Pacific	+7	+9	+17	49	+14	+8	47	147	134	147
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors.	+7	+9	+8	315	-4	+7	257	141	159	143
New England	+19	+27	+1	15	-11	-10	12	80	122	103
Middle Atlantic	+10	+9	+6	74	-4	+7	55	146	165	152
East North Central	+5	+8	+5	68	-6	+5	62	118	129	119
West North Central	-2	+5	+6	31	+8	+1	26	159	147	167
South Atlantic	+1	+6	+10	47	+1	+11	34	170	182	157
East South Central	+15	-10	+23	12	-15	+19	8	155	198	119
West South Central	+5	+11	+10	21	-6	+3	19	178	185	194
Pacific	+23	+13	+20	42	-17	+24	36	125	203	117
Hardware wholesalers	+8	+23	+5	183	+2	+3	157	251	267	298
Middle Atlantic	+10	+21	+10	23	-2	+3	13	225	265	261
East North Central	-1	+23	-3	30	0	+1	30	265	257	322
West North Central	-5	+18	-2	21	0	+3	21	272	254	314
South Atlantic	+25	+26	+6	18	-11	-2	12	231	293	265
East South Central	+22	+28	+12	26	+15	+1	23	245	303	305
West South Central	+5	+17	+6	16	+3	+6	12	202	217	214
Mountain	+18	+18	+26	12	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+15	+26	+14	30	+2	+6	28	262	296	313
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+15	+15	+14	239	+16	+1	172	173	190	203
New England	+13	+6	+12	16	+35	+1	12	206	163	220
Middle Atlantic	+5	+8	+6	69	+6	+3	35	208	196	232
East North Central	+5	+21	+6	22	+16	-1	19	123	163	151
West North Central	+9	+20	+5	25	+18	+2	24	252	233	308
South Atlantic	+26	+18	+24	46	+13	+4	40	168	177	191
South Central	+18	+11	+18	25	+13	+5	23	187	197	206
Pacific	+41	+18	+27	30	+8	-1	16	169	245	212
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+15	+25	+17	517	+11	+2	367	103	110	127
New England	+1	+23	+20	25	+15	+9	17	101	90	109
Middle Atlantic	+13	+26	+14	99	0	-1	58	106	116	130
East North Central	+21	+28	+20	127	+12	+2	74	95	121	123
West North Central	+7	+22	+10	30	+19	+6	24	166	144	199
South Atlantic	+27	+26	+23	43	+21	+3	34	94	106	121
West South Central	+17	+24	+8	56	+19	+1	55	115	103	148
Pacific	+21	+26	+27	94	+3	+1	67	87	105	106
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+8	+19	+5	829	-4	0	764	148	165	180
Middle Atlantic	+13	+9	+12	80	-9	-3	57	108	152	141
East North Central	+20	+21	+11	95	-7	0	89	132	169	154
West North Central	+17	+18	+4	52	-2	+6	51	150	171	171
South Atlantic	+29	+33	+16	32	-4	+4	28	128	144	122
East South Central	+8	+14	0	32	0	0	21	208	229	254
West South Central	-1	+26	-1	396	-2	-2	390	170	169	218
Mountain	+5	+9	+6	60	+3	+1	58	229	248	277
Pacific	-11	+20	-2	72	-1	+7	63	175	140	212

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Data withheld because of incomplete reporting of inventories at time of publication. These data will be included with the April 1955 bulletin.

[4] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[5] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight.

Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, Director

APRIL 1955

FOR RELEASE
JUNE 7, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 10,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

April 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers were down 4 percent below March and were 6 percent higher than April a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first four months of 1955 were 7 percent higher than sales in the comparable period of 1954.

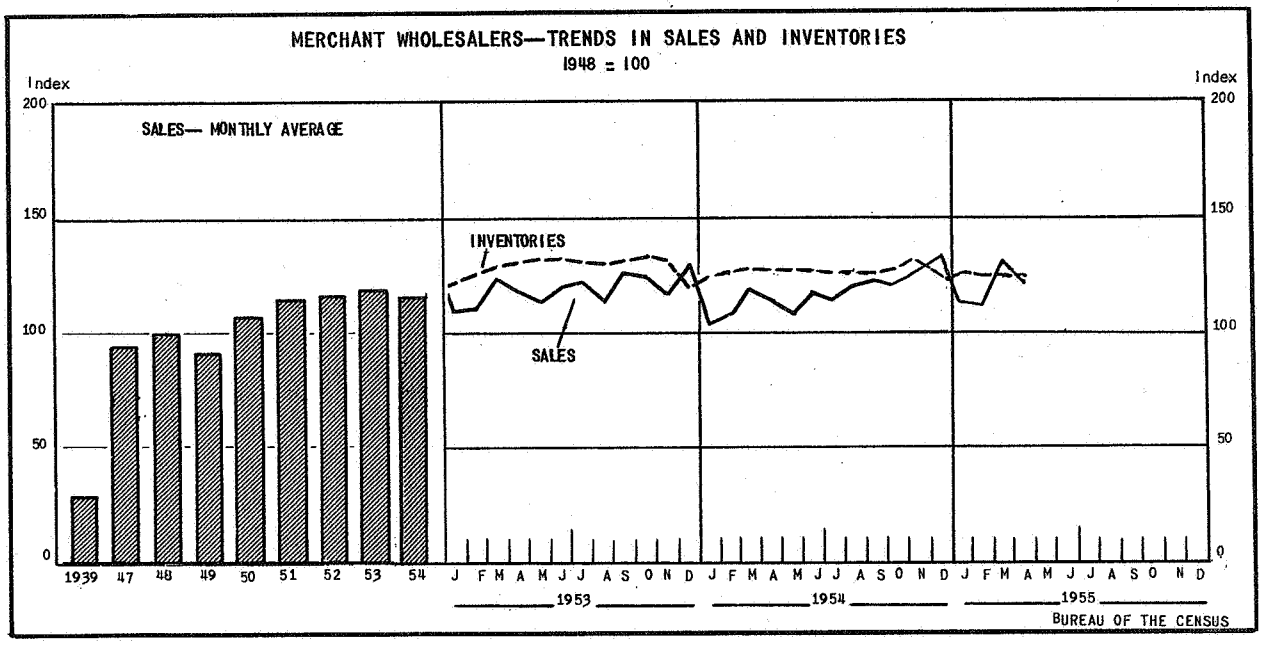
Sales declines of 2 to 8 percent from the previous month were indicated in all but two geographic divisions--the Mountain and the Pacific--which reported little or no change. Compared with a year ago, however, these two divisions indicated increases of 14 and 13 percent, respectively. All other divisions also reported gains, ranging from 1 to 11 percent, over year-ago sales.

Most trades indicated lower sales than a month earlier, but noted gains over April sales a year ago. Inedible farm products, down 23 percent, reflected the principal decline from the previous month. Other declines of 10 percent or more were noted by dry goods and apparel, home furnishings, electrical appliances, coal, and farm supplies. Eleven trades, led by construction materials, up 16 percent, reported increased sales over March 1955. Compared with a year ago, only five trades reported lower sales, with grocery specialty lines indicating the sharpest decline (18%). Iron and steel scrap more than doubled last April's sales. Substantial gains over year-ago sales were also noted by waste materials (48%) nonferrous metals (36%), iron, steel and products (33%), and lumber, millwork (20%).

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of April were down slightly (1%) below March 31, but were 2 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Based on reports of establishments submitting inventory figures in conjunction with sales data, the April stock-sales ratio of 122 percent was 5 points above the previous month, but 5 points lower than the ratio for April 1954.

Most trades showed only very small changes from previous-month inventories, the most significant being noted by inedible farm products (-19%), farm supplies (-18%), and coal (+13%). Compared with a year ago, iron and steel scrap (20%) and waste materials (22%) showed the largest increases in stocks while grocery specialty lines (21%) reported the heaviest decline.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

APRIL 1955

Kind of business	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Apr. 1955 from--		4 mo. 1955 from 4 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Apr. 1955	Percent change, Apr. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Apr. 1955	Apr. 1955	Apr. 1954	Mar. 1954
	Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955			Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers	+6	-4	+7	10,960	+2	-1	8,155	122	127	117
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-6	-8	-4	1,302	-8	-2	1,059	83	90	79
General-line grocery wholesalers	+2	-7	+3	780	-1	-3	685	107	111	104
Nonaffiliated[2]	-1	-7	+2	592	-3	-3	533	120	125	112
Voluntary groups	+2	-6	+2	166	-1	-3	135	107	108	104
Retailer-cooperative	+12	-9	+10	22	+3	-2	17	82	89	85
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-18	-12	-14	293	-21	-1	206	86	93	78
Confectionery wholesalers	+1	-4	+3	83	+8	-4	47	80	74	81
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-5	-4	0	146	-14	+3	121	26	26	23
Edible farm products distributors	+7	+1	+3	974	+4	-2	678	26	26	27
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+2	-2	0	641	+3	0	428	33	32	32
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+13	+7	+10	333	+7	-7	250	18	17	20
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+6	+2	+4	507	+1	+2	432	100	104	98
Beer distributors	+7	+7	+2	129	+5	+3	107	81	83	84
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+5	-2	+5	378	-2	+1	325	115	121	108
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+8	-6	+8	613	+5	+1	443	150	163	142
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+8	-5	+8	299	+5	+1	234	178	182	171
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+9	-9	+6	181	+1	+3	136	75	87	68
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+7	-6	+8	133	+4	-2	73	132	173	123
Tobacco distributors	0	0	+2	248	-3	+1	146	53	56	51
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+4	-14	+4	417	+8	-1	214	190	193	168
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+2	-10	+3	92	+4	-3	44	192	167	161
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+1	-17	+1	199	+5	0	96	203	219	182
Piece goods converters	+12	-13	+8	126	+18	0	74	169	167	151
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+6	-10	+12	282	+3	+2	173	150	165	133
Furniture wholesalers	+16	-3	+10	117	-2	+2	67	129	173	122
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	0	-15	+11	165	+6	+2	106	162	161	138
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+7	-6	+7	445	0	+1	320	109	111	99
Paper wholesalers	+7	-6	+7	281	-1	+2	230	102	107	93
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	0	-8	+6	164	+4	0	90	180	160	164
Inedible farm products merchants	-15	-23	0	271	+6	-19	213	114	90	110
Automotive wholesalers	+17	+5	+14	663	+8	0	501	171	185	181
Motor-vehicle distributors	+19	+6	+19	63	+10	+5	53	88	90	90
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+16	+4	+12	600	+7	-1	448	221	247	235
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+3	-9	+5	870	+5	+5	790	172	165	149
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+8	-6	+6	553	+7	+4	530	161	157	147
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	-2	-12	+5	317	+3	+6	260	185	174	150
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+7	-2	+8	559	+5	0	408	240	251	234
Hardware wholesalers	+4	-4	+5	216	+3	-1	176	251	264	244
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+11	0	+13	343	+7	+1	232	223	229	219
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+18	+7	+18	506	+10	-1	338	101	106	108
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+20	+2	+20	297	+12	-1	214	115	124	120
Construction materials distributors	+14	+16	+12	209	+5	0	124	75	75	83
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+12	-5	+8	1,776	+2	0	1,418	180	197	170
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+6	+6	+9	96	-1	-1	55	150	133	150
Commercial machines, equipment, distributors	+14	-6	+8	136	-3	+2	98	152	181	137
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+14	-8	+8	767	+6	0	657	193	201	176
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+8	-7	+5	395	-2	+1	300	216	227	203
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+7	-3	+5	73	-6	-1	41	167	184	161
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	0	-2	+7	141	-2	+6	103	147	151	138
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+16	-3	+12	241	-2	-1	205	174	213	173
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+34	+1	+22	304	-3	-2	235	149	220	156
Iron, steel and products distributors	+33	+1	+21	216	-1	0	161	176	256	181
Nonferrous metals distributors	+36	+1	+25	88	-12	-5	74	100	156	106
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+75	+4	+58	281	+21	-2	195	61	83	62
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+104	+1	+84	155	+20	-1	112	46	81	48
Waste materials dealers	+48	+10	+31	126	+22	-3	83	85	85	87
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+5	-3	+10	942	0	-2	592	107	111	103
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+9	0	+10	138	+3	+1	98	164	168	171
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	0	-5	+5	114	-4	0	37	124	104	133
Coal wholesalers	+11	-13	+11	210	-8	+13	101	48	58	39
Farm supplies wholesalers	+4	-11	+6	173	+13	-18	140	72	68	78
Jewelry wholesalers	+15	-2	+10	123	-6	+1	75	258	340	273

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

APRIL 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Apr. 1955 from--		4 mo. 1955 from 4 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Apr. 1955	Percent change, Apr. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Apr. 1955	Apr. 1955	Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955
	Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955			Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+6	-4	+7	10,960	+2	-1	8,155	122	127	117
New England	+6	-3	+7	580	+5	+2	398	130	131	122
Middle Atlantic	+4	-8	+6	2,567	+5	-1	1,572	111	113	103
East North Central	+11	-2	+8	2,116	+2	-1	1,591	111	124	109
West North Central	+1	-6	+4	1,060	0	-4	854	132	128	128
South Atlantic	+6	-3	+11	1,044	+2	+1	809	128	133	125
East South Central	+2	-6	+3	475	-2	-5	377	144	138	145
West South Central	+1	-5	+2	1,306	-1	-1	1,105	142	144	135
Mountain	+14	0	+10	374	+8	-2	335	150	164	155
Pacific	+13	0	+10	1,438	+4	+1	1,114	115	133	114
General-line grocery wholesalers	+2	-7	+3	780	-1	-3	685	107	111	104
Middle Atlantic	0	-23	-1	90	+5	-3	77	133	135	104
East North Central	+9	-6	+4	110	0	-3	84	104	112	97
West North Central	-3	-2	+2	146	-5	-5	136	103	110	109
South Atlantic	-3	-5	+1	39	-1	-3	32	127	126	125
East South Central	+2	0	+1	42	-7	-2	39	94	103	93
West South Central	-2	-4	+4	126	-2	-2	110	128	128	125
Mountain	+21	-16	+10	37	+2	-3	37	84	95	72
Pacific	+5	-9	+5	185	+2	-4	166	82	82	90
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-18	-12	-14	293	-21	-1	206	86	93	78
New England	-3	-14	+1	18	-23	-14	10	50	75	50
Middle Atlantic	-28	-17	-22	141	-13	+2	98	80	66	67
East North Central	+7	-4	-1	31	-27	-14	22	66	102	74
West North Central	-23	-6	-14	8	-26	0	8	93	97	87
South Atlantic	-13	-10	-3	26	-14	+5	17	181	245	209
South Central	-8	-2	-13	19	-44	+4	13	89	152	87
Pacific	-1	-10	-4	47	-15	-11	37	67	73	72
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+2	-2	0	641	+3	0	428	33	32	32
New England	+6	-4	-4	24	+18	0	17	21	19	20
Middle Atlantic	-4	-6	-2	119	+4	+1	63	24	20	21
East North Central	-1	-7	-4	126	+7	+7	76	27	24	23
West North Central	-10	+9	-6	35	-1	+9	28	119	103	125
South Atlantic	+9	+1	+12	111	+4	+6	89	36	37	35
East South Central	-2	+7	+10	27	-14	-29	19	19	21	27
West South Central	+27	+1	+10	55	+29	-10	31	22	20	26
Mountain	-12	-2	-3	16	+19	+9	11	57	52	51
Pacific	+12	+1	+3	128	-6	-11	94	34	40	38
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+13	+7	+10	333	+7	-7	250	18	17	20
New England	+9	+3	+6	16	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+12	+7	+12	45	+19	-9	26	10	9	11
East North Central	+17	+8	+11	36	+9	-12	26	10	12	12
West North Central	+27	+5	+13	56	-9	-25	44	12	15	16
South Atlantic	+8	+4	+9	31	+25	-15	19	20	15	25
South Central	+9	+6	+3	44	-26	-1	33	28	41	30
Mountain	+16	+5	+15	29	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+13	+8	+10	76	+18	-10	63	24	15	28
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+8	-5	+8	299	+5	+1	234	178	182	171
New England	+7	-3	+7	20	+6	0	13	168	173	160
Middle Atlantic	+12	+1	+10	64	+11	0	41	213	214	238
East North Central	+5	-7	+7	51	+7	+3	40	131	123	117
West North Central	-1	-12	+4	23	+5	+2	21	168	158	144
South Atlantic	+15	-4	+10	45	+2	+2	36	186	207	177
East South Central	+2	-8	+6	15	+4	+2	13	193	198	173
West South Central	+6	-7	+6	42	+1	-3	33	211	228	203
Mountain	+17	-9	+17	13	-1	+1	13	222	263	199
Pacific	+6	-6	+10	26	0	+2	24	149	164	136
Tobacco distributors	0	0	+2	248	-3	+1	146	53	56	51
New England	+1	-5	+4	22	-14	+2	10	58	75	53
Middle Atlantic	+2	+2	0	47	-4	+3	28	53	55	52
East North Central	-4	0	+4	43	+9	-2	26	49	44	49
West North Central	+2	+2	+2	21	-5	-3	13	37	43	38
South Atlantic	-2	0	+2	25	+6	-2	18	54	47	55
South Central	0	-3	+3	40	-6	+3	19	59	63	37
Pacific	-1	-3	+2	38	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+4	-14	+4	417	+8	-1	214	190	193	168
New England	+15	-5	+6	22	+15	+8	13	272	294	241
Middle Atlantic	+5	-15	+3	267	+12	-3	128	152	163	141
East North Central	+6	-12	+4	34	-23	-2	21	194	215	170
West North Central	-16	-16	-7	22	+5	-3	17	294	217	240
South Atlantic	-10	-23	+8	16	-9	-5	10	234	207	179
South Central	+8	-19	+15	27	+2	-3	14	213	225	168
Pacific	+5	-15	+14	28	+30	+7	10	250	200	198
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+6	-10	+12	282	+3	+2	173	150	165	133
New England	-12	-27	+3	13	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+2	-13	+6	116	+6	+2	41	112	119	94
East North Central	-4	-10	+12	53	+2	+2	37	177	188	150
West North Central	+16	+9	+14	18	+6	0	16	169	194	198
South Atlantic	+9	-6	+11	27	+2	-2	16	192	214	186
South Central	+17	-8	+19	32	+8	+1	30	189	213	175
Pacific	+21	-7	+32	17	0	+4	17	147	177	132

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

APRIL 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change, Apr. 1955 from--		4 mo. 1955 from 4 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Apr. 1955	Percent change, Apr. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting Apr. 1955	Apr. 1955	Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955
	Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955			Apr. 1954	Mar. 1955				
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+16	+4	+12	600	+7	-1	448	221	247	235
Middle Atlantic	+8	0	+5	86	+13	+1	52	265	262	268
East North Central	+23	+5	+19	98	+1	-3	74	141	171	156
West North Central	+15	+15	+5	63	+3	+1	24	309	283	342
South Atlantic	+14	0	+18	53	+14	+3	43	254	265	251
East South Central	+21	+12	+15	61	+7	0	57	217	252	254
West South Central	+3	+2	0	92	+5	-2	88	317	358	322
Mountain	+20	+8	+18	46	+7	+9	43	273	306	271
Pacific	+16	0	+14	89	-2	-3	56	235	284	235
Electrical equipment and supplies wholesalers[3]	+8	-6	+6	553	+7	+4	530	161	157	147
New England	-3	-5	-7	33	+13	+5	32	185	168	169
Middle Atlantic	-2	-13	0	70	+6	+4	64	138	110	125
East North Central	-4	-7	-3	144	0	+5	138	175	170	151
West North Central	+14	-3	+6	60	+4	-4	57	152	168	153
South Atlantic	+23	0	+12	84	+11	+3	82	173	179	157
East South Central	+19	-5	+17	37	+22	+2	37	185	160	173
West South Central	+16	+2	+21	55	+7	+10	50	176	192	168
Mountain	+27	+11	+6	21	+13	+10	21	141	158	142
Pacific	+23	-4	+19	49	+9	+5	49	150	169	137
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	-2	-12	+5	317	+3	+6	260	185	174	150
New England	-17	-21	-2	15	-2	+22	12	156	132	89
Middle Atlantic	+1	-15	+4	68	+1	+3	58	172	167	137
East North Central	-1	-15	+4	67	+14	+3	61	205	183	168
West North Central	-9	-18	+1	31	+18	+11	24	185	154	141
South Atlantic	+3	-8	+8	44	+3	+11	31	169	166	139
East South Central	-12	-9	+10	14	-20	+5	13	199	207	174
West South Central	+4	-1	+7	25	-1	+3	21	179	189	160
Pacific	-8	-10	+9	47	-3	+10	35	195	178	156
Hardware wholesalers	+4	-4	+5	216	+3	-1	176	251	264	244
Middle Atlantic	+1	-2	+7	28	-7	-2	16	177	168	180
East North Central	+5	-4	-1	35	+3	0	32	242	234	239
West North Central	+3	-3	-3	28	+1	-3	26	258	261	263
South Atlantic	+3	-1	+5	29	-2	-3	22	282	285	290
East South Central	+11	-4	+12	22	+10	-1	21	243	245	238
West South Central	+6	-8	+4	23	+8	0	20	226	228	199
Mountain	+9	-4	+20	11	+6	+4	11	297	295	273
Pacific	+11	-5	+13	33	+5	+1	24	286	308	262
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+11	0	+13	343	+7	+1	232	223	229	219
New England	+11	0	+12	18	+4	+1	13	347	341	350
Middle Atlantic	+2	0	+4	125	+11	+2	66	237	214	225
East North Central	+13	-1	+8	43	+4	+4	27	153	191	150
West North Central	+21	+14	+11	31	-3	+2	27	213	232	238
South Atlantic	+5	0	+19	45	+3	+2	35	241	260	238
South Central	+1	-3	+13	37	+8	-1	33	259	229	249
Pacific	+41	-1	+30	33	+11	-1	22	180	228	180
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+18	+7	+18	506	+10	-1	338	101	106	108
New England	+7	+5	+14	33	+19	-1	27	140	118	149
Middle Atlantic	+8	+5	+12	91	+8	+1	68	109	108	113
East North Central	+24	+19	+21	128	+8	-1	53	88	124	97
West North Central	+16	+11	+12	34	+5	-10	21	66	72	89
South Atlantic	+23	-1	+23	48	+4	+1	36	71	78	69
South Central	+24	-3	+18	64	+6	-4	59	130	138	131
Pacific	+27	+4	+27	93	+24	+5	60	85	77	86
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+14	-8	+8	767	+6	0	657	193	201	176
New England	+18	+1	+8	13	-4	+7	7	188	219	174
Middle Atlantic	+10	-22	+11	74	+15	-6	54	182	157	149
East North Central	+28	-5	+15	94	+15	0	84	161	181	149
West North Central	+18	-7	+9	55	-11	0	43	152	188	157
South Atlantic	+12	-2	+15	45	+5	+5	37	178	195	168
South Central	+5	-4	0	374	+4	+1	334	227	208	215
Mountain	+19	+2	+8	40	+4	+3	39	168	238	168
Pacific	+8	+1	+1	72	+6	-1	59	254	289	244

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wire supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight.

Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY
WHOLESALE TRADE
REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

MAY 1955

FOR RELEASE
JULY 11, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business. Beginning with this issue, the index shown in the chart below has been revised on the basis of data developed from this sample.

Sales

May 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers were up 2 percent over April and were 13 percent higher than May a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first five months of 1955 were 8 percent higher than sales in the comparable period of 1954.

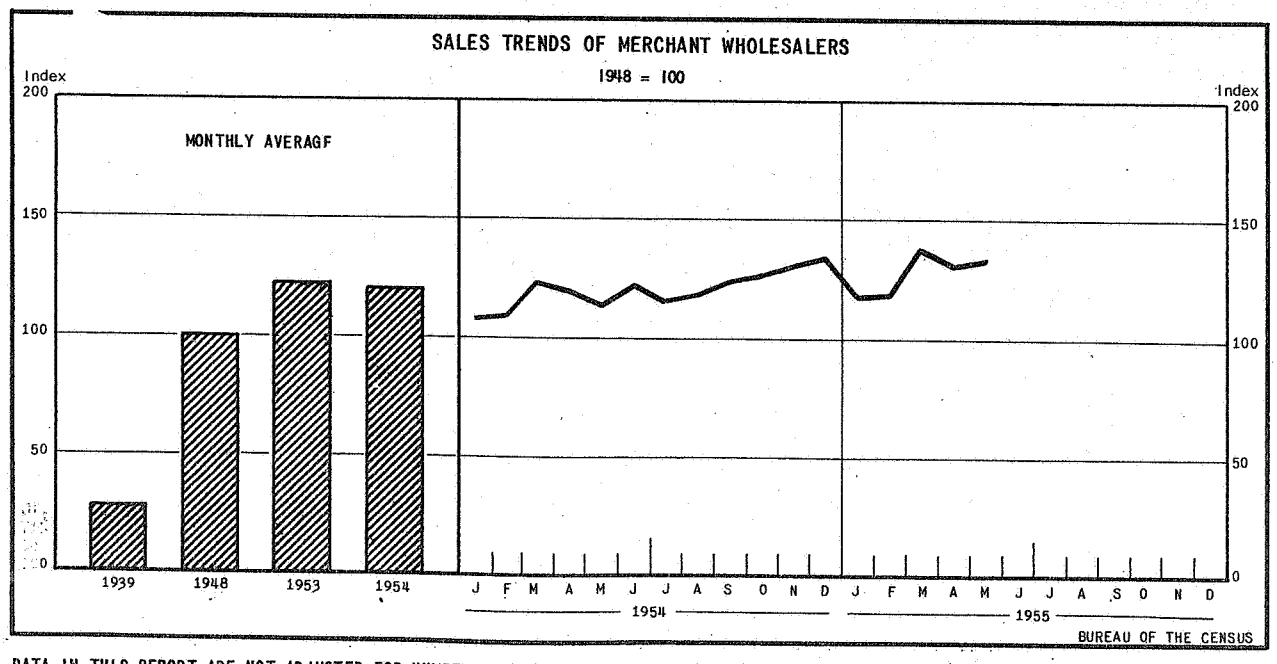
With one exception, all geographic divisions indicated small increases over the previous month and more substantial increases over last year's sales. The West South Central Division showed a slight (1%) decline from April but reported sales 12 percent higher than a year ago. The Mountain Division, up 6 percent, noted the largest increase over April, while the East North Central, up 17 percent, reflected the principal gain over May 1954.

Most trades indicated higher sales than a month earlier, with coal (12%), construction materials (10%), beer (10%), and electrical equipment (9%), showing the principal gains. The largest declines were reported for farm supplies (15%); iron and steel scrap (6%); and clothing, furnishings, and footwear (6%). Compared with a year ago, increased sales were reported in all but one trade--specialty-line groceries, which were off 6 percent. Iron and steel scrap--up 98 percent--and nonferrous metals--up 38 percent--again accounted for the most substantial gains over year-ago sales.

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of May were at about the same level as on April 30, but were 2 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Based on reports of establishments submitting inventory figures in conjunction with sales data, the May stock-sales ratio of 126 percent was 2 points below the previous month and 14 points lower than the ratio for May 1954.

Most trades showed only small changes in inventories. Coal, up 17 percent, and inedible farm products, down 16 percent, indicated the largest changes from April inventories. Substantial increases over year-ago stocks were indicated for iron and steel scrap (27%) and electrical appliances and equipment (17%); while a sharp drop (22%) was noted for specialty-line groceries.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

MAY 1955

Kind of business	Sales: Percent change, May 1955 from— May 1954	Sales: Percent change, May 1955 from— Apr. 1955	Sales: 5 mo. 1955 from 5 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting May 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, May 1955 from— May 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, May 1955 from— Apr. 1955	Number of establishments reporting May 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): May 1955	May 1954	Apr. 1955
Merchant wholesalers	+13	+2	+8	11,022	+2	0	8,032	126	140	128
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+2	+1	-3	1,244	-8	+1	940	91	100	92
General-line grocery wholesalers	+8	+1	+4	756	-2	0	623	116	124	116
Nonaffiliated[2]	+3	-1	+2	560	+2	-2	471	135	135	136
Voluntary groups	+6	0	+3	178	-8	+2	141	109	123	108
Retailer-cooperative	+24	+5	+13	18	-3	+1	11	72	94	75
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-6	+1	-13	251	-22	+5	167	89	109	89
Confectionery wholesalers	+1	-2	+3	93	+8	+2	45	82	81	78
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+3	+5	0	144	0	-2	105	23	21	24
Edible farm products distributors	+7	+2	+4	1,014	-1	+6	707	32	36	31
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+9	+1	+2	686	+1	+12	465	34	39	31
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+2	+3	+8	328	-6	-5	242	26	31	29
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+5	+4	+4	491	0	+4	432	100	106	98
Beer distributors	+9	+10	+4	122	+9	+12	105	53	56	52
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+3	0	+5	369	-3	+1	327	143	151	135
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+13	+1	+9	670	+5	0	474	143	156	146
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+14	+2	+9	318	+7	0	227	158	166	160
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+12	-4	+7	209	-1	-1	157	93	109	96
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+16	+5	+10	143	0	-1	90	166	196	180
Tobacco distributors	+11	+5	+4	258	+10	+4	122	63	61	63
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+17	-1	+6	401	+4	+1	206	211	251	205
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+4	-6	+3	104	-2	+3	60	244	286	240
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+19	+2	+4	165	+6	0	79	190	234	189
Piece goods converters	+28	-1	+12	132	+12	0	67	201	229	190
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	-2	+13	261	+1	-1	182	176	221	174
Furniture wholesalers	+25	+1	+16	112	-1	-1	69	167	221	161
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+14	-4	+2	149	+2	-1	113	180	221	180
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+12	0	+8	438	+4	+2	303	127	135	122
Paper wholesalers	+13	0	+8	277	+4	+2	228	119	128	115
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+10	-1	+7	161	+7	+3	75	198	201	186
Inedible farm products merchants	+6	+4	+1	207	-5	-16	148	123	135	149
Automotive wholesalers	+15	+1	+14	652	0	0	479	191	202	193
Motor-vehicle distributors	+17	+2	+19	71	+4	0	66	90	97	91
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+13	0	+12	581	-1	0	413	255	273	258
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+19	+5	+8	852	+10	+2	773	171	186	176
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+22	+9	+9	565	+5	0	543	157	176	171
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+16	0	+7	287	+17	+5	230	192	200	184
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+18	+5	+10	542	+5	0	412	225	255	234
Hardware wholesalers	+14	+5	+7	206	+3	0	169	234	263	244
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+23	+5	+15	336	+8	-1	243	209	240	218
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+26	+7	+20	515	+12	+1	341	111	119	117
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+28	+6	+22	304	+12	+1	210	127	135	128
Construction materials distributors	+23	+10	+15	211	+12	+1	131	86	93	97
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+18	+2	+10	1,923	+3	+2	1,464	168	198	168
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+30	+4	+14	108	+8	+2	78	197	254	202
Commercial machines, equipment, distributors	+7	-2	+8	163	-1	0	112	154	150	149
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+12	+5	+9	923	+5	+2	718	170	189	175
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+10	+3	+6	345	+8	+2	249	209	217	209
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+6	+1	+5	68	-2	-2	42	182	188	188
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+11	+3	+8	147	+2	-1	108	149	163	149
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+37	-2	+17	237	-1	+3	199	157	220	149
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+31	-2	+24	271	-3	-2	203	134	193	134
Iron, steel and products distributors	+28	-3	+22	195	-3	-2	146	169	248	166
Nonferrous metals distributors	+38	0	+28	76	-8	-3	57	71	86	73
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+66	-4	+60	295	+22	+4	200	60	89	55
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+98	-6	+88	167	+27	+6	117	64	102	58
Waste materials dealers	+33	-1	+32	128	+8	-1	83	50	67	50
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+7	0	+9	988	+3	-1	646	103	112	110
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+7	+3	+9	143	+6	+3	112	215	199	214
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+10	-4	+6	135	+9	+4	64	161	154	150
Coal wholesalers	+20	+12	+13	222	-6	+17	119	31	60	34
Farm supplies wholesalers	+5	-15	+6	189	+7	-14	153	77	82	75
Jewelry wholesalers	+11	-4	+10	135	+4	0	73	299	335	294

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

MAY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change			Number of establishments reporting May 1955	Percent change, May 1955 from—		Number of establishments reporting May 1955	May 1955	May 1954	Apr. 1955
	May 1955 from—		5 mo. 1955 from 5 mo. 1954							
	May 1954	Apr. 1955			May 1954	Apr. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+13	+2	+8	11,022	+2	0	8,032	126	140	128
New England	+14	+4	+9	597	-1	-2	381	108	129	118
Middle Atlantic	+10	+1	+7	2,425	0	0	1,472	111	122	112
East North Central	+17	+3	+10	2,198	+3	+1	1,669	111	126	112
West North Central	+14	+1	+6	1,032	+3	+3	844	138	147	136
South Atlantic	+14	+2	+11	1,097	+4	+1	830	143	163	145
East South Central	+9	+3	+4	485	-1	-3	375	155	170	163
West South Central	+12	-1	+4	1,353	+5	-1	1,090	165	182	166
Mountain	+14	+6	+11	384	+7	0	322	141	152	151
Pacific	+16	+2	+11	1,451	+3	+3	1,049	125	141	125
General-line grocery wholesalers	+8	+1	+4	756	-2	0	623	116	124	116
New England	+10	+4	+10	12	-9	-3	9	123	133	130
Middle Atlantic	+4	+3	0	60	-8	+1	49	109	129	112
East North Central	+6	+1	+4	121	-11	0	98	97	114	98
West North Central	+14	-1	+5	133	-2	+6	124	101	104	94
South Atlantic	+3	0	+2	59	-3	-2	45	155	169	157
East South Central	-3	-3	0	41	-3	-3	37	138	137	138
West South Central	+10	-2	+5	116	+8	-5	102	112	109	115
Mountain	+12	+1	+10	38	+29	+4	31	167	160	162
Pacific	+17	+4	+7	176	+3	0	128	99	106	104
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-6	+1	-13	251	-22	+5	167	89	109	89
Middle Atlantic	-14	-1	-21	113	-26	-5	69	67	72	72
East North Central	+8	+3	0	38	-15	+8	31	79	108	74
West North Central	-6	-3	-12	10	-42	+7	7	156	214	140
South Atlantic	+20	+7	-1	13	-5	-8	9	97	115	119
South Central	-15	+2	-13	14	-18	-7	5	96	107	110
Pacific	+7	+1	-2	38	-20	+3	31	82	117	83
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+9	+1	+2	686	+1	+12	465	34	39	31
New England	+27	+3	+7	22	+20	-15	14	29	30	36
Middle Atlantic	+5	-2	-1	129	+14	+15	75	31	28	27
East North Central	+7	+2	-1	153	+18	+24	96	37	35	30
West North Central	+11	+10	-3	40	-14	+4	32	55	71	66
South Atlantic	+17	+1	+13	113	-26	+4	91	25	51	25
South Central	+16	-1	+12	79	-21	+1	48	29	42	29
Pacific	+2	+1	+2	138	+5	+17	100	41	42	35
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+2	+3	+8	328	-6	-5	242	26	31	29
New England	-17	+25	-1	21	-18	-4	17	19	19	25
Middle Atlantic	+2	+5	+10	36	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
East North Central	0	+6	+8	43	-16	+4	29	20	26	22
West North Central	+6	+1	+11	58	-3	-8	52	22	24	24
South Atlantic	+1	-5	+7	31	+9	-3	19	28	30	29
South Central	+5	+5	+3	31	-23	-14	19	38	48	45
Mountain	-15	-3	+2	29	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+11	-1	+10	79	+8	-12	62	22	21	24
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+14	+2	+9	318	+7	0	227	158	166	160
New England	+17	+7	+9	21	+7	0	14	139	146	144
Middle Atlantic	+10	+5	+10	74	+4	+1	44	142	153	140
East North Central	+12	+2	+8	58	+3	0	40	144	141	147
West North Central	+6	+1	+4	23	+5	+1	22	198	201	196
South Atlantic	+16	+1	+11	43	+3	-1	36	179	203	185
East South Central	+14	+2	+7	14	+4	-3	11	185	204	194
West South Central	+15	+3	+8	42	+4	0	32	189	211	194
Mountain	+5	-4	+15	13	-8	-2	9	205	242	195
Pacific	+20	0	+13	30	+17	-1	19	138	136	140
Tobacco distributors	+11	+5	+4	258	+10	+4	122	63	61	63
New England	+28	+10	+11	29	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+4	+5	+1	38	+10	+4	19	76	62	76
East North Central	+12	+5	+6	53	+17	+5	37	62	60	63
West North Central	+8	0	+3	15	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
South Atlantic	+8	+2	+3	29	+2	-1	20	74	75	74
South Central	+23	+3	+7	36	+8	+1	17	51	59	52
Pacific	+6	+3	+3	44	+24	+10	10	67	55	61
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+17	-1	+6	401	+4	+1	206	211	251	205
New England	0	+7	+5	19	-23	+2	10	206	325	242
Middle Atlantic	+22	0	+6	277	+6	+1	127	199	240	188
East North Central	+10	-7	+5	26	+7	+6	15	163	170	156
West North Central	+6	-12	-5	17	+2	-1	11	275	297	273
South Atlantic	+10	-12	+8	21	+2	+3	16	226	326	198
South Central	+10	+11	+14	17	+8	+3	13	295	297	329
Pacific	+9	-2	+13	22	+12	-2	12	252	244	270
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	-2	+13	261	+1	-1	182	176	221	174
New England	+12	-2	+6	19	-7	-3	16	131	181	133
Middle Atlantic	+15	-5	+8	79	-6	-2	45	181	234	183
East North Central	+27	+3	+15	55	+9	+3	46	155	184	152
West North Central	+1	-22	+11	18	+6	-1	14	230	236	206
South Atlantic	+18	+4	+12	35	+5	-5	19	228	299	243
South Central	+25	+2	+20	24	+16	-2	22	232	255	229
Pacific	+21	-4	+29	24	-4	+1	14	169	257	155

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

MAY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change, May 1955 from-- May 1954	Sales: Percent change, May 1955 from-- Apr. 1955	Sales: 5 mo. 1955 from 5 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting May 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, May 1955 from-- May 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, May 1955 from-- Apr. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting May 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): May 1955	May 1954	Apr. 1955
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+13	0	+12	581	-1	0	413	255	273	258
Middle Atlantic	+10	0	+6	73	+3	0	49	184	180	198
East North Central	+28	-6	+21	102	+3	+2	77	264	269	244
West North Central	+10	0	+7	68	+6	-1	27	254	223	246
South Atlantic	+20	+2	+19	65	0	-1	44	239	280	245
East South Central	+21	+5	+16	57	+13	+1	55	270	274	264
West South Central	+6	+4	+2	84	-5	0	80	313	355	324
Mountain	+14	+4	+17	41	-8	-4	36	282	344	296
Pacific	+11	+4	+13	79	-13	-1	36	201	226	214
Electrical equipment and supplies wholesalers[3]	+22	+9	+9	565	+5	0	543	157	176	171
New England	+36	+24	+1	35	-5	0	31	134	205	227
Middle Atlantic	+3	+8	+1	69	-1	+2	66	147	146	155
East North Central	+36	+26	+3	146	-2	-4	143	157	187	183
West North Central	+23	+1	+8	61	+11	+6	59	178	188	168
South Atlantic	+16	+5	+13	83	+6	-2	80	158	181	171
East South Central	+30	+20	+19	35	+13	-6	35	144	178	183
West South Central	+25	0	+22	60	+15	+2	57	185	210	181
Mountain	+33	0	+11	23	+4	-7	23	167	213	181
Pacific	+28	+6	+21	53	+7	-4	49	138	160	151
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+16	0	+7	287	+17	+5	230	192	200	184
New England	+10	-9	0	19	+6	+1	15	165	180	187
Middle Atlantic	+2	+1	+4	68	+10	+6	48	182	186	175
East North Central	+20	-4	+7	56	+24	+6	51	190	190	169
West North Central	+34	+12	+7	24	+8	+7	19	159	187	169
South Atlantic	+20	-5	+10	45	+15	+5	36	228	232	210
East South Central	+35	-6	+13	8	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
West South Central	+10	0	+8	14	+23	+12	13	214	208	181
Pacific	+37	+7	+15	43	+19	+8	32	202	228	200
Hardware wholesalers	+14	+5	+7	206	+3	0	169	234	263	244
Middle Atlantic	+8	+3	+7	28	+11	+1	19	212	200	203
East North Central	+9	+3	+2	37	+4	0	33	207	215	218
West North Central	+12	+4	+1	22	+6	+2	21	251	267	254
South Atlantic	+23	+8	+10	27	+1	-3	15	270	344	306
East South Central	+16	+2	+13	24	0	+3	22	252	297	242
West South Central	+14	-1	+6	21	0	-1	17	219	275	224
Mountain	+25	+15	+21	11	0	-1	9	339	392	370
Pacific	+20	+7	+15	32	-1	+1	30	249	313	265
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+23	+5	+15	336	+8	-1	243	209	240	218
New England	+11	+2	+11	13	+9	+1	7	419	455	456
Middle Atlantic	+16	0	+7	106	+3	-2	65	185	229	193
East North Central	+29	+4	+13	53	+11	-2	48	177	203	188
West North Central	+5	-2	+10	30	+8	+2	29	256	230	245
South Atlantic	+30	+10	+21	43	+12	+1	32	202	229	221
South Central	+20	+21	+15	45	+5	+2	30	265	278	272
Pacific	+26	+4	+29	38	+10	0	27	246	283	250
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+26	+7	+20	515	+12	+1	341	111	119	117
New England	+43	+21	+19	24	+12	0	21	91	107	94
Middle Atlantic	+20	+8	+14	115	+1	-2	74	98	107	107
East North Central	+26	+9	+23	119	+23	+1	52	130	124	138
West North Central	+26	+3	+15	39	+25	+2	27	95	92	95
South Atlantic	+40	+6	+26	39	+1	0	28	108	119	114
South Central	+33	+7	+20	77	+13	+2	57	134	161	148
Pacific	+28	+5	+27	85	+13	+7	66	121	144	119
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+12	+5	+9	923	+5	+2	718	170	189	175
New England	+22	+9	+12	15	+23	+7	6	100	116	143
Middle Atlantic	+7	+7	+10	74	+2	+1	44	159	191	166
East North Central	+11	+2	+14	112	-11	0	79	146	195	152
West North Central	+7	+14	+9	75	+15	+4	68	131	120	140
South Atlantic	0	-4	+11	37	+4	+4	29	151	138	137
South Central	+20	+5	+5	488	+12	+2	390	211	221	210
Mountain	+19	+5	+14	55	+2	+2	49	164	241	168
Pacific	+8	-4	+2	67	-2	+1	53	259	248	243

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wire supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight.

Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY
WHOLESALE TRADE
REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

JUNE 1955

FOR RELEASE
AUGUST 5, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

June 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers were up 4 percent over May and were 11 percent higher than June a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first half of 1955 were 9 percent higher than sales in the comparable period of 1954.

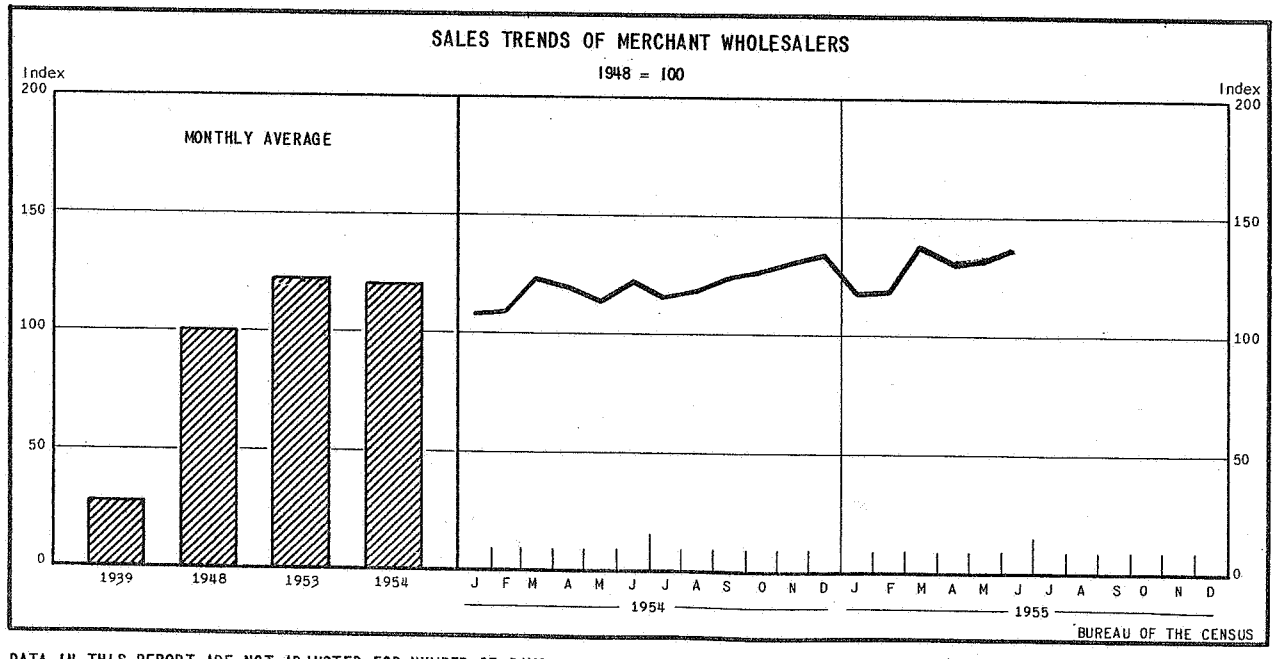
Most trades indicated moderate increases in sales over the previous month with wine, and distilled spirits (14%) showing the principal gain. The sharpest decline, 22 percent, was noted for farm supplies. Other declines (1% to 3%) were reported for furniture, home furnishings, inedible farm products, jewelry, and coal. Compared with a year ago, sales declines were reported in only three trades--inedible farm products (10%), farm supplies (7%), and specialty-line grocers (3%)--while fresh fruit and vegetables showed no change from a year ago. All other trades reflected higher sales than a year ago with durable goods trades showing the larger gains. For the sixth consecutive month, iron and steel scrap accounted for the most substantial gain (70%) over year-ago sales. First-half 1955 sales were well ahead of a year ago in all but two trades--specialty-line grocers (-9%) and inedible farm products (-1%).

The Mountain Division--up 11 percent--indicated the principal increase over previous month sales. Most other divisions reported gains ranging from 3 to 6 percent. The East South Central Division (-1%) and the West North Central Division showed virtually no change from a month earlier. Compared with a year ago, sales gains were experienced in all but one geographic division--New England--which reported sales at about the same level as in June a year ago.

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of June decreased slightly (1%) from the previous month, but were 3 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Based on reports of establishments submitting inventory figures in conjunction with sales data, the June stock-sales ratio of 116 percent was 6 points below the previous month and 8 points below the ratio for June 1954.

Inventories of coal wholesalers were up 17 percent over May, a normal increase for this trade. All other trades showed only small changes from the previous month (under 6%). Larger changes, most of them increases, were reported in comparison with year-ago inventories. Motor-vehicle distributors indicated the largest increase (17%) while specialty-line grocers (-23%) and iron and steel scrap dealers (-20%) noted the sharpest reduction in stocks.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JUNE 1955

Kind of business	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change			Number of establishments reporting June 1955	Percent change, June 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting June 1955	June 1955	June 1954	May 1955
	June 1955 from--		6 mo. 1955 from 6 mo. 1954							
	June 1954	May 1955			June 1954	May 1955				
Merchant wholesalers	+11	+4	+9	11,375	+3	-1	8,132	116	124	122
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	r+2	r+4	-1	1,362	-9	-1	1,045	77	84	80
General-line grocery wholesalers	+5	+4	+4	813	-2	-2	676	105	109	113
Nonaffiliated[2]	+4	+3	+2	616	-4	-2	529	114	116	122
Voluntary groups	+8	+6	+4	182	-3	-3	139	89	102	97
Retailer-cooperative	+4	+3	+12	15	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-3	+4	-9	293	-23	+1	187	75	82	76
Confectionery wholesalers	+6	+4	+3	97	+12	0	57	69	66	72
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+7	+4	+2	159	+5	-5	125	18	20	19
Edible farm products distributors	+3	+7	+4	990	r+8	0	670	r28	r28	r30
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+7	+6	+3	668	+8	+2	448	35	35	36
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	0	+8	+6	322	+5	-6	222	18	16	21
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+9	+13	+5	462	+4	+2	414	96	107	107
Beer distributors	+5	+11	+4	110	+7	+3	94	58	58	62
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+13	+14	+6	352	+2	+2	320	124	156	144
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+11	+2	+9	645	+8	+2	447	139	146	142
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	+1	+9	303	+6	-1	224	160	161	164
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+24	+4	+10	196	+10	+4	142	87	98	86
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+19	+9	+12	146	+13	-2	81	149	170	168
Tobacco distributors	+7	+9	+5	274	+5	0	124	57	60	64
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+12	+3	+7	432	+3	-1	220	196	225	201
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+11	0	+4	107	0	0	54	196	244	195
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	+4	+4	188	+2	+1	92	211	225	207
Piece goods converters	+20	+4	+13	137	+10	-3	74	177	204	199
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+19	-2	+14	278	+9	+1	162	158	175	159
Furniture wholesalers	+14	-1	+16	86	-3	+3	55	147	169	163
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+21	-3	+13	192	+14	+1	107	162	178	158
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+11	+6	+9	516	+5	0	372	114	121	120
Paper wholesalers	+11	+6	+9	342	+6	0	275	107	114	113
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+11	+6	+7	174	+1	0	97	208	221	220
Inedible farm products merchants	-10	-1	-1	253	-7	-6	192	117	124	122
Automotive wholesalers	+19	+4	+15	624	+11	0	423	158	164	163
Motor-vehicle distributors	+31	+5	+21	65	+17	0	50	94	112	95
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+13	+7	+12	559	+9	0	373	214	206	223
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+8	+4	+8	896	+13	-2	779	159	146	170
Electric equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+10	+6	+9	581	+12	-1	536	147	140	159
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+4	+4	+7	315	+14	-3	243	174	153	184
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+8	+3	+10	581	+6	+2	413	225	224	228
Hardware wholesalers	+7	+3	+7	225	+5	+3	180	261	265	260
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+9	+4	+13	356	+8	0	233	175	171	182
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+17	+4	+19	530	+7	-3	346	105	109	113
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+18	+4	+22	299	+9	-2	210	119	122	128
Construction materials distributors	+16	+4	+15	231	+1	-5	136	74	82	82
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+15	+5	+11	1,928	+4	0	1,518	162	184	172
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+13	+8	+14	115	+2	0	76	136	140	151
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+16	+6	+9	112	-6	0	84	139	177	147
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses[4]	+12	+5	+9	884	+4	-1	718	166	190	179
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+12	+6	+9	403	+9	-1	313	189	199	205
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+12	+9	+12	73	+6	0	34	121	121	130
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+11	+4	+8	162	0	+2	119	168	165	170
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+20	+5	+18	252	+6	+1	208	162	187	166
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+34	+3	+26	318	-3	+1	235	130	183	131
Iron, steel and products distributors	+37	+4	+25	224	-3	+1	170	156	235	157
Nonferrous metals distributors	+28	+2	+28	94	-3	-1	65	67	84	71
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+58	+2	+59	288	-15	-3	188	54	107	56
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+70	0	+84	163	-20	-5	113	60	126	59
Waste materials dealers	+43	+5	+34	125	-1	+5	75	45	71	48
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+10	-2	+9	990	0	+3	584	100	101	93
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+1	+10	+7	144	-3	+3	105	168	181	172
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+12	+1	+7	121	-2	+4	39	99	111	89
Coal wholesalers	+28	-2	+16	223	0	+17	119	46	40	58
Farm supplies wholesalers	-7	-22	+4	204	+11	+2	161	112	76	83
Jewelry wholesalers	+3	-2	+9	118	-1	+6	55	281	268	231

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

JUNE 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change, June 1955 from-- June 1954	Sales: Percent change, June 1955 from-- May 1955	Sales: Percent change, 6 mo. 1955 from 6 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting June 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, June 1955 from-- June 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, June 1955 from-- May 1955	Number of establishments reporting June 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): June 1955	June 1954	May 1955
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+11	+4	+9	11,375	+3	-1	8,132	116	124	122
New England	0	+3	+7	563	-3	+3	332	128	128	131
Middle Atlantic	+8	+6	+7	2,524	-1	0	1,505	103	113	105
East North Central	+14	+5	+11	2,317	+5	+1	1,783	108	118	112
West North Central	+9	0	+6	1,096	+5	0	829	128	132	128
South Atlantic	+14	+3	+12	1,191	+7	-4	896	126	133	132
East South Central	+9	-1	+5	486	+5	-5	376	141	139	147
West South Central	+9	+3	+5	1,326	+1	-1	1,067	151	157	158
Mountain	+14	+11	+13	414	+13	-2	338	164	153	164
Pacific	+16	+6	+12	1,458	+6	0	1,006	107	115	117
General-line grocery wholesalers	+5	+4	+4	813	-2	-2	676	105	109	113
Middle Atlantic	-6	-3	-1	88	-5	0	80	108	111	112
East North Central	+6	+5	+5	120	+7	0	98	103	106	110
West North Central	+7	+5	+5	143	-5	-2	132	102	112	109
South Atlantic	+11	+6	+4	73	+5	-7	51	118	126	134
East South Central	-10	-5	-1	37	0	-5	34	117	123	120
West South Central	+4	+5	+5	123	0	-2	112	110	115	117
Mountain	+7	+5	+10	43	-9	-2	36	280	153	300
Pacific	+7	+7	+7	175	-15	-2	128	74	90	83
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-3	+4	-9	293	-23	+1	187	75	82	76
New England	-2	+3	0	21	-60	+6	10	66	122	66
Middle Atlantic	-13	0	-16	125	-21	+1	78	61	65	59
East North Central	+11	+7	+2	43	-2	+7	34	76	87	74
West North Central	-20	-14	-14	14	-35	0	13	132	185	132
South Atlantic	+34	+27	+9	29	-13	-2	15	60	98	71
South Central	+7	+9	-10	19	-40	+1	11	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	-6	+1	-3	41	-26	-6	25	59	71	58
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+7	+6	+3	668	+8	+2	448	35	35	36
New England	-4	0	+6	18	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+2	+8	-1	129	-1	+1	70	29	31	30
East North Central	+3	+6	0	134	+25	+5	86	37	31	37
West North Central	+41	+7	+6	47	+11	+12	32	118	133	103
South Atlantic	+15	+6	+13	108	-10	-2	85	22	28	25
South Central	+14	+6	+12	84	-10	-2	51	17	42	20
Pacific	+2	+2	+2	137	+13	-2	105	33	30	35
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	0	+8	+6	322	+5	-6	222	18	16	21
New England	-11	-2	-2	22	+8	-16	15	6	3	7
Middle Atlantic	-5	+7	+6	42	+4	-7	20	17	16	22
East North Central	+1	+15	+6	54	+3	-9	36	11	9	15
West North Central	-15	+6	+8	47	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
South Atlantic	+4	+8	+6	34	+9	-3	20	23	22	23
South Central	+5	-4	+4	32	+2	-1	17	28	34	33
Pacific	+12	+10	+10	64	+10	-7	49	23	24	26
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	+1	+9	303	+6	-1	224	160	161	164
New England	+4	+5	+9	19	+3	-1	15	146	147	154
Middle Atlantic	0	-1	+8	74	-1	-1	47	163	163	162
East North Central	+7	+3	+8	49	0	-3	37	136	140	142
West North Central	+2	0	+4	24	+9	0	21	136	125	133
South Atlantic	+15	+2	+11	44	+30	-1	34	175	158	180
East South Central	+6	0	+7	13	+5	+2	12	216	218	211
West South Central	+11	-1	+8	35	+3	-3	29	202	218	206
Mountain	+16	+3	+15	15	+11	-3	11	144	203	153
Pacific	+7	+2	+12	30	+10	+1	18	149	142	151
Tobacco distributors	+7	+9	+5	274	+5	0	124	57	60	64
New England	+2	+12	+9	22	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	0	+7	+1	53	+8	+2	23	58	51	61
East North Central	+3	+9	+5	50	+10	-1	31	73	68	82
West North Central	+10	+10	+5	25	+8	+5	17	47	49	50
South Atlantic	+19	+13	+6	28	+4	-6	21	59	69	73
South Central	+4	0	+6	40	-4	-11	14	44	47	52
Pacific	+41	+22	+12	39	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+12	+3	+7	432	+3	-1	220	196	225	201
New England	+33	-6	+7	23	+1	+5	12	141	212	129
Middle Atlantic	+10	+5	+7	276	+8	0	122	191	211	202
East North Central	+15	-5	+8	51	-13	-3	35	209	278	190
West North Central	+25	+16	-1	17	+2	-6	12	226	278	286
South Atlantic	+16	-11	+9	20	-2	+2	15	210	249	185
South Central	-5	-8	+12	18	0	0	14	239	232	224
Pacific	+8	-1	+12	25	+17	-2	8	174	141	179
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+19	-2	+14	278	+9	+1	162	158	175	159
Middle Atlantic	+17	-6	+10	91	+16	+6	39	140	153	130
East North Central	+32	+1	+19	64	+3	-8	42	129	170	148
West North Central	+27	+12	+14	19	+22	+3	16	178	205	200
South Atlantic	+11	+7	+12	36	-10	+3	17	323	395	307
South Central	+10	-15	+18	30	+12	+3	25	227	220	201
Pacific	+13	-2	+26	25	+2	0	15	164	145	167

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

JUNE 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change, June 1955 from-- June 1954	Sales: Percent change, June 1955 from-- May 1955	Sales: 6 mo. 1955 from 6 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting June 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, June 1955 from-- June 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, June 1955 from-- May 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting June 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): June 1955	June 1954	May 1955
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+13	+7	+12	559	+9	0	373	214	206	223
Middle Atlantic	+15	+8	+8	91	0	-2	44	203	203	213
East North Central	+11	+8	+19	98	+1	+5	80	165	164	166
West North Central	+16	+7	+9	61	+16	-2	20	244	229	280
South Atlantic	+15	+5	+18	69	+16	-2	46	220	207	231
East South Central	+17	+4	+17	72	+17	+2	69	305	285	307
West South Central	+1	+5	+2	32	+1	-1	27	169	168	175
Mountain	+10	-2	+16	43	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+18	+7	+14	78	+18	+1	45	225	269	261
Electrical equipment and supplies wholesalers[3]	+10	+6	+9	581	+12	-1	536	147	140	159
New England	-4	+2	0	37	+4	0	25	143	114	139
Middle Atlantic	+18	+16	+4	73	+16	0	64	127	124	150
East North Central	+3	+10	+3	159	+8	-1	150	159	143	175
West North Central	0	+3	+7	60	+19	0	57	187	159	189
South Atlantic	+18	-1	+14	81	+10	-4	80	147	156	162
East South Central	+4	-6	+17	32	+35	0	32	174	135	163
West South Central	+9	-6	+19	63	0	-3	60	138	151	134
Mountain	+30	+10	+18	22	+9	-4	22	131	161	151
Pacific	+24	+4	+22	54	+32	-2	46	136	135	153
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+4	+4	+7	315	+14	-3	243	174	153	184
New England	+12	+22	+3	27	+20	+2	20	117	110	172
Middle Atlantic	0	+11	+3	68	-7	-7	42	183	192	226
East North Central	-1	+8	+5	68	+24	-3	58	176	135	158
West North Central	-5	+1	+4	21	+10	-1	15	214	173	204
South Atlantic	+4	+1	+9	50	+16	-1	39	195	172	200
East South Central	-1	-7	+9	11	+32	-3	11	174	132	168
West South Central	+3	+4	+7	20	+16	+1	19	193	145	197
Pacific	+36	+8	+19	45	+28	-6	34	156	156	178
Hardware wholesalers	+7	+3	+7	225	+5	+3	180	261	265	260
Middle Atlantic	+7	+6	+7	33	+2	-1	21	245	255	259
East North Central	+3	-1	+2	41	-1	0	31	225	229	220
West North Central	-2	+1	0	17	+7	+2	16	277	243	277
South Atlantic	+9	-1	+10	24	+6	+3	18	300	312	279
East South Central	+9	+2	+12	23	+3	+4	21	244	243	232
West South Central	+7	+3	+6	27	+1	0	25	253	282	264
Mountain	+23	+4	+22	23	+31	-3	19	280	266	302
Pacific	+14	+12	+15	27	+2	+11	24	274	304	275
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+9	+4	+13	356	+8	0	233	175	171	182
New England	+14	+8	+12	16	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+1	+8	+6	105	+1	+1	56	173	186	207
East North Central	+14	+7	+13	61	+16	+2	45	168	152	168
West North Central	+2	+5	+8	32	+5	+1	29	169	159	176
South Atlantic	+16	+3	+20	53	+12	-3	45	182	196	190
South Central	+10	-5	+14	44	+13	0	37	201	177	183
Pacific	+10	-1	+24	34	0	-2	8	121	106	134
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+17	+4	+19	530	+7	-3	346	105	109	113
New England	+19	+9	+19	16	-9	-4	15	137	170	154
Middle Atlantic	+10	+2	+13	97	+6	-2	67	123	137	131
East North Central	+23	+10	+23	112	-1	+2	56	69	87	76
West North Central	+23	+7	+17	56	+21	-4	31	137	68	139
South Atlantic	+42	+3	+30	53	+29	-6	38	77	85	87
South Central	+6	-3	+17	78	+5	+4	51	151	141	135
Pacific	+9	-1	+23	101	+11	-8	72	101	89	112
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+12	+5	+9	884	+4	-1	718	166	190	179
Middle Atlantic	+1	+1	+9	58	+13	-1	38	160	166	171
East North Central	+28	+1	+16	99	-2	-2	85	193	269	199
West North Central	+6	+2	+8	42	+10	+1	35	183	174	172
South Atlantic	-4	-2	+7	38	0	+1	35	178	159	173
South Central	+18	+6	+8	491	+3	-1	417	155	182	168
Mountain	+16	+5	+14	66	+4	-2	49	180	155	246
Pacific	+17	+13	+5	79	+13	0	55	116	118	135

x Insufficient data to show separately. r Revised from preliminary release, issued August 2, 1955.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wire supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight. Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

JULY 1955

FOR RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 6, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

July 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers were down 7 percent from June but were 8 percent higher than July a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first 7 months of 1955 were 8 percent higher than sales in the comparable period of 1954.

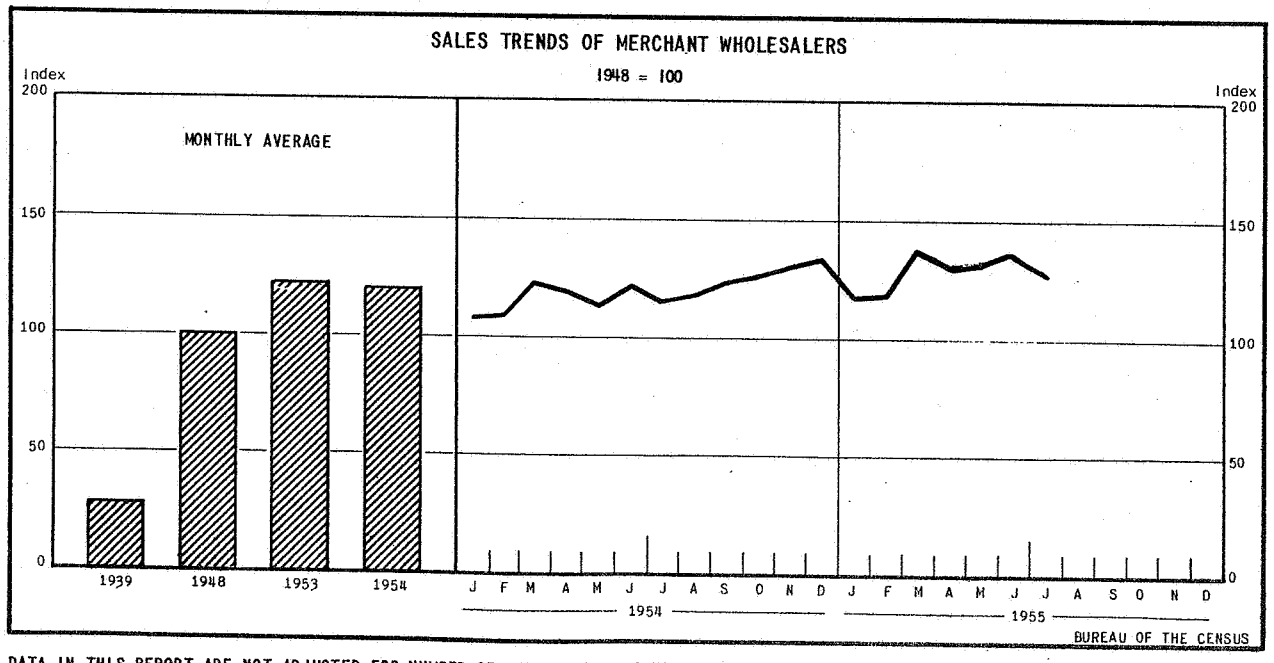
Piece goods converters, down 31 percent, noted the sharpest drop below June sales. Other large declines were shown by industrial chemicals (21%), farm supplies (24%), and jewelry (28%). Inedible farm products and books, periodicals, newspapers, each up 14 percent, led the six trades reporting gains. Compared with July sales a year ago, all but seven trades reported higher sales, with durable goods trades showing the larger gains. For the seventh consecutive month, iron and steel scrap accounted for the most substantial gain (58%) over year-ago sales. Jewelry, off 11 percent, reflected the largest decline.

The West North Central Division--up 3 percent--showed the only increase in sales over the previous month. All other divisions indicated declines ranging from 5 to 11 percent. All but one geographic division--East South Central (down 1%)--experienced sales increases over a year ago, the largest gain (12%) being reported in the East North Central Division.

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of July were at about the same level as a month earlier, but were slightly (1%) above stocks on hand a year ago. Based on reports of establishments submitting inventory figures in conjunction with sales data, the July stock-sales ratio of 119 percent was 7 points above the previous month, but 10 points below the ratio for July 1954.

Most trades showed only small changes in inventories. Inedible farm products, up 19 percent, and coal, up 18 percent, reflected substantially larger inventories than a month earlier, while beer showed a reduction of 12 percent in the same period. Specialty-line grocers reported the sharpest decrease (28%) from year-ago inventories. However, there were seven trades with inventories 12 to 24 percent larger than stocks on hand last July.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy--10¢, annual subscription--$1.00

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JULY 1955

Kind of business	Sales: Percent change, July 1955 from-- July 1954	Sales: Percent change, July 1955 from-- June 1955	Sales: 7 mo. 1955 from 7 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting, July 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, July 1955 from-- July 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, July 1955 from-- June 1955	Number of establishments reporting, July 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): July 1955	July 1954	June 1955
Merchant wholesalers	+8	-7	+8	11,110	+1	0	8,083	119	129	112
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-1	-7	-1	1,308	-10	+1	999	88	97	81
General-line grocery wholesalers	+1	-8	+4	783	+4	+2	649	111	107	102
Nonaffiliated[2]	-2	-8	+1	591	+3	+4	507	128	126	117
Voluntary groups	+5	-5	+4	174	+3	+1	133	90	92	87
Retailer-cooperative	+6	-9	+10	19	+8	-1	10	88	84	78
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-4	-4	-9	291	-28	0	191	89	126	89
Confectionery wholesalers	+1	-11	+3	85	+5	-4	44	87	83	87
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+2	-12	+2	148	-6	-2	114	22	24	20
Edible farm products distributors	+2	-7	+4	868	+7	-2	598	30	29	29
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+4	-5	+3	662	+12	0	450	36	34	34
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	0	-10	+5	206	-6	-7	148	19	21	19
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+2	-6	+5	486	-1	-4	445	98	105	96
Beer distributors	+3	+7	+4	109	+4	-12	98	50	48	61
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+1	-15	+6	377	-3	-1	347	143	168	122
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+7	-12	+9	794	-1	-1	557	142	149	123
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	-7	+8	336	0	-1	237	166	173	155
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+8	-21	+9	322	-3	-2	256	94	89	71
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+11	-11	+11	136	+1	+1	64	147	165	135
Tobacco distributors	0	-5	+4	263	+1	-1	126	51	52	48
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+7	-17	+7	379	+6	+3	192	228	230	194
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+3	-6	+4	91	0	+4	47	203	214	185
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+8	-13	+5	166	+5	+3	84	238	249	199
Piece goods converters	+10	-31	+13	122	+17	+2	61	256	217	202
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+11	-11	+14	265	+5	0	172	206	209	186
Furniture wholesalers	+11	-8	+15	106	+1	-4	64	183	201	181
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+10	-13	+13	159	+7	+1	108	216	211	188
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+2	-12	+8	457	+3	-2	297	119	119	109
Paper wholesalers	+1	-12	+8	281	+3	-2	213	112	113	104
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+9	-9	+8	176	+4	+1	84	176	179	158
Inedible farm products merchants	+9	+14	0	230	-11	+19	162	103	139	107
Automotive wholesalers	+8	-7	+14	627	+2	-2	431	158	167	149
Motor-vehicle distributors	+11	-14	+20	70	+9	-3	53	100	99	91
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+7	-4	+11	557	0	-1	378	196	204	190
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+17	+8	+9	871	+9	-7	768	137	150	161
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+14	+4	+10	552	+9	-6	522	133	140	147
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+20	+13	+9	319	+8	-9	246	141	161	177
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+5	-7	+9	578	+7	-1	427	215	208	204
Hardware wholesalers	+5	-8	+7	214	+4	-1	179	250	252	233
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+5	-6	+12	364	+13	-1	248	174	158	169
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+14	-10	+18	560	+16	-2	396	102	97	92
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+17	-9	+21	327	+15	-3	256	111	108	103
Construction materials distributors	+8	-13	+13	233	+17	-1	140	86	78	74
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+10	-9	+11	1,803	+1	+1	1,475	171	185	154
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+6	+1	+12	104	-6	-8	79	104	109	113
Commercial machines, equipment, distributors	+11	-14	+9	150	+8	-1	101	154	155	130
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+9	-7	+9	737	+3	+1	634	169	178	157
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+4	-6	+9	398	+8	-1	325	223	213	213
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+13	-8	+13	55	+4	0	32	183	178	171
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+12	-16	+9	165	+1	+4	129	160	177	130
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+15	-13	+17	249	-3	+2	207	205	230	169
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+31	-11	+27	328	-9	0	232	129	199	117
Iron, steel and products distributors	+39	-9	+27	233	-9	0	165	147	242	136
Nonferrous metals distributors	+16	-11	+26	95	-2	+1	67	36	89	32
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+49	-9	+58	280	+19	-1	194	59	79	51
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+58	-9	+79	148	+14	-4	101	50	77	43
Waste materials dealers	+39	-10	+34	132	+24	+2	93	69	80	61
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+9	-12	+9	1,013	+2	+7	612	125	126	106
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	-2	-7	+6	135	+3	+2	94	205	171	188
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+5	+14	+7	113	-6	+2	35	131	123	165
Coal wholesalers	+36	-4	+19	230	+3	+18	120	65	86	51
Farm supplies wholesalers	-7	-24	+3	204	-6	+9	136	128	138	92
Jewelry wholesalers	-11	-28	+7	137	-4	+4	78	459	380	303

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

JULY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change			Number of establishments reporting, July 1955	Percent change, July 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting, July 1955	July 1955	July 1954	June 1955
	July 1955 from--		7 mo. 1955 from 7 mo. 1954		July 1954	June 1955				
	July 1954	June 1955								
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+8	-7	+8	11,110	+1	0	8,083	119	129	112
New England	+6	-8	+7	525	-2	-3	331	127	141	118
Middle Atlantic	+6	-11	+7	2,513	0	-1	1,511	108	117	98
East North Central	+12	-7	+11	2,226	+4	0	1,718	102	113	95
West North Central	+9	+3	+7	1,052	+3	+3	834	133	143	136
South Atlantic	+13	-7	+12	1,149	0	-1	868	132	154	128
East South Central	-1	-7	+4	614	+5	-3	505	142	148	134
West South Central	+2	-5	+5	1,273	+4	-1	1,044	147	145	144
Mountain	+10	-6	+12	379	+1	-2	303	144	152	137
Pacific	+10	-8	+12	1,379	-1	+1	969	117	126	110
General-line grocery wholesalers	+1	-8	+4	783	+4	+2	649	111	107	102
Middle Atlantic	-2	-13	-1	83	+3	-5	75	114	99	105
East North Central	0	-10	+4	100	-2	+1	81	109	120	100
West North Central	-2	-2	+4	135	-3	0	130	94	94	93
South Atlantic	+1	-6	+3	60	+12	+5	45	139	145	119
East South Central	-8	-8	-2	55	+5	+12	45	119	114	92
West South Central	-1	-5	+4	122	+3	+1	111	117	105	109
Mountain	+26	+1	+12	40	+3	-3	33	88	101	89
Pacific	+10	-5	+8	171	+13	+7	124	87	85	83
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-4	-4	-9	291	-28	0	191	89	126	89
New England	-9	-3	-1	15	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	-11	-4	-15	117	-23	-9	79	61	71	63
East North Central	-11	-1	0	46	-21	+7	24	92	115	84
West North Central	+27	-1	-10	11	-59	-2	7	107	422	101
South Atlantic	+36	+11	+14	30	-57	-1	21	107	214	129
South Central	0	-2	-9	33	0	+1	29	133	132	132
Pacific	-14	-17	-5	37	-38	+12	26	110	199	103
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+4	-5	+3	662	+12	0	450	36	34	34
New England	-14	-5	+4	19	-29	-28	12	22	24	26
Middle Atlantic	+3	-11	0	115	+13	+4	55	36	33	31
East North Central	+5	-3	0	145	+30	-3	97	36	29	35
West North Central	-4	-4	+5	46	-6	-4	41	69	69	68
South Atlantic	+7	0	+12	117	-8	-6	97	27	31	28
South Central	+4	-11	+11	73	+14	+8	42	27	21	20
Pacific	+7	+3	+3	132	+5	+4	98	35	37	36
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	0	-10	+5	206	-6	-7	148	19	21	19
New England	+8	+8	0	22	-11	-9	21	30	37	36
Middle Atlantic	+10	-9	+7	33	-31	-1	19	11	14	10
East North Central	-5	-14	+4	34	+20	-11	28	22	17	22
West North Central	-19	-4	+3	13	-17	+1	10	17	18	14
South Atlantic	+9	-10	+7	30	0	-5	14	10	17	11
South Central	-7	-19	+2	35	-24	-14	26	26	40	26
Pacific	0	-11	+9	22	+31	+7	17	13	12	13
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	-7	+8	336	0	-1	237	166	173	155
New England	+3	-8	+8	16	0	-1	13	150	154	141
Middle Atlantic	+6	-7	+8	68	0	+1	40	151	152	141
East North Central	+5	-8	+7	63	-5	-2	43	139	147	127
West North Central	+1	-11	+3	20	0	+1	18	179	174	164
South Atlantic	+10	-2	+11	41	0	0	33	172	188	167
East South Central	0	-3	+6	19	0	-3	15	209	200	209
West South Central	+6	-5	+8	58	0	+3	41	204	239	186
Mountain	+2	-13	+14	19	-2	-11	14	196	199	191
Pacific	+8	-8	+12	33	+6	-3	21	160	166	147
Tobacco distributors	0	-5	+4	263	+1	-1	126	51	52	48
New England	+2	+2	+8	24	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	0	-2	+1	46	+2	-2	25	46	42	46
East North Central	+10	-5	+6	45	+6	-2	31	36	44	36
West North Central	+2	-3	+4	28	-2	-7	20	62	65	65
South Atlantic	-11	-10	+3	32	+12	+6	26	71	63	60
South Central	-8	-10	+5	40	-12	0	15	59	54	51
Pacific	0	-5	+10	39	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+7	-17	+7	379	+6	+3	192	228	230	194
New England	-9	-19	+6	14	-3	-6	9	159	183	132
Middle Atlantic	+7	-21	+7	261	+11	+5	117	239	238	188
East North Central	+20	+5	+10	25	+4	0	15	153	116	182
West North Central	-16	+4	-3	20	-11	-2	15	291	289	297
South Atlantic	+24	0	+12	24	+8	+6	17	188	218	206
South Central	0	+17	+11	22	+3	+3	15	212	194	235
Pacific	+12	-21	+12	14	+3	-2	6	247	187	199
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+11	-11	+14	265	+5	0	172	206	209	186
Middle Atlantic	+9	-5	+10	79	+1	+2	42	198	207	197
East North Central	+10	-16	+17	60	+8	+2	51	178	180	150
West North Central	-9	-23	+12	19	+6	+2	15	303	306	223
South Atlantic	+8	-14	+11	27	-10	-6	9	307	367	261
South Central	+11	-4	+17	30	+21	+3	27	194	188	188
Pacific	+30	-16	+26	33	-2	-7	13	185	167	159

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

JULY 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change: July 1955 from--: July 1954	Sales: Percent change: July 1955 from--: June 1955	Sales: Percent change: 7 mo. 1955 from 7 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting July 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, July 1955 from--: July 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, July 1955 from--: June 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting July 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): July 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): July 1954	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): June 1955
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+7	-4	+11	557	0	-1	378	196	204	190
New England	+2	-8	+12	13	+6	-2	9	244	225	227
Middle Atlantic	+7	-4	+8	86	-16	+1	50	152	164	150
East North Central	+7	-6	+17	102	-5	-1	73	166	187	154
West North Central	+3	-4	+8	52	0	+1	9	265	258	240
South Atlantic	+25	-6	+19	53	+7	-2	39	209	229	204
East South Central	+2	+1	+14	76	+12	-5	75	216	229	230
West South Central	-3	-2	+1	41	-5	-3	29	232	218	245
Mountain	+15	-6	+16	46	+2	-2	40	184	189	173
Pacific	+7	-1	+13	88	+5	+1	54	198	202	189
Electrical equipment and supplies wholesalers[3]	+14	+4	+10	552	+9	-6	522	133	140	147
New England	+18	+10	+1	32	-18	-15	32	110	162	143
Middle Atlantic	+26	+6	+6	68	-7	-3	62	144	191	155
East North Central	+15	+1	+5	155	+10	-7	146	121	125	131
West North Central	+1	+8	+5	62	+9	+1	59	149	142	179
South Atlantic	+12	+5	+14	80	+8	-6	76	135	141	151
East South Central	+5	+7	+14	32	+23	-3	28	122	128	137
West South Central	+5	+1	+17	55	+22	-9	53	159	133	178
Mountain	+9	-4	+17	21	+15	-4	21	149	141	149
Pacific	+28	+1	+22	48	+34	-2	46	120	118	126
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+20	+13	+9	319	+8	-9	246	141	161	177
New England	+29	+29	+8	14	-2	-3	11	102	153	119
Middle Atlantic	+35	+12	+8	85	+2	-11	59	138	193	183
East North Central	+21	+8	+7	69	+8	-9	62	140	155	170
West North Central	-6	+23	+2	35	+10	-15	25	143	130	204
South Atlantic	+16	+12	+10	44	+8	0	35	166	192	200
East South Central	+49	+29	+17	12	+18	0	9	104	126	133
West South Central	+7	+2	+7	17	+23	-13	15	195	162	230
Pacific	+6	+4	+16	39	+13	-13	27	118	115	139
Hardware wholesalers	+5	-8	+7	214	+4	-1	179	250	252	233
Middle Atlantic	+6	-17	+7	34	-3	-1	19	209	244	177
East North Central	+8	-3	+3	36	+9	0	35	265	257	248
West North Central	-7	-6	-1	23	+5	-2	22	280	250	269
South Atlantic	0	-13	+8	25	0	-3	20	232	220	207
East South Central	+3	-3	+11	26	+4	0	24	269	268	265
West South Central	+9	+4	+7	20	+4	-2	16	190	212	208
Mountain	+16	-6	+21	10	+6	-1	10	289	315	274
Pacific	+15	-8	+13	33	+4	0	27	274	306	248
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+5	-6	+12	364	+13	-1	248	174	158	169
New England	+11	-2	+12	21	0	-1	15	223	218	225
Middle Atlantic	+5	-9	+6	105	+10	-3	48	175	158	169
East North Central	-5	-6	+9	49	+18	0	45	150	119	140
West North Central	-3	+6	+5	34	+14	-7	33	189	151	217
South Atlantic	+25	-9	+21	60	+19	+4	51	172	172	147
South Central	+1	-1	+11	45	+27	-2	36	192	171	193
Pacific	+13	-7	+22	40	0	+1	15	166	198	166
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+14	-10	+18	560	+16	-2	396	102	97	92
New England	+4	-8	+16	24	+11	+3	19	87	63	72
Middle Atlantic	+3	-14	+11	115	+5	-5	81	106	105	91
East North Central	+9	-3	+20	133	+18	-2	78	87	81	86
West North Central	+34	-12	+19	35	+10	-6	22	120	106	125
South Atlantic	+31	-7	+30	44	+39	+2	33	103	85	96
South Central	+12	-20	+17	84	+11	+1	68	103	113	82
Pacific	+22	-9	+23	103	+6	-4	75	87	90	76
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+9	-7	+9	737	+3	+1	634	169	178	157
Middle Atlantic	+7	+11	+9	76	+2	+8	51	182	183	176
East North Central	-2	-15	+17	88	+2	+3	78	160	188	132
West North Central	+15	+4	+9	38	+15	0	36	170	172	182
South Atlantic	+10	-34	+8	39	+15	+4	34	168	172	119
South Central	+4	+3	+7	376	+2	-3	336	144	146	157
Mountain	-5	-7	+11	47	-5	-1	41	240	304	208
Pacific	+12	-15	+6	64	-1	-4	55	205	212	177

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wire supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight.

Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY
WHOLESALE TRADE
REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

AUGUST 1955

FOR RELEASE
OCTOBER 7, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

August 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers rose 11 percent over July and were 17 percent higher than August a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first eight months in 1955 were 10 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1954.

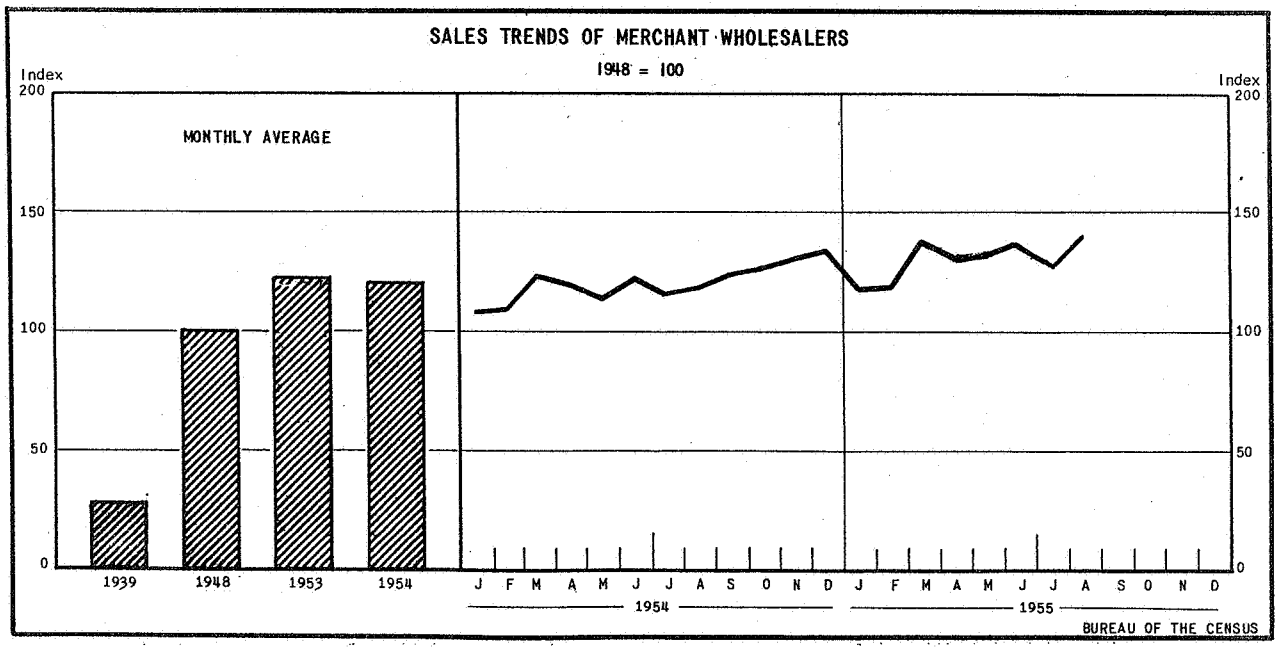
Almost all trades reported increased sales over July as well as a year ago. Jewelry, with sales up 47 percent, reported the principal increase over the previous month. Dry goods and apparel, furniture and home furnishings, and iron and steel scrap also experienced substantial increases. Compared with sales a year ago, iron and steel scrap again scored the largest gain (106%). Declines were reported in only three trades. Fresh fruit and vegetables and farm supplies were below both previous-month and year-ago sales levels. Air conditioning and commercial refrigeration, while well ahead of sales a year ago, was down 2 percent below July 1955 sales.

All geographic divisions experienced gains over the previous month and showed more substantial increases over sales a year ago. The Middle Atlantic and South Atlantic Divisions shared the principal increase (13%) over the previous month, while the East North Central Division--up 22 percent--showed the largest increase over year-ago sales. The Mountain Division reported the smallest sales gains--4 percent over the previous month and 9 percent over a year ago.

Inventories

Inventories (valued at cost) of wholesalers at the end of August were at about the same level as a month earlier, but were up 5 percent over stocks on hand a year ago. Based on reports of establishments submitting inventories in conjunction with sales data, the August stock-sales ratio of 114 percent was 12 points below the ratios for July 1955 and August 1954.

Most trades showed only small changes from previous-month inventories. Coal, up 13 percent, indicated the largest increase, while farm supplies, down 11 percent, reflected the sharpest decline. Compared with inventories a year ago, most trades noted moderate increases although six trades showed increases of 15 percent or more. Specialty-line groceries, off 18 percent, and farm supplies, down 19 percent, noted the largest decreases from year-ago inventories.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

AUGUST 1955

Kind of business	Sales: Percent change: August 1955 from-- August 1954	Sales: Percent change: August 1955 from-- July 1955	Sales: Percent change: 8 mo. 1955 from 8 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting August 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, August 1955 from-- August 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, August 1955 from-- July 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting August 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): August 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): August 1954	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): July 1955
Merchant wholesalers	+17	+11	+10	11,492	+5	0	8,131	114	126	126
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+7	+8	0	1,290	-6	-1	994	78	92	85
General-line grocery wholesalers	+7	+7	+4	768	+1	+1	634	99	107	104
Nonaffiliated[2]	+3	+8	+2	584	0	+1	487	119	123	126
Voluntary groups	+6	+5	+4	164	-1	0	132	86	89	92
Retailer-cooperative	+20	+6	+12	20	+4	+2	15	78	96	80
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers[3]	+7	+9	-7	286	-18	-3	203	86	110	97
Confectionery wholesalers	+6	+5	+3	84	+2	-3	41	73	79	79
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+8	+8	+3	152	+1	-4	116	23	25	27
Edible farm products distributors	+5	+3	+4	983	+13	-1	668	33	29	35
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+10	+6	+4	659	+21	-1	438	45	35	49
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-2	-2	+4	324	-12	-2	230	15	18	15
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+7	+2	+5	527	+11	0	452	100	94	101
Beer distributors	+7	0	+4	131	+8	-8	106	50	51	55
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+7	+3	+6	396	+13	+3	346	146	144	146
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+17	+10	+10	674	+1	+2	427	132	153	145
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+19	+13	+14	312	-1	+2	218	146	175	164
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+19	+8	+10	205	+11	+3	137	80	81	85
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+2	+1	+9	157	+9	0	72	176	157	185
Tobacco distributors	+7	+5	+5	266	+1	+2	143	53	64	56
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+9	+30	+7	415	+7	-5	202	174	180	232
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	0	+32	+4	95	+6	-3	45	159	141	228
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+14	+29	+6	199	+4	-4	96	185	220	239
Piece goods converters	+10	+31	+12	121	+15	-8	61	167	156	221
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	+30	+14	322	+11	0	177	144	156	188
Furniture wholesalers	+19	+32	+16	124	-2	+1	62	141	185	187
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+18	+29	+14	198	+16	0	115	145	146	188
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+17	+20	+9	468	+5	0	314	96	108	117
Paper wholesalers	+17	+19	+9	293	+6	0	229	91	103	110
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+15	+29	+9	175	0	-1	85	143	168	208
Inedible farm products merchants	+19	+7	+3	282	-3	+12	204	112	116	102
Automotive wholesalers	+19	+9	+15	658	+15	-1	457	178	178	195
Motor-vehicle distributors	+13	+7	+19	72	+19	-6	53	102	95	113
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+22	+9	+13	586	+14	0	404	213	224	236
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+25	+6	+12	888	+9	-1	792	132	146	140
Electric equipment, supplies wholesalers[4]	+24	+2	+12	567	+10	-1	529	129	139	131
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+25	+11	+11	321	+8	-1	263	135	154	150
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+19	+13	+10	599	+6	-1	451	199	217	232
Hardware wholesalers	+18	+14	+8	222	+4	-1	181	223	245	257
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+19	+12	+13	377	+9	0	270	170	182	200
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+24	+10	+19	551	+17	+2	371	84	90	92
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+31	+11	+22	324	+21	+3	242	90	99	102
Construction materials distributors	+11	+8	+13	227	+6	-1	129	72	74	74
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+24	+14	+13	1,979	+4	0	1,510	173	204	192
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+10	-2	+12	121	+4	-3	76	133	145	143
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+12	+15	+10	126	+5	+4	85	155	171	169
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+26	+13	+11	885	+5	+1	721	175	199	186
Professional equipment, supplies houses[5]	+11	+21	+9	418	+1	0	290	177	192	221
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+10	+10	+12	69	+2	+1	36	148	164	160
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+22	+24	+11	162	-3	0	123	146	183	185
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+35	+14	+19	267	+4	0	215	190	253	212
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+46	+13	+29	314	+3	+1	214	130	198	140
Iron, steel and products distributors	+48	+13	+29	219	+4	+1	152	167	252	185
Nonferrous metals distributors	+41	+12	+28	95	-4	+1	62	58	87	57
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+77	+28	+60	294	+8	-7	195	50	78	69
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+106	+31	+83	162	+2	-7	110	37	72	51
Waste materials dealers	+45	+23	+36	132	+13	-7	85	70	85	97
Other merchant wholesalers[6]	+17	+13	+10	982	-4	0	560	106	123	115
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+8	+4	+6	133	+10	+4	87	178	164	155
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+12	+9	+7	109	-6	+3	39	120	149	127
Coal wholesalers	+32	+18	+21	229	+12	+13	121	71	86	74
Farm supplies wholesalers	-11	-9	+2	215	-19	-11	147	119	133	117
Jewelry wholesalers	+14	+47	+8	119	-6	+2	65	240	306	356

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

AUGUST 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change: August 1955 from-- August 1954	Sales: Percent change: August 1955 from-- July 1955	Sales: Percent change: 8 mo. 1955 from 8 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting August 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, August 1955 from-- August 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, August 1955 from-- July 1955	Number of establishments reporting August 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): August 1955	August 1954	July 1955
Merchant wholesalers, total[5]	+17	+11	+10	11,492	+5	0	8,131	114	126	126
New England	+16	+12	+8	579	0	-1	367	105	126	118
Middle Atlantic	+16	+13	+8	2,566	+5	0	1,536	106	112	117
East North Central	+22	+11	+13	2,237	+6	0	1,612	99	116	109
West North Central	+18	+12	+8	1,154	+2	+2	854	119	138	129
South Atlantic	+15	+13	+12	1,185	+6	+1	855	127	136	139
East South Central	+13	+11	+5	498	+5	-1	395	129	140	148
West South Central	+11	+7	+5	1,383	+4	+1	1,138	150	159	160
Mountain	+9	+4	+12	382	-2	-2	309	126	136	133
Pacific	+19	+7	+13	1,508	+8	0	1,065	115	127	127
General-line grocery wholesalers	+7	+7	+4	768	+1	+1	634	99	107	104
Middle Atlantic	+15	+11	0	86	+1	0	77	107	111	116
East North Central	+7	+6	+5	113	+7	+6	85	81	84	82
West North Central	+12	-1	+5	138	+4	+2	129	98	112	93
South Atlantic	-2	+8	+3	58	-1	+2	44	126	135	135
East South Central	+1	+14	-1	47	-6	-1	42	88	95	102
West South Central	+2	+11	+4	114	+3	-2	102	126	132	143
Mountain	+28	+1	+15	35	-8	+1	28	67	181	66
Pacific	+10	+7	+8	170	-8	0	123	86	97	91
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+7	+9	-7	286	-18	-3	203	86	110	97
New England	-14	+17	-3	16	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	-1	+10	-14	115	-10	-6	81	67	69	79
East North Central	+23	+6	+2	35	+1	+11	25	74	86	67
West North Central	+6	+4	-8	11	-37	+9	8	118	192	109
South Atlantic[6]	+3	+9	+8	23	-21	-3	14	175	243	195
South Central	+13	+7	-6	39	-30	-13	35	147	258	183
Pacific	+34	+12	-1	44	-7	+6	31	58	77	59
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+10	+6	+4	659	+21	-1	438	45	35	49
New England	+28	+8	+8	23	-2	+6	17	43	58	44
Middle Atlantic	+7	+10	+1	109	+6	-4	51	21	22	26
East North Central	+8	+7	+1	133	+50	-4	83	40	29	43
West North Central	+22	+15	+25	52	+32	+2	41	130	120	146
South Atlantic	+6	+6	+11	117	-12	-3	94	27	33	29
South Central	+11	0	+11	81	+4	-8	47	80	21	87
Pacific	+9	+1	+4	129	+31	+13	94	45	37	40
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-2	-2	+4	324	-12	-2	230	15	18	15
New England	+2	-9	+1	15	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+20	0	+8	42	+39	+11	21	11	10	8
East North Central	-12	-15	+2	36	-3	-6	24	8	14	8
West North Central	-20	-2	-2	52	-21	-2	41	35	20	35
South Atlantic	+8	+9	+7	30	+10	-1	17	17	16	20
South Central	+2	+8	+2	44	-28	0	33	23	33	27
Pacific	-12	-2	+6	77	-9	-4	60	14	15	15
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+19	+13	+14	312	-1	+2	218	146	175	164
New England	+19	+12	+9	20	+9	+3	13	144	163	157
Middle Atlantic	+16	+7	+9	66	-1	+1	40	156	169	171
East North Central	+22	+19	+9	58	-5	-1	34	107	138	129
West North Central	+18	+16	+6	24	-3	+3	22	142	174	160
South Atlantic	+16	+12	+12	48	-3	+1	35	170	204	189
East South Central	+14	+16	+7	16	+4	+7	12	173	183	188
West South Central	+18	+14	+9	41	+3	+4	33	194	228	217
Mountain	+13	+20	+14	13	-5	+5	10	182	216	210
Pacific	+21	+6	+13	26	+1	+1	19	135	164	138
Tobacco distributors	+7	+5	+5	266	+1	+2	143	53	64	56
New England	+9	+2	+8	32	+3	0	10	68	93	69
Middle Atlantic	+7	+4	+2	49	+16	+3	23	46	47	47
East North Central	+7	+9	+6	45	-6	+5	27	47	49	53
West North Central	+4	+1	+4	20	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
South Atlantic	+8	+4	+3	27	+10	+3	20	50	51	51
South Central	+8	+6	+5	41	0	+3	19	74	79	77
Pacific	+8	+6	+10	39	-15	-1	29	36	83	38
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+9	+30	+7	415	+7	-5	202	174	180	232
New England	+26	+54	+8	20	-18	-6	10	109	177	173
Middle Atlantic	+6	+25	+7	266	+13	-4	116	181	175	229
East North Central	+14	+38	+11	36	+5	+3	20	166	187	212
West North Central	+8	+67	-1	18	-1	-8	13	168	175	298
South Atlantic	+32	+53	+13	14	+10	-8	8	152	180	266
South Central	+13	+55	+11	28	-5	-2	14	144	174	218
Pacific	+14	+15	+13	32	+9	-9	20	190	208	244
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	+30	+14	322	+11	0	177	144	156	188
Middle Atlantic	+10	+30	+10	101	+6	+1	33	129	117	169
East North Central	+15	+30	+17	69	+10	-3	40	123	139	165
West North Central	-7	+18	+10	18	+2	+1	16	218	197	257
South Atlantic	+36	+47	+14	38	+14	+9	17	178	231	252
South Central	+22	+19	+18	41	+11	+1	35	185	247	220
Pacific	+44	+33	+30	34	+16	-2	20	120	153	169

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

AUGUST 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change, August 1955 from-- August 1954	Sales: Percent change, August 1955 from-- July 1955	Sales: 8 mo. 1955 from 8 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting August 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, August 1955 from-- August 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, August 1955 from-- July 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting August 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): August 1955	August 1954	July 1955
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+22	+9	+13	586	+14	0	404	213	224	236
Middle Atlantic	+16	+4	+9	84	+19	+4	54	278	246	269
East North Central	+25	+15	+18	101	+16	-1	72	160	179	191
West North Central	+13	+8	+8	65	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
South Atlantic	+18	+6	+18	59	+17	+1	48	235	244	246
East South Central	+21	+3	+15	76	+7	-2	70	182	208	198
West South Central	+21	+10	+3	58	+8	+1	54	268	302	292
Mountain	+18	+8	+16	32	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+32	+20	+17	96	+5	0	55	187	231	226
Electrical equipment and supplies wholesalers[4]	+24	+2	+12	567	+10	-1	529	129	139	131
New England	+17	+7	+3	33	+11	+17	31	129	144	117
Middle Atlantic	+19	-5	+8	74	+4	-1	67	136	142	122
East North Central	+41	+10	+10	155	+6	-3	141	115	142	127
West North Central	+22	+7	+7	56	+10	-3	53	113	128	132
South Atlantic	+20	+1	+15	87	+18	+6	83	141	144	135
East South Central	+10	+1	+13	33	+22	-1	27	146	122	148
West South Central	+20	-14	+17	58	0	-18	58	131	158	138
Mountain	+10	+11	+16	21	+13	+1	21	136	133	149
Pacific	+18	+5	+22	50	+17	+2	48	135	126	138
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+25	+11	+11	321	+8	-1	263	135	154	150
New England	+12	+14	+8	15	-17	-3	13	111	170	128
Middle Atlantic	+19	-3	+10	65	-6	-4	46	132	158	128
East North Central	+36	+28	+12	69	+23	+7	61	138	151	164
West North Central	+13	+26	+4	32	+15	-3	20	125	127	160
South Atlantic	+38	+7	+14	45	+22	-4	36	121	134	132
East South Central	+17	+17	+17	15	+13	-4	15	172	169	210
West South Central	+21	+5	+9	26	+9	-3	25	152	156	165
Pacific	+32	+11	+19	49	-10	-3	42	120	180	133
Hardware wholesalers	+18	+14	+8	222	+4	-1	181	223	245	257
Middle Atlantic	+5	+12	+6	26	+8	0	16	216	218	254
East North Central	+23	+15	+6	36	+7	-2	33	207	230	245
West North Central	+24	+27	+3	25	0	-2	24	236	260	288
South Atlantic	+18	+15	+10	29	-1	+3	19	234	283	269
East South Central	+22	+17	+12	23	+5	-4	22	221	257	274
West South Central	+21	+4	+8	26	+8	+1	23	202	215	210
Mountain	+17	+3	+20	11	+3	-4	11	239	252	254
Pacific	+14	+11	+13	39	+4	+2	29	235	241	253
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+19	+12	+13	377	+9	0	270	170	182	200
New England	+19	+30	+13	18	-3	-3	13	217	254	309
Middle Atlantic	+19	+13	+8	126	+8	-1	76	162	190	208
East North Central	+24	+28	+11	51	+17	+2	40	132	123	164
West North Central	+15	+10	+7	34	+3	+1	33	158	167	172
South Atlantic	+19	+12	+21	59	+10	-1	48	177	193	193
South Central	+14	-2	+11	44	+25	+1	43	204	185	193
Pacific	+27	-4	+22	34	+1	-1	10	174	190	194
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+24	+10	+19	551	+17	+2	371	84	90	92
New England	+12	-2	+15	30	+25	-4	25	127	123	129
Middle Atlantic	+22	+10	+13	107	+3	+2	77	81	95	89
East North Central	+22	+11	+20	117	+14	-1	70	74	79	82
West North Central	+33	+15	+21	43	+18	-7	25	60	54	70
South Atlantic	+18	+1	+29	57	+17	+1	35	76	69	69
South Central	+1	-1	+14	78	+25	+7	58	134	123	120
Pacific	+43	+17	+26	103	+21	+9	67	63	76	87
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+26	+13	+11	885	+5	+1	721	175	199	186
New England	+25	-2	+6	13	+18	+7	5	103	124	106
Middle Atlantic	+29	+28	+11	69	+15	+3	46	145	130	162
East North Central	+29	+23	+20	94	+1	0	77	155	202	166
West North Central	+11	+3	+9	69	-9	-1	49	193	218	176
South Atlantic	+32	+21	+10	45	+20	+1	41	154	199	183
South Central	+15	+8	+8	461	-2	0	374	188	233	203
Mountain	+39	+19	+14	60	-3	+1	47	175	227	187
Pacific	+32	+14	+9	74	+7	+3	66	241	199	225

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Percent change in sales shown for this kind of business in the July 1955 report should be changed from -4 to -8 in column "July 1955 from July 1954;" and from -4 to -7 in column "July 1955 from June 1955."

[4] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[5] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

[6] Percent change in sales shown for this division in the July 1955 report should be changed from +36 to +5 in column "July 1955 from July 1954;" and from +11 to -13 in column "July 1955 from June 1955."

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight. Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

SEPTEMBER 1955

FOR RELEASE
NOVEMBER 3, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers in September 1955 were slightly (1%) higher than in August, but were 13 percent above September a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first nine months in 1955 were 10 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1954.

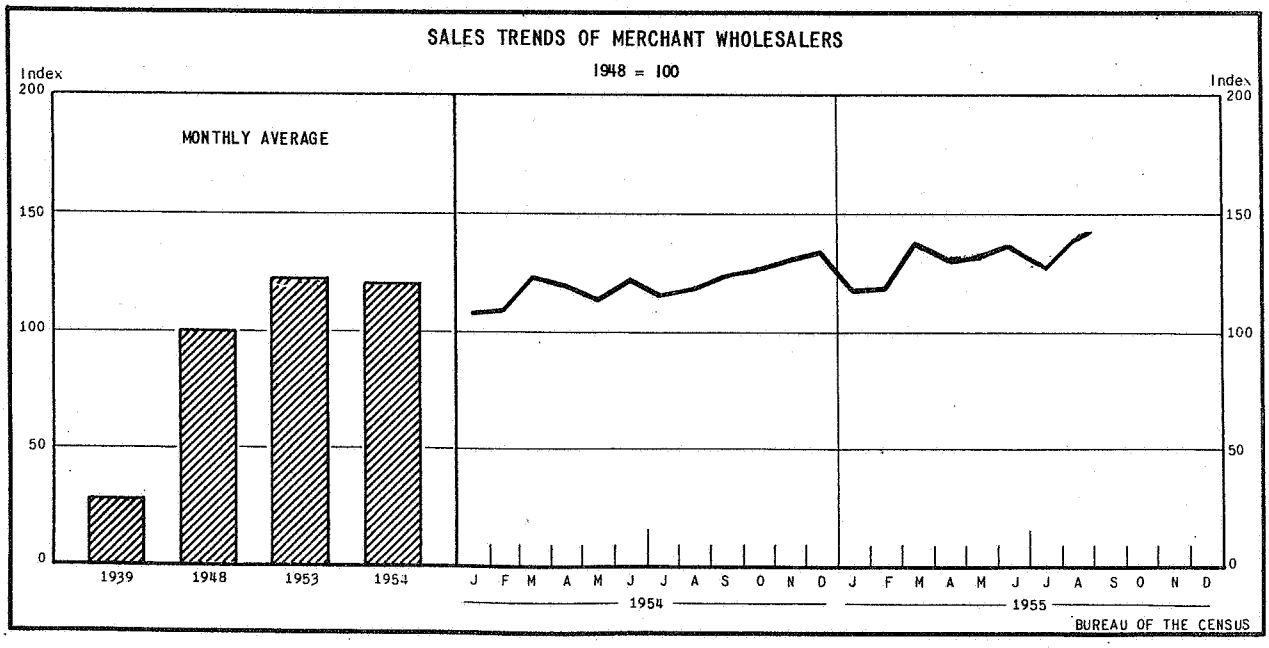
Most trades reported only small increases over August, which had been an unusually good month. Jewelry, with sales up 20 percent, reported the principal increase for the second month. Declines were noted, however, in 13 trades, with beer (17%), air conditioning, commercial refrigeration (17%), and fresh fruits and vegetables (16%), showing the largest decreases. Compared with sales a year ago, only two trades—farm supplies, down 6 percent, and fresh fruits and vegetables, off 2 percent--reported declines. Durable goods trades continued to show the more substantial gains, with iron and steel scrap (107%) scoring the largest increase for the ninth successive month.

Seven of the nine geographic divisions reported small sales increases over the previous month, with the New England and South Atlantic Divisions sharing the principal gain (5%). In the Pacific Division, sales were down 4 percent, while in the West North Central Division they were at about the same level as a month earlier. Compared with sales a year ago, gains of 10 to 19 percent were experienced in all but one division —the East South Central—which reported sales at the same level as last September.

Inventories

September 30 inventories of wholesalers rose slightly (1%) above the stock level of a month earlier, and were 6 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Sales gains during this period more than matched the rise in inventories and, as a result, the September stock-sales ratio of 115 percent was 1 point below the ratio of the previous month and 9 points lower than the September 1954 ratio.

Most trades showed only small changes from previous month inventories but showed moderate increases over a year ago. Inedible farm products (up 17%) and iron and steel scrap (up 15%) indicated the largest increases, while beer (down 8%) reflected the principal reduction in stocks. Dairy, poultry products reported the principal increase (26%) over year-ago inventories. Only 6 trades, led by specialty-line groceries (-14%) showed lower inventories than a year ago.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

SEPTEMBER 1955

Kind of business	Sales: Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Sept. 1954	Sales: Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Aug. 1955	Sales: 9 mo. 1955 from 9 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting, Sept. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Sept. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Aug. 1955	Number of establishments reporting, Sept. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Sept. 1955	Sept. 1954	Aug. 1955
Merchant wholesalers	+13	+1	+10	11,365	+6	+1	8,088	115	124	116
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+6	+3	+1	1,225	-3	+1	933	82	87	83
General-line grocery wholesalers	+9	+5	+5	721	+2	+3	592	107	111	110
Nonaffiliated[2]	+4	+6	+2	534	+2	+4	469	121	122	124
Voluntary groups	+9	+5	+5	171	+1	-1	115	96	99	100
Retailer-cooperative	+20	+5	+13	16	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+3	+5	-6	274	-14	-2	193	76	85	83
Confectionery wholesalers	+2	+10	+3	86	0	+11	41	92	88	93
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+4	-5	+3	144	+10	+2	107	20	19	19
Edible farm products distributors	+9	-4	+4	963	+18	0	647	31	29	29
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+13	+2	+5	645	+26	0	428	33	31	34
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-2	-16	+3	318	-4	-1	219	26	24	21
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+5	-1	+5	516	+5	-2	449	96	102	98
Beer distributors	+2	-17	+4	133	-5	-8	116	51	53	46
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+7	+14	+6	383	+9	-1	333	132	154	159
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+15	+5	+11	671	+3	+1	458	139	142	144
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)[3]	+12	+7	+10	305	+3	+3	218	141	155	146
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+25	+3	+12	217	+5	-2	150	123	86	131
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+14	0	+10	149	+4	-2	90	172	180	171
Tobacco distributors	+4	-2	+5	266	+5	+7	143	63	64	58
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+10	+1	+8	403	+5	-2	184	167	190	175
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+9	-2	+4	103	+9	-2	50	150	174	160
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+9	+1	+7	172	+2	-4	67	161	177	170
Piece goods converters	+15	+5	+13	128	+3	+1	67	214	244	215
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+16	+4	+14	353	+15	0	190	144	151	151
Furniture wholesalers	+29	-3	+18	108	+9	+1	64	147	185	144
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+9	+8	+13	245	+17	0	126	142	140	155
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+13	0	+9	458	+6	-1	300	116	123	117
Paper wholesalers	+13	-1	+9	292	+6	-2	222	107	114	107
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+10	+7	+9	166	+6	+1	78	187	196	209
Inedible farm products merchants	+7	+8	+3	279	+2	+17	194	102	124	101
Automotive wholesalers	+13	-1	+15	618	+6	-1	485	179	192	177
Motor-vehicle distributors	+18	-3	+19	70	+15	-6	59	91	96	93
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+12	-1	+13	548	+4	+1	426	221	237	219
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+19	+5	+12	861	+11	+1	765	129	135	133
Electric equipment, supplies wholesalers[4]	+24	+7	+13	560	+15	+2	533	126	137	134
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+12	+3	+11	301	+5	-1	232	134	133	132
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+12	+1	+11	572	+8	+1	438	190	200	189
Hardware wholesalers	+9	+2	+8	231	+7	+1	195	214	218	215
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+17	0	+13	341	+9	+1	243	159	176	155
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+12	-3	+18	561	+23	0	388	111	103	105
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+14	-6	+21	334	+24	0	237	130	122	125
Construction materials distributors	+8	0	+13	227	+19	0	151	85	77	79
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+18	0	+13	2,022	+7	0	1,538	172	194	171
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+23	-17	+13	110	+18	+1	79	207	221	161
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+18	+10	+11	152	-2	-3	96	148	172	163
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+18	+1	+12	952	+4	0	763	162	185	162
Professional equipment, supplies houses[5]	+8	+5	+9	407	+10	-3	287	174	176	182
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+3	+1	+11	71	+8	-6	43	161	153	170
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+11	-2	+11	145	+4	0	105	150	157	141
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+26	+1	+20	256	+10	0	208	193	232	199
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+53	+3	+31	305	+7	+3	203	128	181	131
Iron, steel and products distributors	+57	+4	+32	220	+8	+4	145	161	240	166
Nonferrous metals distributors	+46	+2	+30	85	+1	-5	58	52	64	56
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+87	+1	+63	284	-8	+10	186	56	106	50
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+107	-3	+86	164	-8	+15	111	63	138	53
Waste materials dealers	+64	+8	+39	120	-6	-1	75	43	64	44
Other merchant wholesalers[5]	+6	+6	+10	1,008	+5	+3	587	106	111	110
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers[6]	+13	+5	+7	147	+7	+1	114	167	166	174
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+18	+8	+9	137	+10	-1	49	87	105	101
Coal wholesalers	+23	+4	+21	232	+9	+2	121	59	80	64
Farm supplies wholesalers	-6	+7	+1	202	0	+6	153	107	101	112
Jewelry wholesalers	+5	+20	+7	123	+14	+7	48	244	264	261

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

SEPTEMBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change, Sept. 1955 from— Sept. 1954	Sales: Percent change, Sept. 1955 from— Aug. 1955	Sales: 9 mo. 1955 from 9 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Sept. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Sept. 1955 from— Sept. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Sept. 1955 from— Aug. 1955	Number of establishments reporting Sept. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Sept. 1955	Sept. 1954	Aug. 1955
Merchant wholesalers, total[5]	+13	+1	+10	11,365	+6	+1	8,088	115	124	116
New England	+10	+5	+8	606	+1	-1	355	105	109	113
Middle Atlantic	+12	+2	+8	2,461	+3	0	1,434	97	107	99
East North Central	+16	+1	+13	2,252	+6	+1	1,676	102	112	102
West North Central	+19	0	+10	1,114	+7	+3	885	118	143	114
South Atlantic	+16	+5	+13	1,178	+6	+3	857	134	148	137
East South Central	0	+1	+4	529	+7	+3	409	135	122	132
West South Central	+10	+3	+6	1,338	+5	+1	1,122	156	162	159
Mountain	+17	+4	+12	401	+16	-2	326	131	136	133
Pacific	+14	-4	+13	1,486	+11	0	1,024	123	125	118
General-line grocery wholesalers	+9	+5	+5	721	+2	+3	592	107	111	110
Middle Atlantic	+4	+4	+1	72	-6	+5	47	98	107	96
East North Central	+7	+6	+5	122	+2	+1	100	100	102	104
West North Central	+21	+8	+7	113	-6	-3	106	88	105	97
South Atlantic	+7	+6	+3	57	-3	+4	45	137	153	139
East South Central	-2	+2	-2	45	+4	+5	40	139	132	136
West South Central	+9	+10	+4	104	+8	+5	103	99	99	103
Mountain	+16	-4	+15	27	+25	0	18	123	104	116
Pacific	+8	+3	+8	169	-2	+12	124	97	100	90
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+3	+5	-6	274	-14	-2	193	76	85	83
New England	+32	+15	+2	14	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	-7	+8	-13	115	-16	+2	74	52	53	59
East North Central	+8	+2	+3	41	-6	-4	34	71	83	75
West North Central	+1	+5	-7	11	-34	-6	8	148	235	160
South Atlantic	+10	-5	+8	19	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
South Central	+11	+1	-4	33	+21	-8	25	91	84	108
Pacific	+23	+3	+1	37	-1	-3	31	83	96	86
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+13	+2	+5	645	+26	0	428	33	31	34
New England	+20	+11	+10	21	+26	+4	14	26	26	29
Middle Atlantic	+11	+1	+2	120	+23	-4	66	21	19	22
East North Central	+19	+6	+3	142	+30	-12	92	33	30	39
West North Central	+17	0	+24	34	+26	+1	28	52	60	51
South Atlantic	+12	+3	+11	117	+19	+5	94	33	32	35
South Central	+4	-6	+10	77	+13	+14	46	35	32	28
Pacific	+8	-1	+4	122	+40	+10	79	48	41	44
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-2	-16	+3	318	-4	-1	219	26	24	21
New England	-21	-22	-2	20	-3	-3	13	21	18	14
Middle Atlantic	+12	-12	+9	37	+31	-18	17	37	13	38
East North Central	-1	-15	+2	43	-4	+10	28	25	31	20
West North Central	-7	0	-3	54	-2	+19	47	25	26	21
South Atlantic	-3	+8	+6	29	-16	+10	17	30	42	32
South Central	-19	-1	0	31	-13	+1	19	37	33	38
Pacific	+1	-26	+5	76	-7	-2	55	18	17	10
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+12	+7	+10	305	+3	+3	218	141	155	146
New England	+22	+7	+11	21	+7	+3	14	109	129	113
Middle Atlantic	+10	+15	+9	72	+6	+2	43	136	148	154
East North Central	+6	+4	+9	52	-4	+3	33	112	128	113
West North Central	+11	+7	+6	20	+2	+4	18	163	180	171
South Atlantic	+17	+3	+13	44	0	+5	36	165	195	161
East South Central	+17	+10	+8	13	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
West South Central	+15	+6	+10	40	+4	+2	33	172	192	180
Mountain	+11	+1	+13	14	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+13	+6	+13	29	+10	+2	21	138	141	142
Tobacco distributors	+4	-2	+5	266	+5	+7	143	63	64	58
New England	+13	-2	+9	39	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	-3	-6	+1	37	+22	+14	13	87	75	73
East North Central	+4	-4	+6	52	0	+5	38	59	62	55
West North Central	-8	+10	+2	21	+1	+1	16	57	48	61
South Atlantic	+14	+7	+5	29	+13	+17	19	87	80	80
South Central	+5	+2	+5	35	+7	+3	15	62	61	62
Pacific	+11	-7	+10	44	-5	+5	33	47	64	42
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+10	+1	+8	403	+5	-2	184	167	190	175
New England	+2	0	+8	20	+14	-7	7	130	128	140
Middle Atlantic	+13	+2	+7	264	+5	0	116	186	203	199
East North Central	+5	+5	+10	27	+9	+3	15	162	172	169
West North Central	-3	-10	-1	23	-6	-6	9	100	164	95
South Atlantic	+15	+15	+13	21	-2	-6	13	157	205	216
South Central	+9	-7	+11	22	+4	-3	9	225	239	199
Pacific	-1	-10	+10	24	+1	-9	13	149	150	148
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+16	+4	+14	353	+15	0	190	144	151	151
Middle Atlantic	+13	+5	+10	97	+15	0	50	128	136	135
East North Central	+8	+8	+16	68	+19	-1	43	136	122	153
West North Central	+8	+4	+10	19	+6	-1	13	200	212	211
South Atlantic	+21	+4	+15	43	+1	-1	14	237	312	235
South Central	+17	+4	+18	43	+9	0	29	186	210	202
Pacific	+8	-4	+26	52	+28	0	17	154	142	139

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

SEPTEMBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Sept. 1954	Sales: Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Aug. 1955	Sales: 9 mo. 1955 from 9 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Sept. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Sept. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Sept. 1955 from-- Aug. 1955	Number of establishments reporting Sept. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Sept. 1955	Sept. 1954	Aug. 1955
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+12	-1	+13	548	+4	+1	426	221	237	219
Middle Atlantic	+12	-4	+10	53	+5	-1	28	136	139	133
East North Central	+12	-2	+17	101	+13	+1	86	220	216	207
West North Central	+7	+8	+8	39	-7	-3	30	210	241	250
South Atlantic	+18	0	+18	67	+2	+1	49	245	269	235
East South Central	+10	-2	+15	75	+23	0	74	262	251	256
West South Central	+9	-1	+4	79	+1	+1	76	284	305	281
Mountain	+15	+4	+16	45	+16	0	40	211	199	202
Pacific	+15	-3	+16	82	-5	+2	39	204	229	202
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[4]	+24	+7	+13	560	+15	+2	533	126	137	134
New England	+41	+20	+8	35	-2	+10	32	89	120	99
Middle Atlantic	+27	+11	+10	69	-2	+2	66	107	137	117
East North Central	+19	+1	+11	148	+14	+4	138	132	145	127
West North Central	+19	-5	+8	57	+13	+4	55	134	143	120
South Atlantic	+22	+6	+16	85	+21	+1	80	129	139	140
East South Central	+10	+5	+13	33	+12	-1	32	119	134	127
West South Central	+24	+3	+18	57	+41	-2	56	175	139	186
Mountain	+30	+27	+18	23	+6	-3	23	115	142	152
Pacific	+27	+8	+22	53	+23	+2	51	117	126	132
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+12	+3	+11	301	+5	-1	232	134	133	132
New England	+24	+18	+10	16	-7	-4	11	99	117	120
Middle Atlantic	+17	+11	+11	67	-14	-3	43	115	149	124
East North Central	+3	-3	+10	59	+12	+5	54	124	109	113
West North Central	+1	-8	+3	35	+5	+1	26	167	157	145
South Atlantic	+22	+2	+15	44	+27	+3	35	178	160	168
East South Central	-3	-13	+15	8	-3	-5	7	144	135	129
West South Central	-16	-15	+8	15	-14	-16	13	173	153	155
Pacific	+21	+7	+19	48	-3	-12	34	122	145	138
Hardware wholesalers	+9	+2	+8	231	+7	+1	195	214	218	215
Middle Atlantic	+9	+3	+7	30	+16	+4	20	197	196	193
East North Central	+3	+10	+4	38	+6	-2	33	187	177	204
West North Central	+8	+6	+3	41	+4	+4	39	202	222	208
South Atlantic	+17	+4	+11	31	+4	-1	21	262	295	267
East South Central	+10	-5	+12	24	+3	+1	23	219	221	205
West South Central	+16	+9	+9	20	+7	0	17	203	225	215
Mountain	+29	-13	+22	11	+1	+4	10	296	303	253
Pacific	+8	-8	+13	32	+9	-1	29	236	240	219
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+17	0	+13	341	+9	+1	243	159	176	155
New England	+23	+8	+14	13	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+17	+4	+9	95	+5	0	63	157	179	152
East North Central	+26	+3	+14	58	+16	0	52	128	144	129
West North Central	+3	-8	+7	31	+3	-4	30	199	208	189
South Atlantic	+15	-1	+20	57	+19	+5	48	175	167	163
South Central	+3	-13	+10	42	+6	+6	30	240	218	211
Pacific	+12	-7	+21	38	+3	0	9	165	176	151
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+12	-3	+18	561	+23	0	388	111	103	105
New England	+28	-7	+17	20	+26	-3	17	88	79	84
Middle Atlantic	+12	-4	+12	130	+7	+1	82	99	102	93
East North Central	+6	-7	+18	135	+17	-4	73	116	110	116
West North Central	+16	-7	+20	47	+53	+2	29	103	80	97
South Atlantic	+16	+3	+27	44	+42	+9	37	95	84	91
South Central	+8	-5	+13	78	+11	0	67	143	127	132
Pacific	+16	-10	+25	90	+37	+1	67	139	128	125
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+18	+1	+12	952	+4	0	763	162	185	162
New England	-2	+23	+4	19	-3	-2	9	146	127	174
Middle Atlantic	+2	-5	+10	74	-2	-2	44	175	172	180
East North Central	+20	-4	+20	127	+8	+2	93	131	140	129
West North Central	+26	-9	+11	83	-4	-6	75	127	145	116
South Atlantic	+8	-3	+10	46	+8	-5	37	146	145	157
South Central	+31	+1	+11	473	+7	+2	398	188	244	185
Mountain	+31	+6	+16	62	+1	+1	52	129	192	136
Pacific	+13	-1	+9	68	+3	+2	55	274	297	267

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Percent change in sales for 8 months of 1955 from 8 months of 1954 shown for this kind of business in the August 1955 report should be changed from +14 to +10.

[4] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[5] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

[6] Percent change in sales for August 1955 from July 1955 shown for this kind of business in the August 1955 report: Change from + 4 to +15.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight. Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

OCTOBER 1955

FOR RELEASE
DECEMBER 7, 1955

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers in October 1955 showed no change from September, but were 11 percent above October a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first ten months in 1955 were 10 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1954.

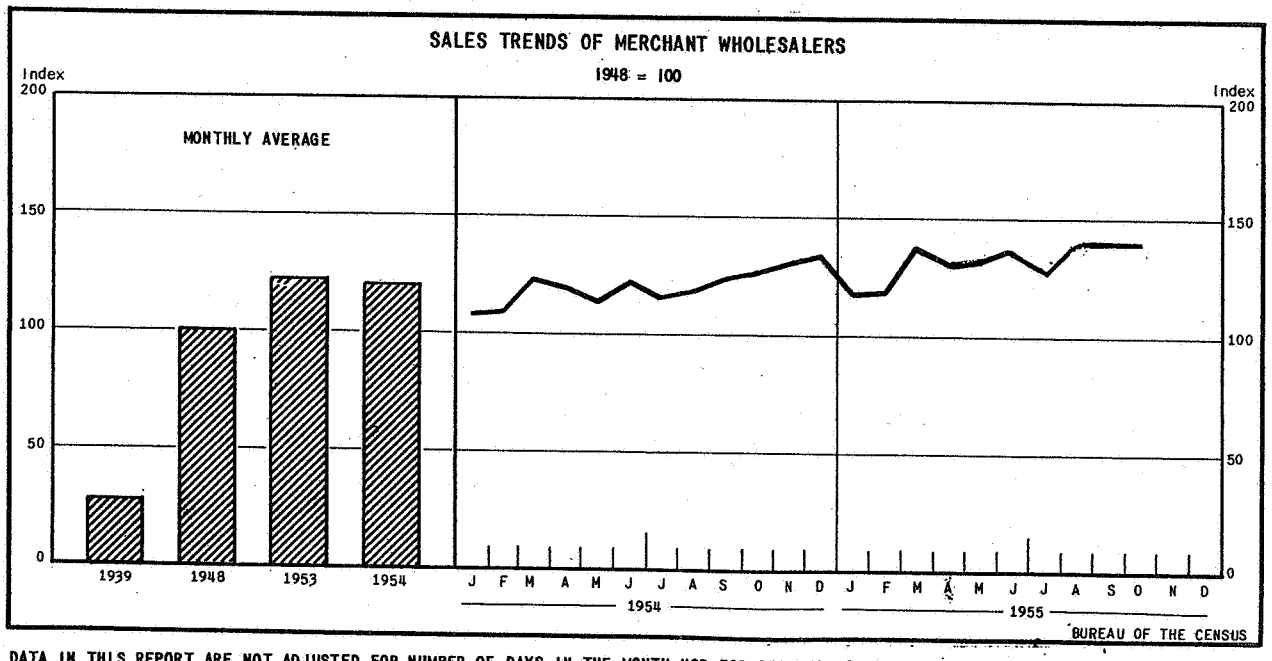
Most trades reported small changes from September sales. The principal increases were reported for iron-steel scrap (17%); waste materials (13%); jewelry (11%); and wine, distilled spirits (10%). The largest declines were shown for beer (12%); electrical equipment, supplies (9%); and other machinery, equipment (9%). Compared with sales a year ago, only two trades—inedible farm products, down 15 percent; and farm supplies, down 12 percent—reported declines. Iron and steel scrap, up 90 percent, scored the largest gain for the tenth consecutive month.

The Mountain Division, down 8 percent, showed the principal change from previous month's sales. October sales in all other geographic divisions varied from a decline of 3 percent in the South Atlantic to an increase of 3 percent in the East North Central. Compared with sales a year ago, the West North Central Division, reported an increase of 3 percent. All other divisions, however, experienced more substantial gains, ranging from 8 to 16 percent.

Inventories

October 31 inventories of wholesalers rose 3 percent above the level of the previous month, and were 8 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. The October stock-sales ratio of 120 percent was 4 points above the ratio of the previous month, but 5 points lower than the October 1954 ratio.

Most trades indicated small changes from previous-month inventories, the largest being increases for fresh fruits and vegetables (14%); wine, distilled spirits (12%); and inedible farm products (10%); and a decline for iron-steel scrap dealers (9%). Changes from previous-year stocks were more substantial, motor vehicles leading with an increase of 30 percent.



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

OCTOBER 1955

Kind of business	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change			Number of establishments reporting, Oct. 1955	Percent change, Oct. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting, Oct. 1955	Oct. 1955	Oct. 1954	Sept. 1955
	Oct. 1955 from--		10 mo. 1955 from 10 mo. 1954							
	Oct. 1954	Sept. 1955			Oct. 1954	Sept. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers	+11	0	+10	11,372	+8	+3	8,155	120	125	116
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+8	-1	+1	1,276	+4	+6	1,001	84	83	77
General-line grocery wholesalers	+9	-1	+5	718	+8	+8	594	118	114	109
Nonaffiliated[2]	+8	-2	+3	565	+9	+8	502	125	116	114
Voluntary groups	+13	+1	+6	141	+1	+6	85	100	109	95
Retailer-cooperative	+5	+1	+12	12	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+6	-1	-5	303	-4	+4	228	77	81	70
Confectionery wholesalers	+8	+3	+4	95	+7	+4	51	67	67	64
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+7	-4	+3	160	0	-4	128	19	19	19
Edible farm products distributors	+7	-1	+5	958	+14	+4	627	36	36	35
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+11	-1	+6	632	+17	+1	411	39	39	39
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+1	0	+3	326	+5	+14	216	29	28	25
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+9	+1	+6	491	+18	+11	442	117	119	106
Beer distributors	+4	-12	+4	106	+15	+6	97	73	63	60
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+13	+10	+7	385	+19	+12	345	140	157	137
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+15	0	+11	660	+8	0	439	145	147	141
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+13	-1	+11	308	+7	+2	220	166	173	160
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+20	+2	+13	196	+12	-3	126	96	86	95
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+13	-3	+10	156	+9	-3	93	166	181	163
Tobacco distributors	+5	-5	+5	274	-3	+1	142	57	60	52
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+10	+1	+8	424	+12	+3	211	176	167	173
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+16	+1	+5	103	+3	0	48	149	172	147
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+5	-2	+6	192	+13	+6	94	169	158	159
Piece goods converters	+11	+5	+13	129	+18	+2	69	216	180	225
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	+5	+15	320	+11	+3	195	143	149	143
Furniture wholesalers	+14	+4	+17	101	+2	+3	66	154	186	156
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+19	+6	+14	219	+15	+3	129	140	135	138
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+15	+2	+10	478	+2	+4	326	109	125	108
Paper wholesalers	+14	+2	+10	307	+2	+4	231	104	121	103
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+16	+5	+10	171	+3	0	95	157	176	165
Inedible farm products merchants	-15	+5	+1	272	+6	+10	185	150	128	154
Automotive wholesalers	+18	+4	+15	652	+14	0	464	164	173	169
Motor-vehicle distributors	+31	+2	+21	63	+30	+4	53	102	101	98
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+14	+5	+13	589	+10	-2	411	199	209	211
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+9	-8	+12	845	+11	+6	732	149	146	127
Electric equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+15	-9	+14	520	+18	+6	481	148	146	128
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+3	-7	+10	325	+5	+6	251	151	147	126
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+9	0	+10	593	+8	0	430	206	214	207
Hardware wholesalers	+9	0	+8	234	+7	0	193	241	245	242
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+10	0	+13	359	+11	0	237	159	168	159
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+8	-4	+17	564	+12	0	389	109	109	105
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+5	-4	+19	335	+16	0	256	127	126	121
Construction materials distributors	+13	-2	+13	229	+1	0	133	74	75	72
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+18	-3	+14	1,940	+5	+1	1,587	161	184	152
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+13	-4	+13	107	0	-1	73	151	161	140
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+11	+3	+11	113	+8	+2	81	135	146	131
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+20	-3	+13	874	+6	+1	755	151	180	143
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+4	-7	+8	413	+7	+3	322	192	189	176
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+6	+1	+11	79	+1	+1	44	146	152	149
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+12	+4	+11	172	-3	-1	133	151	176	155
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+23	-9	+21	261	+7	+2	223	189	213	170
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+45	+3	+33	330	+10	+3	239	130	186	135
Iron, steel and products distributors	+49	+4	+34	234	+12	+3	181	158	232	161
Nonferrous metals distributors	+37	0	+31	96	-2	+4	58	55	80	58
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+70	+15	+64	288	-12	-7	188	45	85	56
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+90	+17	+86	155	-14	-9	107	46	102	59
Waste materials dealers	+47	+13	+40	133	-7	-4	81	42	58	50
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+10	+1	+10	1,007	+3	0	558	105	106	104
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers[5]	+12	+6	+8	151	+2	+2	96	147	175	152
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+6	+6	+8	119	+21	+1	34	54	38	54
Coal wholesalers	+40	+8	+23	231	+12	+1	112	54	68	68
Farm supplies wholesalers	-12	-7	0	215	0	+6	161	149	117	109
Jewelry wholesalers	+3	+11	+6	120	-2	-4	58	155	166	185

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

OCTOBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change: Oct. 1955 from Oct. 1954	Sales: Percent change: Oct. 1955 from Sept. 1955	Sales: 10 mo. 1955 from 10 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting, Oct. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Oct. 1955 from Oct. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Oct. 1955 from Sept. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting, Oct. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Oct. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Oct. 1954	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Sept. 1955
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+11	0	+10	11,372	+8	+3	8,155	120	125	116
New England	+10	-2	+9	570	+3	+2	345	116	120	115
Middle Atlantic	+12	0	+9	2,468	+7	+2	1,436	103	107	100
East North Central	+16	+3	+13	2,338	+10	+4	1,724	111	119	110
West North Central	+3	-2	+9	1,053	+7	+4	826	136	130	124
South Atlantic	+10	-3	+12	1,257	+9	+5	933	137	141	126
East South Central	+8	+1	+5	508	+6	+5	400	139	135	132
West South Central	+11	0	+7	1,339	+5	+1	1,124	148	165	148
Mountain	+15	-8	+13	422	+17	-1	356	164	162	152
Pacific	+12	-1	+13	1,417	+9	+4	1,011	116	116	108
General-line grocery wholesalers	+9	-1	+5	718	+8	+8	594	118	114	109
Middle Atlantic	+11	-2	+2	60	+11	+11	34	122	124	109
East North Central	+4	-1	+5	122	+12	+10	100	135	125	116
West North Central	+10	+6	+7	101	0	+9	90	108	120	102
South Atlantic	+2	-10	+3	71	-1	+6	53	140	125	115
East South Central	+6	-3	-1	37	+6	+5	34	121	123	111
West South Central	+9	+2	+5	122	+13	+4	111	127	124	124
Mountain	+21	+12	+15	43	+6	+6	36	214	148	268
Pacific	+15	0	+9	150	+9	+9	129	76	79	72
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+6	-1	-5	303	-4	+4	228	77	81	70
New England	-2	-19	+1	17	-19	+9	10	119	130	91
Middle Atlantic	+7	-5	-11	127	+4	+9	95	58	51	49
East North Central	+5	+3	+3	41	+18	+4	31	98	87	96
West North Central	+6	+18	-5	14	-26	+2	13	137	197	149
South Atlantic	+4	-9	+7	32	-4	-1	25	118	130	107
South Central	+6	0	-3	38	+3	+2	30	78	103	79
Pacific	+10	+21	+2	33	-25	-6	23	43	69	49
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+11	-1	+6	632	+17	+1	411	39	39	39
New England	+1	-2	+10	18	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+12	-3	+3	124	+17	+8	67	22	23	20
East North Central	+13	+5	+4	127	+30	0	74	34	31	36
West North Central	+27	-12	+25	34	+36	-12	28	84	80	85
South Atlantic	+3	-3	+11	110	+3	-1	86	20	21	20
South Central	+10	-1	+10	80	+6	+4	48	67	83	63
Pacific	+7	-4	+5	130	+19	-4	91	34	30	35
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+1	0	+3	326	+5	+14	216	29	28	25
New England	-16	+2	-3	21	-11	+19	7	13	12	10
Middle Atlantic	+1	0	+8	47	+6	+18	23	31	32	24
East North Central	0	-4	+2	52	-13	+2	37	22	21	18
West North Central	-17	-10	-3	45	-1	+25	38	30	25	21
South Atlantic	+5	-7	+6	33	+5	+8	18	32	33	31
South Central	+8	+11	+1	34	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+15	+8	+6	66	+2	+13	52	30	35	28
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+13	-1	+11	308	+7	+2	220	166	173	160
New England	+11	-4	+11	19	+8	+1	14	151	139	145
Middle Atlantic	+12	+4	+9	70	-2	+1	45	143	159	139
East North Central	+7	-2	+9	52	+10	+5	32	179	177	170
West North Central	+5	-6	+6	25	+2	+1	22	151	159	144
South Atlantic	+19	+4	+13	47	+11	+1	37	164	175	169
East South Central	+13	-4	+9	14	+9	+1	12	223	233	214
West South Central	+21	-5	+11	34	+5	+3	29	197	229	180
Mountain	+6	-11	+13	15	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+18	-2	+13	32	+14	+4	18	146	138	136
Tobacco distributors	+5	-5	+5	274	-3	+1	142	57	60	52
New England	+5	-7	+9	32	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+4	-2	+1	39	-1	+7	11	63	59	57
East North Central	+2	-6	+5	52	-2	+4	30	66	62	61
West North Central	+3	-4	+3	24	0	+3	17	54	58	52
South Atlantic	+8	-8	+5	30	+2	-3	22	71	74	65
South Central	-2	-3	+4	41	-7	+1	16	51	53	48
Pacific	+23	-11	+12	39	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+10	+1	+8	424	+12	+3	211	176	167	173
New England	+11	-15	+8	25	+18	+5	12	113	104	103
Middle Atlantic	+8	+2	+7	265	+15	+3	114	189	169	186
East North Central	+15	+14	+10	49	+2	0	34	173	176	190
West North Central	+1	-12	-1	22	-2	+4	17	210	237	172
South Atlantic	+19	-1	+14	19	+34	+9	13	156	124	128
South Central	+6	-5	+11	15	+3	-2	11	191	191	186
Pacific	+27	+11	+13	27	+17	+8	8	118	145	141
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+18	+5	+15	320	+11	+3	195	143	149	143
Middle Atlantic	+15	+6	+11	100	+9	-4	41	102	100	111
East North Central	+18	-2	+16	71	+13	+9	49	145	159	127
West North Central	+28	-2	+11	16	+7	+3	13	178	237	174
South Atlantic	+40	+17	+18	33	-1	+5	20	249	351	255
South Central	+19	+7	+18	39	+5	0	35	161	182	174
Pacific	+16	+5	+25	40	+28	+4	20	150	139	154

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

OCTOBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change: Oct. 1955 from-- Oct. 1954	Sales: Percent change: Oct. 1955 from-- Sept. 1955	Sales: Percent change: 10 mo. 1955 from 10 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting Oct. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Oct. 1955 from-- Oct. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Oct. 1955 from-- Sept. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting Oct. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Oct. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Oct. 1954	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Sept. 1955
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+14	+5	+13	589	+10	-2	411	199	209	211
Middle Atlantic	+9	+4	+10	90	+33	+3	49	180	152	198
East North Central	+17	+12	+17	112	+16	+1	83	156	159	176
West North Central	+10	+1	+9	66	0	-1	27	243	267	230
South Atlantic	+18	+6	+18	69	+5	-7	53	182	210	202
East South Central	+20	+20	+15	88	+13	0	87	239	257	293
West South Central	+27	+6	+6	22	+13	0	21	170	182	174
Mountain	+9	-8	+16	48	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+10	-10	+16	78	+5	-7	44	266	280	242
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+15	-9	+14	520	+18	+6	481	148	146	128
New England	+17	-1	+10	36	+12	-3	35	100	101	104
Middle Atlantic	+13	-12	+10	36	+19	+9	28	133	123	106
East North Central	+19	-2	+12	157	+10	+3	146	162	173	153
West North Central	+2	-7	+8	44	+19	+13	41	177	164	143
South Atlantic	+16	-10	+16	83	+18	+6	78	158	151	128
East South Central	+18	-16	+13	29	+33	+19	28	178	158	125
West South Central	+14	-21	+18	59	+19	+5	56	146	144	116
Mountain	+22	-18	+15	22	+12	+10	22	132	143	98
Pacific	+29	-7	+23	54	+25	+8	47	150	156	127
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+3	-7	+10	325	+5	+6	251	151	147	126
New England	-9	-13	+6	27	+6	0	22	114	108	94
Middle Atlantic	+11	-4	+11	68	-18	+2	43	155	185	131
East North Central	+8	-4	+10	68	+18	+4	54	132	127	120
West North Central	-24	-13	-1	28	-6	-2	22	147	107	119
South Atlantic	+9	-11	+14	55	+8	+10	40	174	181	138
East South Central	+19	+1	+15	12	+27	+11	12	153	144	139
West South Central	+4	-6	+8	23	+15	+7	22	194	189	169
Pacific	0	-14	+17	38	+9	+18	31	152	136	110
Hardware wholesalers	+9	0	+8	234	+7	0	193	241	245	242
Middle Atlantic	+20	+5	+8	36	+4	-3	23	226	253	242
East North Central	+11	-1	+5	42	+5	0	33	187	204	187
West North Central	+8	-3	+4	17	+6	0	17	233	236	225
South Atlantic	+8	-3	+10	27	+4	+1	20	263	284	255
East South Central	+11	0	+12	24	+8	-1	22	205	207	210
West South Central	+5	-1	+9	29	+8	+1	26	247	246	245
Mountain	+25	-4	+22	22	+16	-2	22	279	307	272
Pacific	-10	+1	+10	27	+4	-1	24	326	293	338
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+10	0	+13	359	+11	0	237	159	168	159
New England	+3	0	+13	15	+6	0	8	196	190	197
Middle Atlantic	+11	+1	+9	109	+16	+1	55	161	172	151
East North Central	+15	+1	+14	54	+11	0	40	146	150	149
West North Central	+8	+1	+7	32	+3	-2	28	140	143	139
South Atlantic	+14	+2	+19	55	+15	-3	47	181	186	196
South Central	+8	-4	+10	51	+3	0	43	182	207	169
Pacific	+12	+3	+20	32	+17	+4	8	143	142	149
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+8	-4	+17	564	+12	0	389	109	109	105
New England	+4	-1	+16	16	+6	-2	14	160	160	158
Middle Atlantic	+15	-3	+13	110	+13	+3	71	116	122	107
East North Central	+5	-6	+17	125	+14	+2	59	93	92	90
West North Central	+7	-7	+18	60	+8	-7	42	82	85	87
South Atlantic	+24	+5	+27	52	+51	+6	43	92	79	93
South Central	+5	-2	+12	77	+13	-2	62	171	168	171
Pacific	-3	-2	+21	103	+3	+4	78	115	117	104
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+20	-3	+13	874	+6	+1	755	151	180	143
New England	+30	-13	+6	9	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+7	-1	+10	55	-7	+1	37	96	132	92
East North Central	+15	+9	+20	100	+5	+4	78	141	158	149
West North Central	+27	-7	+12	61	+4	0	57	167	207	154
South Atlantic	+23	-22	+15	43	-7	+9	38	161	223	111
South Central	+20	-6	+12	476	+4	-1	430	158	184	147
Mountain	+54	+5	+21	62	+21	0	52	206	239	221
Pacific	+21	+2	+11	68	+6	-1	60	138	159	139

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight. Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

NOVEMBER 1955

FOR RELEASE
JANUARY 6, 1956

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country (see note on page 4). The reporting panel is part of a probability sample recently developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers in November 1955 rose 2 percent over October and were 13 percent above November a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first 11 months in 1955 were 11 percent higher than in a comparable period of 1954.

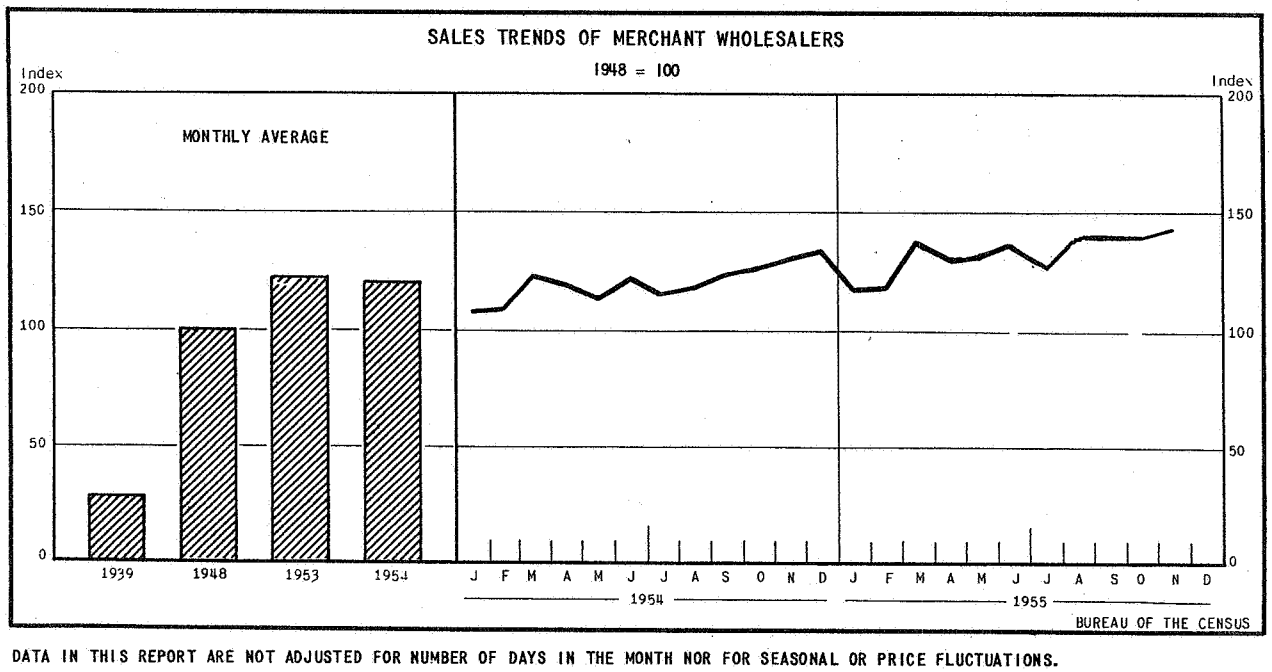
Most trades reported small sales increases over October, with wines and distilled spirits reporting the principal increase, a seasonal gain of 17 percent. However, 15 trades reported declines, mostly seasonal. Compared with a year ago, increased sales were shown in all trades except farm supplies, down 2 percent, and lumber, which reported no change from a year ago. Substantial gains were reported by motor vehicles (32%), waste materials (40%), nonferrous metal products (40%), iron and steel products (47%), and iron and steel scrap (58%)--the 11th consecutive month in which this trade reported the largest gain.

The New England, East South Central and Mountain Divisions reported small declines while the West South Central Division showed no change from the previous month. The five remaining geographic divisions noted increased sales ranging from 2 to 5 percent. All geographic divisions, however, experienced sales gains over a year ago, with East North Central Division (up 19%) showing the principal gain.

Inventories

November 30 inventories of wholesalers rose slightly (1%) above October 31 stocks and were 6 percent above the year-ago inventory level. The November stock-sales ratio of 115 percent, was 3 points below the ratio of the previous month and 9 points lower than the November 1954 ratio.

Most trades registered small changes from previous-month inventories, the largest being increases for fresh fruits and vegetables (14%), motor vehicles (13%), and farm supplies (9%). Changes from previous-year stocks were more substantial. Motor-vehicle inventories, up 29 percent, again showed the principal increase; other large inventory gains were in books, periodicals, and newspapers (25%), and piece goods (20%).



DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

For sale by the Bureau of the Census: single copy—10¢, annual subscription—$1.00

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

NOVEMBER 1955

Kind of business	Sales: Percent change Nov. 1955 from-- Nov. 1954	Sales: Percent change Nov. 1955 from-- Oct. 1955	Sales: 11 mo. 1955 from 11 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting, Nov. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change Nov. 1955 from-- Nov. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change Nov. 1955 from-- Oct. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting, Nov. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Nov. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Nov. 1954	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Oct. 1955
Merchant wholesalers	+13	+2	+11	11,633	+6	+1	8,575	115	124	118
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+9	+3	+2	1,362	+4	+3	1,057	88	87	88
General-line grocery wholesalers	+10	+3	+6	811	+6	+1	692	106	107	105
Nonaffiliated[2]	+6	+2	+3	620	+6	+1	553	123	123	122
Voluntary groups	+18	+3	+7	168	+4	-1	122	93	97	93
Retailer-cooperative	+12	+5	+13	23	+9	+5	17	80	79	79
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+3	-2	-4	297	0	+8	206	99	94	93
Confectionery wholesalers	+9	+5	+4	97	+5	-5	41	78	80	86
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+10	+11	+4	157	-2	+2	118	23	24	23
Edible farm products distributors	+12	+6	+6	873	+11	+1	686	32	32	34
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+15	+6	+7	562	+13	-4	461	33	33	37
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+7	+6	+4	311	+7	+14	225	30	30	28
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+7	+10	+6	506	+6	+4	451	103	113	107
Beer distributors	+2	-1	+4	113	+4	-5	104	65	61	67
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+10	+17	+7	393	+7	+7	347	123	145	132
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+9	0	+11	828	+8	0	615	130	140	132
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+9	0	+10	329	+5	-2	225	160	162	165
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+9	+2	+12	345	+16	+5	295	81	86	79
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+14	-4	+11	154	+8	-1	95	154	168	148
Tobacco distributors	+9	+5	+5	246	-1	+1	164	57	61	59
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+14	+1	+8	383	+11	-2	193	170	176	174
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+17	-4	+7	98	+11	-3	47	141	156	136
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+13	+4	+7	164	+6	-2	88	173	180	180
Piece goods converters	+11	+4	+12	121	+20	0	58	207	195	226
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+12	+3	+15	300	+7	-2	179	180	183	180
Furniture wholesalers	+11	+3	+17	109	+1	-1	64	163	174	172
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+12	+3	+14	191	+10	-2	115	187	187	183
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+15	+3	+10	480	+7	-2	316	106	113	115
Paper wholesalers	+16	+3	+11	309	+7	-2	238	102	110	110
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+8	+4	+10	171	+6	-3	78	143	139	152
Inedible farm products merchants	+4	+15	+1	270	-10	0	175	122	150	137
Automotive wholesalers	+21	0	+16	631	+11	+2	464	154	174	158
Motor-vehicle distributors	+32	+6	+22	70	+29	+13	53	87	100	91
Automotive equiptment, tire-tube wholesalers	+18	-3	+13	561	+6	0	411	191	210	189
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+14	+6	+12	891	+11	-1	794	133	138	143
Electric equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+12	+1	+13	570	+10	-2	533	141	141	144
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+17	+11	+11	321	+12	0	261	126	134	142
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+11	-7	+10	567	+8	-1	415	192	199	180
Hardware wholesalers	+12	-3	+9	219	+8	0	187	221	227	214
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+11	-10	+13	348	+7	-3	228	154	162	141
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+4	-11	+16	575	+17	+1	412	114	99	101
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	0	-11	+17	333	+18	+3	258	127	106	112
Construction materials distributors	+12	-10	+13	242	+15	-2	154	92	88	83
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+16	-2	+14	2,060	+3	+1	1,606	172	187	167
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+13	0	+13	129	-10	-2	96	135	150	134
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+12	-4	+11	150	+6	-2	97	137	132	123
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+18	0	+13	902	+15	0	721	147	160	146
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+11	-2	+9	430	+13	+2	333	208	205	196
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+17	+10	+11	68	+16	+3	36	151	153	155
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+13	+5	+11	176	-1	-2	135	143	168	154
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+20	-7	+20	272	+1	+2	224	251	281	228
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+45	+1	+34	325	-2	0	227	127	189	124
Iron, steel and products distributors	+47	+1	+35	228	-3	+1	163	157	247	152
Nonferrous metals distributors	+40	+1	+32	97	+5	-1	64	62	84	58
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+51	-2	+63	301	+7	-2	198	45	60	45
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+58	-5	+82	167	-1	-1	114	43	58	39
Waste materials dealers	+40	+4	+40	134	+16	-3	84	48	63	54
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+17	+4	+11	1,035	-1	-1	623	98	113	111
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+12	+1	+8	145	+8	-2	94	143	148	157
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+16	-11	+9	124	+25	-5	47	110	95	109
Coal wholesalers	+28	-3	+24	224	+5	-4	110	53	77	58
Farm supplies wholesalers	-2	+3	-1	204	-11	+9	157	114	134	130
Jewelry wholesalers	+14	+4	+7	142	-7	-6	76	212	243	220

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

NOVEMBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change			Number of establishments reporting, Nov. 1955	Percent change, Nov. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting, Nov. 1955	Nov. 1955	Nov. 1954	Oct. 1955
	Nov. 1955 from--		11 mo. 1955 from 11 mo. 1954		Nov. 1954	Oct. 1955				
	Nov. 1954	Oct. 1955								
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+13	+2	+11	11,633	+6	+1	8,575	115	124	118
New England	+13	-2	+9	545	+5	+3	356	119	129	115
Middle Atlantic	+13	+2	+9	2,621	+4	0	1,587	97	107	100
East North Central	+19	+2	+14	2,220	+6	0	1,688	94	108	98
West North Central	+7	+5	+9	1,117	+5	-1	904	138	141	149
South Atlantic	+13	+3	+12	1,160	+7	+1	911	132	141	137
East South Central	+5	-1	+5	646	+7	0	518	145	145	141
West South Central	+10	0	+7	1,418	+7	0	1,175	154	167	153
Mountain	+11	-4	+13	429	+5	+1	357	154	155	145
Pacific	+13	+5	+13	1,477	+7	+2	1,079	119	120	120
General-line grocery wholesalers	+10	+3	+6	811	+6	+1	692	106	107	105
Middle Atlantic	+15	+8	+3	80	+1	+5	72	105	103	104
East North Central	+8	+3	+5	98	+15	0	80	120	112	121
West North Central	+8	+2	+7	127	+11	+7	122	112	104	105
South Atlantic	+10	+3	+4	61	-6	-2	45	115	119	119
East South Central	-4	0	-1	57	+1	-1	45	131	120	132
West South Central	+9	+3	+5	164	+9	+4	132	106	109	105
Mountain	+40	-18	+17	40	+5	-4	38	82	103	70
Pacific	+27	+4	+11	173	+21	+2	152	76	87	77
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+3	-2	-4	297	0	+8	206	99	94	93
New England	-2	-19	+1	18	-3	+9	9	120	93	91
Middle Atlantic	+8	-4	-10	118	-4	+15	84	64	75	54
East North Central	+5	+3	+3	48	+1	-2	26	106	98	93
West North Central	+4	+6	-4	11	+6	+8	7	108	104	106
South Atlantic	+13	-7	+8	28	-12	-3	20	145	187	148
South Central	+8	+1	-2	34	+14	+5	29	113	112	110
Pacific	-5	+4	+1	38	+9	+13	30	124	78	132
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+15	+6	+7	562	+13	-4	461	33	33	37
New England	+7	+35	+10	14	-6	-29	11	19	13	34
Middle Atlantic	+17	+12	+4	100	+22	-1	59	31	30	36
East North Central	+17	+1	+6	118	+22	-10	94	29	28	33
West North Central	-5	-3	+21	38	+4	+5	33	73	66	69
South Atlantic	+22	+8	+12	104	+6	-5	98	38	27	44
South Central	+16	+19	+11	56	-11	+2	47	28	36	34
Pacific	+14	-1	+6	115	+5	-2	104	33	37	34
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+7	+6	+4	311	+7	+14	225	30	30	28
New England	+3	+2	-3	19	-11	+9	13	63	71	57
Middle Atlantic	+7	+11	+8	36	+17	+13	22	23	21	23
East North Central	+10	+6	+3	40	+10	+19	31	21	20	19
West North Central	-1	+8	-3	48	+1	+20	41	30	28	32
South Atlantic	+10	+10	+6	30	+3	+10	17	24	22	22
South Central	+3	+13	+1	43	+13	+17	25	44	39	40
Pacific	+18	-7	+8	67	+5	+10	54	33	44	29
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+9	0	+10	329	+5	-2	225	160	162	165
New England	+8	-1	+9	17	+10	+1	13	148	144	143
Middle Atlantic	+9	-3	+9	67	-1	-1	38	141	145	137
East North Central	+8	+2	+9	56	+8	-2	35	152	151	162
West North Central	+6	-1	+6	20	+4	-5	17	163	166	170
South Atlantic	+11	+4	+13	41	+4	0	35	148	157	155
East South Central	+7	+3	+9	19	+12	-3	14	188	175	207
West South Central	+11	+1	+11	58	+4	0	40	182	198	183
Mountain	+3	+3	+11	17	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific	+10	-1	+13	34	+8	-4	21	155	156	160
Tobacco distributors	+9	+5	+5	246	-1	+1	164	57	61	59
New England	+4	+4	+8	23	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+9	+4	+2	49	+1	+3	28	58	62	59
East North Central	-14	+5	+6	43	+4	+1	29	39	47	41
West North Central	+9	+9	+3	29	+8	+3	23	70	69	73
South Atlantic	+4	+2	+5	30	-5	-2	26	69	73	72
South Central	+5	+1	+4	29	-7	+4	22	76	73	74
Pacific	+7	+13	+11	38	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+14	+1	+8	383	+11	-2	193	170	176	174
New England	+5	-14	+8	11	+13	+9	6	177	188	133
Middle Atlantic	+16	+3	+8	267	+15	-2	125	174	180	183
East North Central	+5	+1	+10	24	-18	-14	10	72	100	100
West North Central	-7	+5	-2	20	-5	+1	15	200	198	213
South Atlantic	+9	-12	+13	23	+17	+2	17	172	169	147
South Central	+12	-8	+11	21	+9	-7	14	178	177	166
Pacific	+23	+17	+14	14	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+12	+3	+15	300	+7	-2	179	180	183	180
Middle Atlantic	+16	+9	+11	90	+4	-1	40	171	180	175
East North Central	+7	0	+15	65	+14	0	43	192	202	198
West North Central	-7	-3	+10	19	+6	-2	13	224	214	203
South Atlantic	+3	-4	+16	26	-11	-3	16	218	191	212
South Central	+17	-12	+18	38	+17	-5	33	169	170	150
Pacific	+13	+6	+23	40	+18	-4	15	131	129	153

See page 4 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

NOVEMBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales: Percent change, Nov. 1955 from-- Nov. 1954	Sales: Percent change, Nov. 1955 from-- Oct. 1955	Sales: 11 mo. 1955 from 11 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting Nov. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Nov. 1955 from-- Nov. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Nov. 1955 from-- Oct. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting Nov. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Nov. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Nov. 1954	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Oct. 1955
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+18	-3	+13	561	+6	0	411	191	210	189
Middle Atlantic	+16	-3	+10	87	-2	-5	58	147	158	158
East North Central	+25	-6	+18	88	0	-2	66	154	192	154
West North Central	+13	-11	+9	56	+3	+3	20	229	246	202
South Atlantic	+16	-6	+18	53	+3	-1	39	231	294	211
East South Central	+16	-2	+15	81	+18	+2	81	202	199	192
West South Central	+4	-9	+5	43	+15	0	38	258	231	243
Mountain	+29	+18	+17	47	+9	-1	42	165	177	185
Pacific	+26	+10	+17	92	+9	+1	55	193	217	201
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+12	+1	+13	570	+10	-2	533	141	141	144
New England	+27	-2	+11	32	+2	-1	32	115	158	113
Middle Atlantic	+1	+5	+8	70	0	-3	63	136	126	150
East North Central	+15	0	+12	157	+3	-4	147	123	132	127
West North Central	+16	+7	+9	65	+11	-1	61	164	168	175
South Atlantic	+21	+7	+16	82	+26	+2	76	139	134	148
East South Central	+8	-18	+13	33	+26	+2	28	175	154	133
West South Central	+17	+6	+18	60	+15	+1	57	187	191	194
Mountain	+17	+5	+15	21	+13	+1	21	126	131	132
Pacific	+15	0	+22	50	+24	-1	48	133	127	136
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+17	+11	+11	321	+12	0	261	126	134	142
New England	+8	-6	+6	15	+46	+4	13	103	81	103
Middle Atlantic	+31	+14	+13	81	0	-2	57	112	148	131
East North Central	+12	+9	+10	67	+16	+3	58	119	118	129
West North Central	+2	+16	-1	35	+3	-4	29	134	132	165
South Atlantic	+13	+8	+14	43	+19	-1	39	137	140	149
East South Central	+4	+23	+14	12	+29	+8	9	181	133	206
West South Central	+12	+20	+8	21	+24	+3	16	205	196	245
Pacific	+36	+16	+19	42	+11	-3	35	93	122	113
Hardware wholesalers	+12	-3	+9	219	+8	0	187	221	227	214
Middle Atlantic	+9	-5	+8	38	+6	+2	22	182	195	169
East North Central	+20	-3	+6	36	+13	0	34	211	211	202
West North Central	+5	-8	+4	22	+6	-3	22	243	242	229
South Atlantic	+20	+15	+11	25	+12	+4	20	223	250	248
East South Central	+2	-4	+11	26	+6	0	25	246	230	237
West South Central	+19	0	+10	21	+3	-3	17	162	192	167
Mountain	+8	-14	+21	10	+8	0	10	288	290	247
Pacific	+13	-3	+10	34	+7	0	31	255	259	245
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+11	-10	+13	348	+7	-3	228	154	162	141
New England	+18	-6	+13	22	+2	+1	16	179	198	163
Middle Atlantic	+13	-8	+10	106	+6	-2	50	132	154	122
East North Central	+15	-15	+14	43	+8	0	38	114	121	96
West North Central	-3	-11	+6	32	+10	0	32	201	178	179
South Atlantic	+22	-3	+19	60	+7	-10	50	142	165	153
South Central	+6	-5	+9	35	+20	-1	26	166	196	163
Pacific	-6	-17	+17	41	+2	-7	12	258	193	196
Lumber, construction materials dealers	+4	-11	+16	575	+17	+1	412	114	99	101
New England	-4	-5	+13	24	+20	+1	18	84	73	80
Middle Atlantic	+2	-11	+12	117	+13	-2	74	98	86	88
East North Central	+11	-11	+16	139	+9	0	79	90	93	81
West North Central	-4	-17	+16	36	+19	-1	26	145	124	126
South Atlantic	+30	-1	+27	44	+70	+14	39	137	89	115
South Central	+9	-7	+12	85	+22	-3	75	126	121	122
Pacific	-3	-14	+18	105	+2	+2	78	119	94	99
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+18	0	+13	902	+15	0	721	147	160	146
Middle Atlantic	-7	-4	+5	85	+11	0	56	114	92	104
East North Central	+37	+4	+22	105	+9	0	91	129	159	136
West North Central	+22	-4	+13	54	+7	-3	44	168	189	163
South Atlantic	+15	+9	+15	41	+16	+2	34	126	131	157
South Central	+31	+1	+14	466	+4	0	397	156	184	154
Mountain	+10	-11	+20	67	+2	+1	55	207	230	176
Pacific	+13	+3	+11	74	-10	+5	40	226	244	233

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight. Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.

MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, *Director*

DECEMBER 1955

FOR RELEASE
FEBRUARY 9, 1956

SALES AND INVENTORIES

Annual Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers for the year 1955 were 10 percent ahead of 1954. Durable goods trades, in total, showed an increase of 17 percent over 1954 sales as compared to an increase of 5 percent by the non-durable goods trades.

Increases over annual 1954 sales were reported in all but 3 trades--inedible farm products (-1%), farm supplies (-2%), and grocery-specialty lines (-5%). Iron and steel scrap, which had led all trades in the year-ago sales comparisons throughout the year, registered the principal gain (76%) over annual 1954 sales. Other substantial increases were reported for waste materials (40%), iron and steel products (36%), and non-ferrous metals (32%). The smallest gains among the durable goods trades were indicated by jewelry (7%) and hardware (8%). Among the non-durable goods trades the larger gains were shown by coal (24%), retailer-cooperative grocers (13%), and industrial chemicals (12%), paints and varnishes (10%).

All geographic divisions shared in the increased sales during 1955. The East North Central Division recorded the principal gain, 14 percent over 1954 sales while the East South Central Division, up 4 percent, indicated the smallest increase.

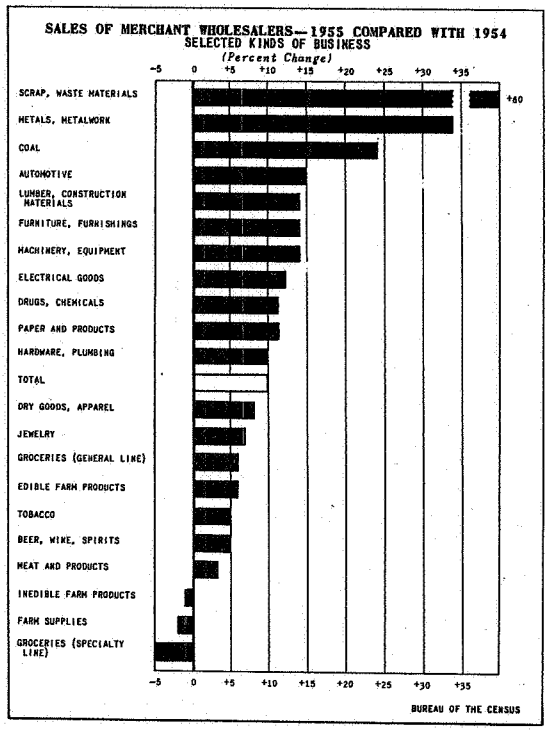
December Sales

December 1955 sales of merchant wholesalers were off 2 percent from November, but were 7 percent higher than sales a year ago. The sharpest decline from the previous month was a seasonal drop of 20 percent for clothing, furnishings, and footwear. Other large decreases were noted by dry goods (14%), plumbing and heating (14%), automotive equipment (13%), and construction materials (13%). Large increases over November were reported by wines and distilled spirits (16%), amusement and sporting goods (12%), tobacco (11%), and beer (11%). Compared with December sales a year ago, gains were noted in all but 8 trades. Farm supplies (-18%) and inedible farm products (-19%), showed the sharpest declines. Iron and steel scrap (40%) and iron and steel products (39%), experienced the largest increases.

December 1955 sales in most geographic divisions were slightly below November but moderately above last December. The West North Central Division, down 7 percent, reported the largest decrease from the previous month while the New England and East North Central Divisions shared the principal increase (13%) over a year ago.

Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at year-end 1955 were up 6 percent over stocks on hand a year ago, but were down 3 percent from November 30, 1955. The December stock-sales ratio of 115 percent was approximately the same as the December 1954 ratio, but was one point below the ratio of the previous month.



By trade, significant changes from previous month inventories were shown in amusement and sporting goods (-11%), coal (-12%), beer (-12%), fresh fruits and vegetables (-14%), and wine and distilled spirits (-20%). Changes from previous year stocks were more substantial with sharp declines shown by farm supplies (27%), and inedible farm products (29%), and large increases shown by plumbing and heating goods (20%), piece goods converters (21%), electrical equipment and supplies (21%), lumber and millwork (26%), and motor-vehicles (30%).

All geographic divisions noted declines from previous month inventories ranging from 2 to 7 percent. In comparison with a year ago, only two divisions--the West South Central (-2%) and the East South Central (-8%) reported declines and these were largely due to substantial reductions in stocks of inedible farm products in these regions.

General

Data shown in this report are based on reports submitted by a reporting panel of over 11,000 establishments which are representative of all merchant wholesaler firms in the country. (See note on page 6.) The reporting panel is part of a probability sample developed by the Bureau of the Census to provide national dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories of merchant wholesalers by kind of business.

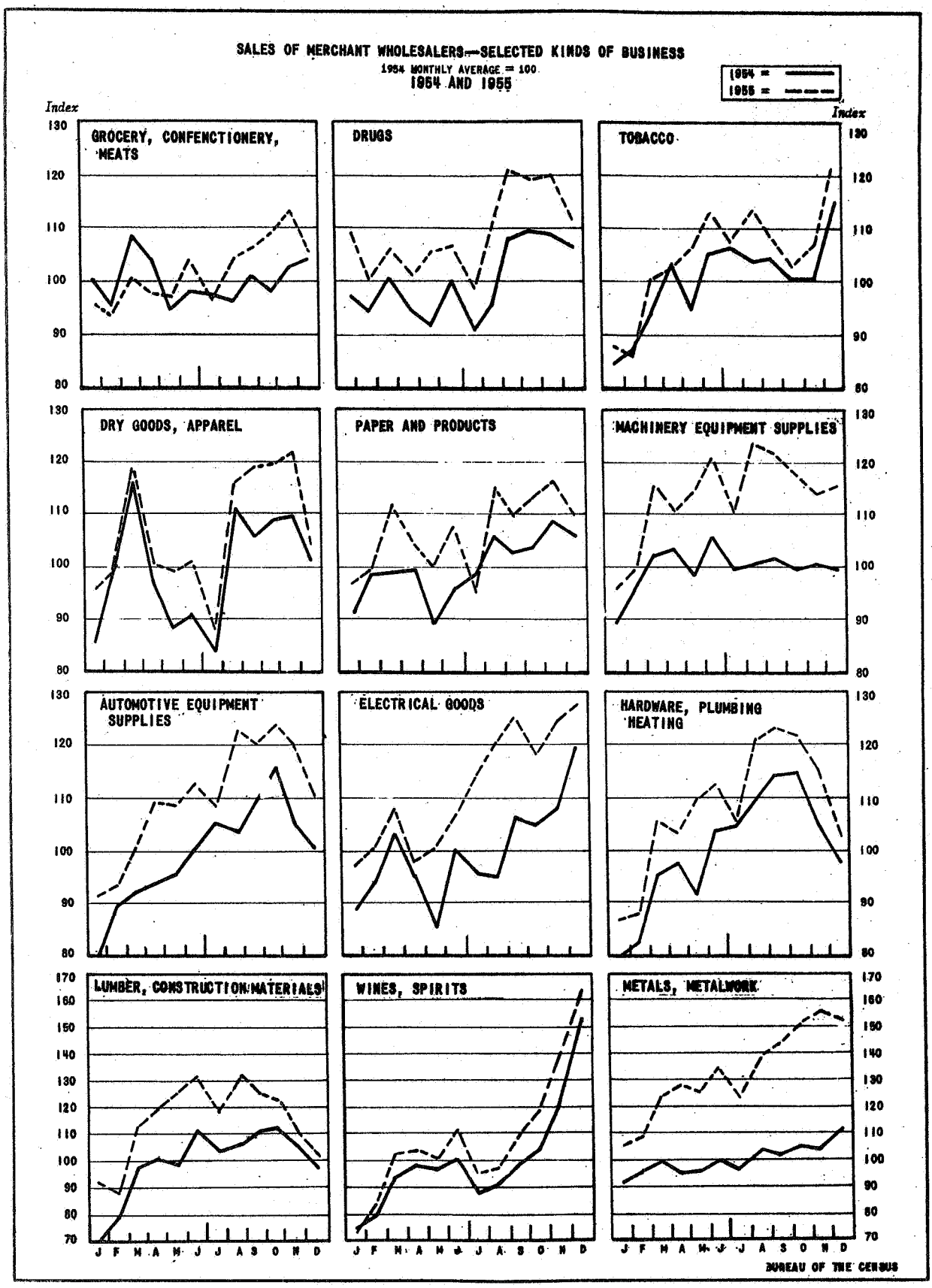

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100
1954 AND 1955
1954 =
1955 =
Index
GROCERY, CONFENCTIONERY, MEATS
DRUGS
TOBACCO
DRY GOODS, APPAREL
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
MACHINERY EQUIPMENT SUPPLIES
AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT SUPPLIES
ELECTRICAL GOODS
HARDWARE, PLUMBING HEATING
LUMBER, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
WINES, SPIRITS
METALS, METALWORK
J F M A M J J A S O N D
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Table 1.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

DECEMBER 1955

Kind of business	Sales: Percent change, Dec. 1955 from-- Dec. 1954	Sales: Percent change, Dec. 1955 from-- Nov. 1955	Sales: 12 mo. 1955 from 12 mo. 1954	Sales: Number of establishments reporting, Dec. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Dec. 1955 from-- Dec. 1954	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Percent change, Dec. 1955 from-- Nov. 1955	Inventory, end-of-month (at cost): Number of establishments reporting, Dec. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Dec. 1955	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Dec. 1954	Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent): Nov. 1955
Merchant wholesalers	+7	-2	+10	11,378	+6	-3	7,758	115	115	116
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-2	-4	+2	1,308	+1	-4	1,039	85	83	86
General-line grocery wholesalers	+6	-2	+6	786	+2	-5	676	108	114	111
Nonaffiliated[2]	+1	-4	+3	610	+4	-5	538	123	127	127
Voluntary groups	+9	0	+7	157	0	-4	125	95	102	99
Retailer-cooperative	+13	+3	+13	19	-5	-4	13	84	100	89
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-10	-7	-5	289	+2	-3	206	86	74	87
Confectionery wholesalers	-3	0	+4	83	-4	-10	36	67	74	74
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-5	-6	+3	150	-3	-3	121	26	23	24
Edible farm products distributors	+8	+1	+6	885	+13	-7	692	24	23	27
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+11	0	+7	555	+18	-5	456	29	27	31
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+5	+2	+4	330	+2	-14	236	17	17	21
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+3	+14	+5	519	+6	-18	439	79	71	100
Beer distributors	+2	+11	+4	131	+4	-12	105	69	47	59
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+3	+16	+7	388	+7	-20	334	83	82	120
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+6	-7	+11	686	+6	-4	438	136	138	137
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	-7	+10	308	+6	-5	215	154	152	157
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+9	-6	+12	219	+6	-1	155	84	86	82
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+6	-8	+10	159	+7	-3	68	205	191	194
Tobacco distributors	+5	+11	+5	271	+1	-9	129	51	52	63
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+3	-15	+8	405	+3	-3	193	202	183	177
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	0	-20	+6	95	+1	0	41	192	168	165
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+9	-14	+7	193	-5	-7	95	201	209	177
Piece goods converters	-5	-12	+11	117	+21	+3	57	214	159	188
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+13	-8	+14	331	+9	-6	165	132	127	126
Furniture wholesalers	+9	0	+16	126	+1	-5	72	124	130	139
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+16	-12	+14	205	+15	-7	93	136	126	120
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+12	-4	+11	485	+7	+1	309	99	103	91
Paper wholesalers	+13	-5	+11	303	+8	+2	221	93	97	86
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+7	+1	+9	182	+2	-1	88	146	153	134
Inedible farm products merchants	-19	-12	-1	268	-29	-4	174	123	141	111
Automotive wholesalers	+9	-11	+15	641	+13	0	410	203	183	178
Motor-vehicle distributors	+6	-7	+20	76	+30	+9	50	126	98	105
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+10	-13	+13	565	+8	-2	360	240	231	210
Electrical, electronic, appliance goods distributors	+11	+3	+12	879	+19	-5	754	123	113	136
Electric equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+12	+6	+13	569	+21	-5	529	121	109	141
Electrical appliances, TV and radio sets and parts, and electronic parts, equipment distributors	+11	0	+11	310	+16	-4	225	127	118	131
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+9	-12	+10	545	+13	-2	368	222	218	199
Hardware wholesalers	+6	-10	+8	222	+8	-3	171	236	230	216
Plumbing, heating goods distributors	+13	-14	+13	323	+20	-1	197	205	201	178
Lumber, construction materials distributors	0	-9	+14	548	+20	+4	367	126	102	110
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-1	-7	+16	327	+26	+5	252	136	108	123
Construction materials distributors	+1	-13	+12	221	+3	+1	115	100	90	81
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+21	+1	+14	2,036	+9	+1	1,388	190	208	189
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors	+14	+3	+13	128	+9	0	74	157	173	156
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+14	+8	+11	129	+9	+1	85	162	146	165
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies houses	+26	+1	+14	917	+5	+1	705	167	194	169
Professional equipment, supplies houses[4]	+13	+4	+9	440	+11	0	262	201	194	217
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses	+16	+10	+12	79	+6	+2	41	153	158	173
Service establishment equipment, supplies houses	+13	-8	+11	163	-2	0	86	162	182	145
Other machinery, equipment distributors	+21	+1	+20	259	+17	+2	176	285	300	268
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+36	+1	+34	308	+10	+3	200	139	182	130
Iron, steel and products distributors	+39	-1	+36	214	+15	+4	137	175	223	161
Nonferrous metals distributors	+31	+4	+32	94	-5	0	63	73	110	73
Iron-steel scrap, waste materials dealers	+37	+2	+60	296	+8	+4	167	61	76	57
Iron-steel scrap dealers	+40	+5	+76	172	+2	+9	91	54	74	47
Waste materials dealers	+32	-3	+40	124	+15	0	76	69	78	70
Other merchant wholesalers[4]	+10	+3	+11	967	-5	-5	526	94	111	98
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	+15	+12	+9	139	-3	-11	75	103	105	148
Book, periodical, newspaper wholesalers	+13	+3	+9	110	+6	-3	31	128	147	144
Coal wholesalers	+22	+8	+24	220	+10	-12	108	47	59	60
Farm supplies wholesalers	-18	+10	-2	193	-27	+6	147	168	203	184
Jewelry wholesalers	+4	+10	+7	122	-4	-5	58	153	190	159

See page 6 for footnotes.

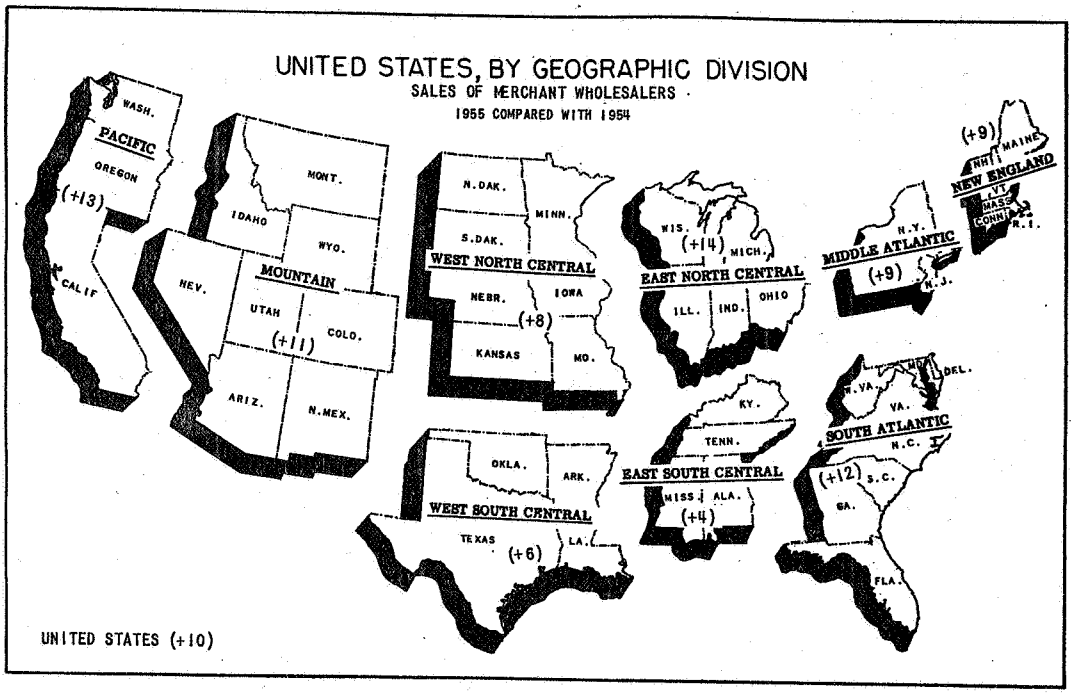


Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

DECEMBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division (See map above)	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change			Number of establishments reporting, Dec. 1955	Percent change, Dec. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting, Dec. 1955	Dec. 1955	Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955
	Dec. 1955 from--		12 mo. 1955 from 12 mo. 1954							
	Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955			Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955				
Merchant wholesalers, total[4]	+7	-2	+10	11,378	+6	-3	7,758	115	115	116
New England	+13	+1	+9	556	+3	-2	332	101	109	103
Middle Atlantic	+6	-3	+9	2,592	+7	-2	1,488	103	99	101
East North Central	+13	-3	+14	2,190	+8	-2	1,563	104	107	100
West North Central	+1	-7	+8	1,095	+6	-2	769	149	139	141
South Atlantic	+8	-2	+12	1,164	+10	-7	853	119	113	128
East South Central	0	+1	+4	506	-8	-6	374	123	139	135
West South Central	+1	+1	+6	1,394	-2	-6	1,119	134	142	146
Mountain	-1	-3	+11	404	+5	-4	306	144	140	149
Pacific	+11	0	+13	1,477	+14	-2	954	124	117	129
General-line grocery wholesalers	+6	-2	+6	786	+2	-5	676	108	114	111
Middle Atlantic	+19	+3	+5	84	+2	+2	76	115	139	113
East North Central	+15	+4	+6	103	-4	-7	78	94	116	104
West North Central	+11	-6	+8	122	+7	-3	113	116	118	114
South Atlantic	-8	-1	+3	57	+10	-3	42	133	113	140
East South Central	-7	-4	-2	46	-2	-2	40	102	106	101
West South Central	-1	-6	+5	164	+3	-10	140	117	115	125
Mountain	+20	+3	+18	35	+6	-14	33	69	70	83
Pacific	+5	-5	+10	168	-6	-2	150	102	115	96
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-10	-7	-5	289	+2	-3	206	86	74	87
New England	+2	+4	+1	17	-18	-7	9	80	115	95
Middle Atlantic	-16	-12	-10	123	0	+7	81	77	66	70
East North Central	-5	+6	+3	35	+35	-3	26	85	63	90
West North Central	+5	-3	-3	9	-11	-5	7	80	71	70
South Atlantic	+11	0	+8	24	+8	-6	16	174	158	184
South Central	-31	-11	-5	40	-11	-27	35	77	72	110
Pacific	+1	-6	+1	38	+17	-8	30	74	67	75
Dairy, poultry products distributors	+11	0	+7	555	+18	-5	456	29	27	31
New England	+3	-3	+9	17	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+2	+2	+4	93	+7	-18	59	18	17	22
East North Central	+13	-7	+6	104	+20	-8	79	23	23	27
South Atlantic	+9	+7	+12	103	+5	-1	94	32	31	36
South Central	+17	.0	+11	64	-2	+3	55	24	30	23
Pacific	+9	+3	+6	109	+10	-7	100	36	35	39

See page 6 for footnotes.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

DECEMBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division (See map, page 4)	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change				Percent change, Dec. 1955 from--					
	Dec. 1955 from--		12 mo. 1955 from 12 mo. 1954	Number of establishments reporting Dec. 1955	Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955	Number of establishments reporting Dec. 1955	Dec. 1955	Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955
	Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955								
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+5	+2	+4	330	+2	-14	236	17	17	21
New England	-13	-25	-3	11	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic	+8	+1	+8	43	+4	-21	20	12	12	15
East North Central	+5	+5	+3	38	-8	-21	28	8	10	11
West North Central	-1	-1	-3	57	-27	-21	44	25	20	29
South Atlantic	+3	+19	+6	29	+6	-4	22	20	18	24
South Central	+6	+16	+2	46	+14	-5	33	27	26	34
Pacific	+7	-6	+8	77	-1	-14	59	17	18	24
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	-7	+10	308	+6	-5	215	154	152	157
New England	+6	+4	+10	18	+8	-8	13	143	139	162
Middle Atlantic	+2	-16	+9	65	-1	-6	38	141	137	148
East North Central	+9	-8	+9	56	+15	-3	33	140	133	133
West North Central	+4	-2	+6	27	+2	-3	24	157	162	159
South Atlantic	+7	-1	+12	47	+4	-6	36	159	163	169
East South Central	+9	0	+9	15	+6	-7	12	156	160	168
West South Central	+10	0	+11	41	+5	-7	33	179	192	193
Mountain	+3	-9	+10	12	+2	-7	8	215	205	208
Pacific	+4	-10	+12	27	+15	-5	18	148	131	140
Tobacco distributors	+5	+11	+5	271	+1	-9	129	51	52	63
New England	+5	+6	+8	30	-6	-11	9	58	70	66
Middle Atlantic	+3	+11	+2	54	+16	-1	32	49	46	57
East North Central	+5	+10	+6	44	+7	-16	26	45	43	54
West North Central	-11	+10	+1	21	-21	-14	15	56	64	66
South Atlantic	+11	+17	+6	29	-5	-7	22	45	56	59
South Central	+11	+20	+5	43	-10	-15	18	53	45	83
Pacific	+14	+5	+11	39	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+3	-15	+8	405	+3	-3	193	202	183	177
New England	+1	-19	+7	16	-20	-10	6	171	203	123
Middle Atlantic	0	-14	+7	264	+7	-6	122	190	164	167
East North Central	+6	-15	+9	35	-9	-4	19	173	213	160
West North Central	+15	-27	0	18	+2	+4	11	318	324	278
South Atlantic	+11	-20	+13	15	+1	-12	7	181	191	157
South Central	+16	-9	+11	26	-18	-13	10	120	176	117
Pacific	+13	-13	+14	30	+7	+7	17	333	219	285
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+13	-8	+14	331	+9	-6	165	132	127	126
Middle Atlantic	+6	-16	+11	105	-2	-3	41	140	105	93
East North Central	+15	-9	+15	69	+6	-11	36	118	123	111
West North Central	-8	0	+8	18	-3	-13	13	177	166	209
South Atlantic	+10	+1	+15	37	+8	-10	24	133	133	148
South Central	+30	+12	+19	44	+13	-7	26	173	194	226
Pacific	+22	+2	+23	34	+20	-2	14	117	134	120
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	+10	-13	+13	565	+8	-2	360	240	231	210
Middle Atlantic	+10	-13	+10	85	+5	0	54	251	228	223
East North Central	+25	-16	+19	100	+10	-2	72	190	202	151
West North Central	+19	-6	+9	66	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
South Atlantic	+5	-4	+17	59	+8	-8	46	252	251	255
East South Central	+1	-13	+14	75	+23	-5	70	248	189	223
West South Central	-2	-14	+5	27	+5	-2	24	336	307	286
Pacific	+21	-10	+18	92	+15	+3	25	226	241	215
Electrical equipment, supplies wholesalers[3]	+12	+6	+13	569	+21	-5	529	121	109	141
New England	+19	+22	+12	32	+23	-9	32	120	116	161
Middle Atlantic[5]	+19	+7	+10	74	+13	+2	64	109	102	129
East North Central	+8	+3	+12	158	+10	-7	144	107	104	123
West North Central	+8	+8	+9	55	+22	-6	52	126	111	145
South Atlantic	+9	+7	+15	92	+25	-9	85	130	114	149
East South Central	+11	+2	+13	33	+49	-10	30	159	106	208
West South Central	+14	+18	+17	56	+27	+1	55	161	146	190
Mountain	+8	0	+15	21	+36	-5	21	120	96	126
Pacific	+11	+2	+21	48	+29	-6	46	125	102	136
Electrical appliances, electronic parts distributors	+11	0	+11	310	+16	-4	225	127	118	131
New England	+22	-10	+7	12	+15	+6	10	105	114	93
Middle Atlantic	+9	-6	+12	70	+2	-4	46	112	114	111
East North Central	+11	+2	+10	64	+28	-1	51	142	123	149
West North Central	-1	-6	-1	30	+19	-3	21	133	114	121
South Atlantic	+22	+8	+15	42	+30	-1	28	109	100	116
East South Central	-2	+6	+12	13	+14	-5	13	173	146	192
West South Central	+8	-1	+8	24	+10	-12	20	131	123	148
Pacific	+15	+2	+19	49	+16	-9	32	119	122	115
Hardware wholesalers	+6	-10	+8	222	+8	-3	171	236	230	216
Middle Atlantic	+9	-4	+8	29	+3	-9	12	133	163	157
East North Central	+17	-8	+7	37	+9	-2	34	220	227	200
West North Central	-1	-24	+4	26	+10	+2	25	308	275	239
South Atlantic	+7	-16	+11	30	+1	+1	22	293	285	232
East South Central	-1	-7	+10	22	+5	-12	17	216	202	225
West South Central	+4	-10	+9	24	+14	-2	22	197	194	181
Mountain	+9	+3	+20	11	+7	-4	10	215	223	232
Pacific	-1	-9	+9	36	+10	-4	27	276	242	258

See footnotes at bottom of page 6.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

DECEMBER 1955

Kind of business and geographic division (See map, page 4)	Sales				Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)			Stock-sales ratios[1] (percent)		
	Percent change			Number of establishments reporting, Dec. 1955	Percent change, Dec. 1955 from--		Number of establishments reporting, Dec. 1955	Dec. 1955	Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955
	Dec. 1955 from--		12 mo. 1955 from 12 mo. 1954							
	Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955			Dec. 1954	Nov. 1955				
Plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+13	-14	+13	323	+29	-1	197	205	201	178
New England	+9	-17	+13	19	+7	-2	14	326	352	281
Middle Atlantic	+18	-15	+11	113	+21	0	53	197	225	162
East North Central	+13	-22	+14	48	+26	0	35	163	138	133
West North Central	+9	-16	+6	31	+15	-2	29	221	209	193
South Atlantic	+18	-9	+19	45	+24	-7	32	176	175	181
South Central	+9	+1	+9	24	+14	-2	18	192	186	201
Pacific	+2	-16	+16	34	+41	+2	10	235	174	187
Lumber, construction materials dealers	0	-9	+14	548	+20	+4	367	126	102	110
New England	+3	-14	+12	31	+5	+2	22	128	124	116
Middle Atlantic	+11	-5	+12	111	+20	+4	80	121	96	98
East North Central	+1	-11	+15	131	+20	+3	68	121	101	98
West North Central	-12	-12	+14	37	+26	-1	23	148	91	116
South Atlantic	+11	-10	+26	57	+23	+2	40	145	126	133
South Central	-17	-15	+9	69	+15	+6	58	183	144	145
Pacific	-3	-4	+16	103	+32	+8	69	91	70	97
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+26	+1	+14	917	+5	+1	705	167	194	169
New England	+28	-4	+8	13	+18	+9	7	226	203	177
Middle Atlantic	+24	+3	+6	71	-2	+3	46	143	131	138
East North Central	+20	-8	+22	106	+14	+5	78	157	147	134
West North Central	+14	-16	+13	69	+3	+3	47	211	198	191
South Atlantic	+33	-6	+17	46	+16	0	42	161	182	152
South Central	+35	+10	+16	476	-3	-1	405	147	221	167
Mountain	+4	+17	+18	63	+4	+4	47	198	202	225
Pacific	+33	+8	+13	73	+15	-3	33	230	264	279

x Insufficient data to show separately.

[1] Stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for an identical group of firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

[2] Not affiliated with voluntary groups or cooperative groups.

[3] Includes general-line electrical goods, wiring supplies, construction materials and apparatus wholesalers.

[4] Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

[5] In November 1955 report, percent change in sales shown for this division under column "November 1955 from November 1954" should be changed from +1 to +10, and stock-sales ratio shown for November 1954 should be changed from 126 to 142.

Note: Firms reporting in this survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection (or, in other terms, the number of firms in the trade which it represents in the sample). Large firms are selected with certainty, thus having a weight of one (1). Other firms are sampled at varying rates, depending upon sizes, with smaller firms having a lower probability of selection and thus a larger weight.

Sales and inventory figures reported for any firm are multiplied by this weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes and stock-sales ratios.

Data on reported dollar values, previously shown as a measure of coverage, are now omitted since the trend data are based on weighted values. The number of establishments in the sample, from which reports were received in time for tabulation, are shown as an indication of coverage.