

**MONTHLY  
WHOLESALE TRADE  
REPORT**

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

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

**JANUARY 1957**

FOR RELEASE  
MARCH 15, 1957

**SALES AND INVENTORIES**

Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers in January were only slightly (1%) below December 1956 sales, a smaller than usual decline from the previous month. However, January 1957 sales were 11 percent above January sales a year ago. (Data in this report are not adjusted for number of days in the month nor for seasonal or price fluctuations.)

Durable goods trades, in total, showed no change from December sales, but noted a 7 percent gain over a year ago. Nondurable goods trades reported a slight (1%) decrease from previous month sales but noted a larger gain (15%) over January 1956 sales than the durable goods trades.

The sharpest declines from previous month sales were reported for wine and distilled spirits (4%), jewelry (4%) and amusement, sporting goods (3%). Other large declines, including electrical apparatus and supplies (15%), electrical appliances (11%), furniture (14%), construction materials (16%), poultry, poultry products (19%), beer, ale (17%) and tobacco (12%), offset sharp increases for farm supplies (23%), piece goods converters (22%), iron, steel scrap (22%) and iron, steel products (22%). Most trades reported increases over year ago sales. Farm products (raw materials), up 53 percent, reflected the principal gain over January 1956 sales. Iron and steel scrap, up 23 percent and industrial machinery and equipment, up 20 percent, also showed large increases over a year ago. The principal decreases were registered for motor-vehicles (8%), poultry, poultry products (9%), waste materials (10%) and lumber, millwork (12%).

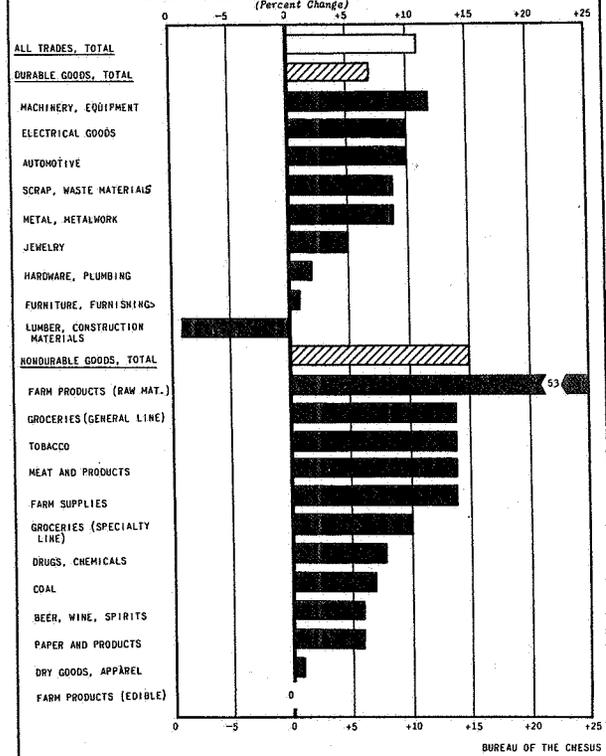
Most geographic divisions showed small to moderate changes from December 1956 sales. However, the New England and West North Central Divisions reported declines of 7 and 9 percent, respectively and the East South Central Division indicated a gain of 15 percent, mostly due to increased sales by farm products (raw materials) merchants. Compared with a year ago, the East South Central Division reported a sales gain of 23 percent, and the West South Central an increase of 20 percent. All other divisions noted smaller gains ranging from 14 percent in the Pacific Division to 4 percent in New England.

Inventories

Wholesalers inventories at the end of January declined 2 percent from the December 31 level but were up 8 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. The January 1957 stock-sales ratio of 128 percent was 1 point above the ratio for December 1956 and 3 points below the ratio for a year ago.

Most trades indicated only moderate changes in their inventories. However, farm products (raw materials), down 11 percent, iron and steel scrap, down 12 percent and coal, off 20 percent, reported sharp declines from previous month inventories, while clothing and furnishings, and amusement and sporting goods, each up 10 percent, noted the largest increases. Compared with stocks on hand a year ago, the principal increases were indicated by coal (30%), nonferrous metals (30%), iron, steel products (26%) and farm

**SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS  
JANUARY 1957 COMPARED WITH JANUARY 1956**  
(Percent Change)



products (raw materials) (20%). Small declines were reported by lumber, millwork (7%), piece goods converters (6%) and meat, meat products (5%).

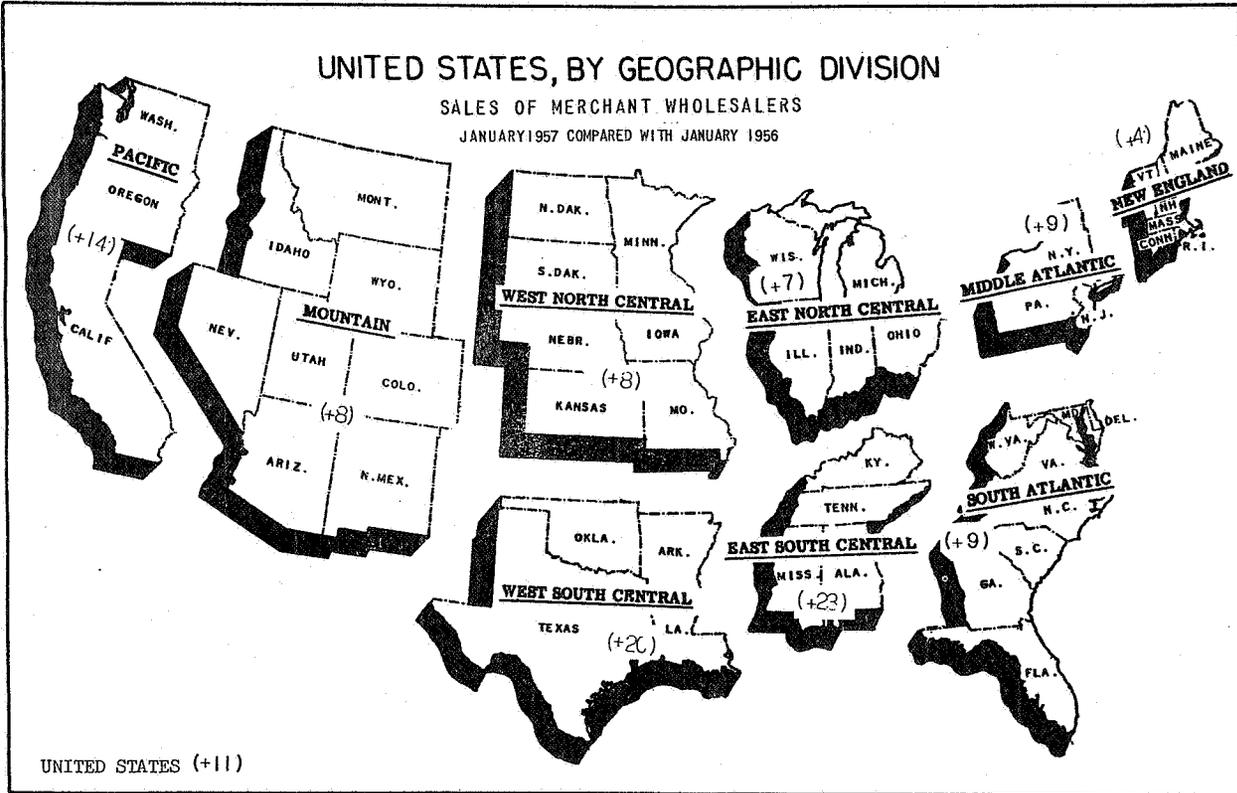
No significant changes from previous month inventories were noted in any geographic divisions. However, in comparison with a year ago, larger inventories were reported in all divisions except the East South Central, which showed no change. Inventory gains ranged from 4 percent in the Middle Atlantic and West North Central Divisions to 17 percent in the West South Central Division.

The January 1957 stock-sales ratios for most trades showed only moderate changes from December 1956. The most significant change was reported by the jewelry trade, which noted a ratio of 261 percent in January 1957 as compared with 125 for December 1956.

General

Data shown in this report are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of the revised sample is included on page 2.

Each month approximately one week prior to the publication of this report, an advance release is issued containing percentage changes in sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios for most trades covered by this report. This advance release is available upon request.



#### DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, TERMINOLOGY AND KINDS OF BUSINESS

**Scope of the Survey.**--Wholesale trade includes several types of establishments: merchant wholesalers; manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; assemblers of farm products; and agents, brokers and commercial merchants. This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade. However, all kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are described in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual developed by the Federal Bureau of the Budget, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials. Firms which operate retail and manufacturing establishments in addition to their wholesale establishments report only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind of business classification shown in this report is included on page 6.

**Sample design.**--Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms. Over 90 percent of this number of firms submit their reports in time for tabulation.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales-size, (c) the degree of reliability desired in the data, and (d) whether geographic division trends were to be shown for the trade.

This sample has been designed to develop monthly dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories by kind of business with a sampling variability for each trade of approximately 5 percent at the one sigma level. The sampling variability of the percentage changes based on this sample is expected to be somewhat lower. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

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.

**Percentage changes.**--For each firm reporting, data are available for each of the three months (current, previous, and year ago) for which comparisons are made. Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes of sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios. Data in this report are not adjusted for number of days in the month nor for seasonal or price fluctuations.

**Sales** include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included. Sales trends shown in this report reflect the operation of firms selected in the sample which were in business in each of the three months compared.

**Inventory, end-of-month** represents stock, at cost value, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. Inventory trends are based on reports from only those firms which included data for all three periods compared. The number of firms reporting inventories is generally smaller than the number reporting sales. Some firms cannot submit inventory data in time for tabulation but furnish sales figures only.

**Stock-sales ratios** are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

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

Kind of business	Sales		Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change		Percent change, January 1957 from--		January 1957	January 1956	December 1956
	January 1956	December 1956	January 1956	December 1956			
	January 1956	December 1956	January 1956	December 1956	January 1957	January 1956	December 1956
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....</b>	+11	-1	+8	-2	r128	r131	r127
<b>Durable goods, total.....</b>	+7	0	+8	+1	161	160	157
Automotive wholesalers.....	+10	+8	+2	+2	204	220	219
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	-8	+8	+1	+4	152	124	155
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+14	+7	+3	+2	216	249	234
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	+10	-13	+12	+2	149	146	123
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	+12	-15	+13	0	135	134	112
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	+8	-11	+10	+5	169	163	140
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	+1	-12	+1	+2	209	202	173
Furniture wholesalers.....	+4	-14	+5	0	200	198	157
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	-1	-10	0	+3	213	204	181
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	+2	-1	+1	+4	238	244	223
Hardware wholesalers.....	+5	-1	+1	+7	256	261	233
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	0	-2	0	+1	219	226	211
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-9	-5	-1	0	134	130	122
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-12	+3	-7	+1	134	132	135
Construction materials distributors.....	-3	-16	+7	0	134	126	109
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+12	+5	+13	0	173	175	180
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	-1	+10	+6	+2	172	165	185
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	-1	-3	+7	-1	209	199	197
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+20	+8	+12	-2	142	153	151
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+8	-6	+6	+1	229	249	237
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+5	0	+2	-8	182	214	230
Service establishment supply houses.....	+6	+6	+6	+1	118	117	121
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	+9	+8	+27	0	144	113	167
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	+13	+22	+26	0	175	142	218
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	+3	-7	+30	+1	71	58	71
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	+9	+21	+4	-8	41	41	51
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	+23	+22	+7	-12	28	31	37
Waste materials dealers.....	-10	+18	+1	-5	61	53	72
Jewelry wholesalers.....	+5	-42	0	+8	261	327	125
<b>Nondurable goods, total.....</b>	+15	-1	+9	-5	r103	r107	r106
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+13	+8	+4	-1	71	76	77
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+14	+12	+4	+1	97	106	108
Voluntary groups.....	+10	+7	0	-3	92	102	101
Retailer-cooperative.....	+25	+20	+10	+5	71	78	81
Nonaffiliated.....	+13	+12	+2	+3	116	130	128
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+10	+5	+9	-2	61	59	68
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+6	-6	+12	+3	73	63	65
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+14	+6	-5	+1	21	24	21
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	0	-13	0	+1	36	37	30
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	-9	-19	+1	+4	34	31	26
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	+5	-10	0	0	37	41	33
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+6	r-37	+10	-3	133	128	r89
Beer, ale distributors.....	+5	r-17	+6	+8	70	67	52
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+7	r-46	+11	-6	183	180	r109
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+8	r+8	+8	+3	135	131	r145
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+9	r+7	+9	+3	154	151	r166
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	+6	+7	+5	+1	82	79	88
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	+2	+12	+3	+4	196	208	223
Tobacco distributors.....	+14	-12	+1	+2	65	74	57
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+1	+12	r+1	+5	196	214	208
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	-2	+3	r+4	+10	225	226	210
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+6	+13	r+3	+4	190	199	205
Piece goods converters.....	-1	+22	-6	0	172	221	210
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	+6	+5	+9	+1	109	108	118
Paper wholesalers.....	+5	+7	+10	+1	107	106	118
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	+11	-9	+4	0	125	128	117
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+53	+9	+20	-11	r123	r130	r149
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+11	-1	+6	-2	111	123	113
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.....	+4	-39	+5	+10	233	279	134
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+14	+7	+3	-4	r124	r141	r141
Coal wholesalers.....	+7	-2	+30	-20	77	69	110
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	+14	+23	+3	-3	137	148	166

r Revised from Press Release of January 1957

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

JANUARY 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (See map page 2)	Sales		Inventory, end- of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change		Percent change, January 1957 from--		January 1957	January 1956	December 1956
	January 1957 from--		January 1957 from--				
	January 1956	December 1956	January 1956	December 1956			
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL</b> .....	+11	-1	+8	-2	128	131	127
New England.....	+4	-7	+10	0	143	135	131
Middle Atlantic.....	+9	-3	+4	-1	113	118	112
East North Central.....	+7	-1	+7	0	112	109	109
West North Central.....	+8	-9	+4	0	146	149	131
South Atlantic.....	+9	0	+6	-1	144	151	147
East South Central.....	+23	+15	0	-1	352	599	512
West South Central.....	+20	+1	+17	0	153	167	165
Mountain.....	+8	-3	+5	0	130	119	130
Pacific.....	+14	+1	+12	-1	120	125	121
<b>Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers</b> .....	+14	+7	+3	+2	216	249	234
New England.....	+53	+29	+7	+3	172	229	200
Middle Atlantic.....	+16	+9	+1	+5	200	237	203
East North Central.....	+36	-2	+2	-5	162	214	171
West North Central.....	+11	-6	+6	0	278	301	274
South Atlantic.....	0	+19	+5	+3	196	232	243
East South Central.....	+9	+12	-4	+8	222	257	232
West South Central.....	+10	+13	+9	+2	261	265	289
Mountain.....	+16	+7	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific.....	-1	-1	+2	+3	252	244	249
<b>Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors</b> .....	+12	-15	+13	0	135	134	112
New England.....	-35	-31	+21	-1	183	86	118
Middle Atlantic.....	+11	-8	+13	-3	130	129	116
East North Central.....	+11	-21	+7	0	114	118	92
West North Central.....	+18	-23	+21	0	204	193	156
South Atlantic.....	+4	-15	+1	+2	151	154	126
East South Central.....	+22	+3	+20	-5	159	168	185
West South Central.....	+5	-18	+20	-4	210	185	170
Mountain.....	+14	-2	+31	+7	140	149	123
Pacific.....	+20	-12	+16	+5	144	149	119
<b>Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distrs.</b> .....	+8	-11	+10	+5	169	163	140
New England.....	+17	-6	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	-14	+14	+5	175	158	144
East North Central.....	+3	-15	+18	+7	169	151	128
West North Central.....	-19	-11	-7	+3	151	137	133
South Atlantic.....	+12	-8	+9	+4	165	198	136
East South Central.....	+7	-7	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
West South Central.....	-3	-11	+6	+11	177	164	143
Pacific.....	+14	-6	+12	+7	205	211	179
<b>Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers</b> .....	+1	-12	+1	+2	209	202	173
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	-10	-1	+1	229	236	205
East North Central.....	+6	-14	+7	+7	171	168	134
West North Central.....	-1	-8	+7	+3	196	176	198
South Atlantic.....	-11	-24	+7	+3	239	203	166
South Central.....	+7	-1	-1	+10	217	202	178
Pacific.....	+12	-3	+8	-3	199	215	156
<b>Hardware wholesalers</b> .....	+5	-1	+1	+7	256	261	233
Middle Atlantic.....	-3	0	-5	-8	208	204	220
East North Central.....	+16	-2	+5	+9	241	254	219
West North Central.....	+4	+4	-5	+14	294	307	268
South Atlantic.....	+5	+5	+13	+1	282	253	278
East South Central.....	+4	+5	+2	+9	231	233	220
West South Central.....	-2	-12	+6	+16	331	307	252
Pacific.....	+10	-2	-2	+6	280	313	258
<b>Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors</b> .....	0	-2	0	+1	219	226	211
New England.....	-10	-6	-1	-2	243	233	253
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	+4	-5	-1	193	209	197
East North Central.....	0	-4	+4	+5	225	217	203
West North Central.....	+13	-17	+5	0	260	266	260
South Atlantic.....	+6	-4	-6	+5	179	232	162
South Central.....	-9	+7	-1	+2	271	250	280
Pacific.....	0	-2	+1	-3	208	217	200
<b>Lumber, construction materials distributors</b> .....	-9	-5	-1	0	134	130	122
New England.....	-12	-41	+9	-6	101	91	55
Middle Atlantic.....	-15	-8	-2	-1	199	159	177
East North Central.....	-12	-12	+3	+10	133	116	105
West North Central.....	-14	+2	-17	-1	148	188	148
South Atlantic.....	+3	-6	-2	+2	165	181	149
South Central.....	-4	+16	-1	-2	122	138	141
Pacific.....	-7	+3	+24	-1	57	47	58

See footnotes at end of table.

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

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 2)	Sales		Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change		Percent change, January 1957 from--		January 1957	January 1956	December 1956
	January 1957 from		January 1957 from--				
	January 1956	December 1956	January 1956	December 1956			
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors....	+20	+8	+12	-2	142	153	151
New England.....	+13	-4	+28	+1	207	204	159
Middle Atlantic.....	+33	+16	+2	-5	119	158	137
East North Central.....	+11	+13	+3	-3	85	89	98
West North Central.....	+9	+16	+6	+5	241	172	240
South Atlantic.....	+5	+12	+10	+5	159	150	173
South Central.....	+32	+11	+9	-1	147	170	160
Mountain.....	+11	-19	+25	-2	186	159	156
Pacific.....	+10	-1	+10	0	174	194	170
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+14	+12	+4	+1	97	106	108
Middle Atlantic.....	+15	+8	+1	0	105	124	114
East North Central.....	+4	+7	+4	-4	80	78	88
West North Central.....	+15	+15	+3	+3	104	115	115
South Atlantic.....	+13	+10	+3	+6	107	114	114
East South Central.....	+18	+15	+4	+1	104	121	119
West South Central.....	0	+13	-4	+4	117	121	124
Mountain.....	+19	+21	+12	+4	122	127	142
Pacific.....	+36	+18	+19	-1	65	70	73
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+10	+5	+9	-2	61	59	68
New England.....	-5	-6	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic.....	+8	+6	+9	-1	59	53	66
East North Central.....	+15	+10	0	-8	61	68	77
West North Central.....	-2	+7	+16	-2	73	59	75
South Atlantic.....	+11	-3	+8	-9	92	88	98
South Central.....	+25	+20	+9	-5	55	68	77
Pacific.....	-1	-6	-7	+12	43	44	35
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	+5	-10	0	0	37	41	33
New England.....	+11	-7	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic.....	+12	-14	-2	+2	14	16	12
East North Central.....	+7	+6	-3	-1	20	24	21
West North Central.....	+7	-16	+1	-1	48	50	40
South Atlantic.....	+3	-19	-10	+3	21	24	16
South Central.....	-3	-19	0	+9	25	21	16
Pacific.....	+10	+1	-4	-1	73	89	78
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+9	+7	+9	+3	154	151	166
New England.....	+5	+14	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic.....	+6	-5	+6	+3	139	134	137
East North Central.....	+7	+14	+6	-1	137	136	155
West North Central.....	+15	+10	+8	+2	153	158	174
South Atlantic.....	+11	+15	+10	+6	153	157	164
East South Central.....	+8	+2	+12	+4	222	228	208
West South Central.....	+12	+15	+13	+6	167	163	178
Mountain.....	+7	+25	+7	+6	170	173	210
Pacific.....	+16	+17	+19	+1	146	145	165
Tobacco distributors.....	+14	-12	+1	+2	65	74	57
New England.....	+12	-16	+3	+2	66	68	53
Middle Atlantic.....	+17	-19	+1	0	77	90	65
East North Central.....	+15	-11	+3	-3	59	67	55
West North Central.....	+6	-19	+3	-1	69	73	58
South Atlantic.....	+20	-6	+7	+15	55	56	40
South Central.....	+4	-2	-7	+3	55	63	51
Pacific.....	+15	-3	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+1	+12	+1	+5	196	214	208
New England.....	+14	+9	-4	+1	227	201	290
Middle Atlantic.....	-2	+16	-1	+3	173	199	197
East North Central.....	+11	-13	+4	+2	189	215	153
West North Central.....	-8	0	+8	+5	313	280	250
South Atlantic.....	+2	+30	0	0	164	186	164
South Central.....	-5	+42	+11	+23	283	243	367
Pacific.....	+16	-8	-5	+5	188	221	160

x Insufficient data to show separately.

## DESCRIPTION OF KINDS OF BUSINESS

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its annual 1954 sales by commodity lines as reported in the 1954 Census of Business. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

## DURABLE GOODS

## Automotive wholesalers

Motor-vehicle distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

## Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, irons, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

## Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

Furniture wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

## Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

Hardware wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

## Lumber, construction materials distributors

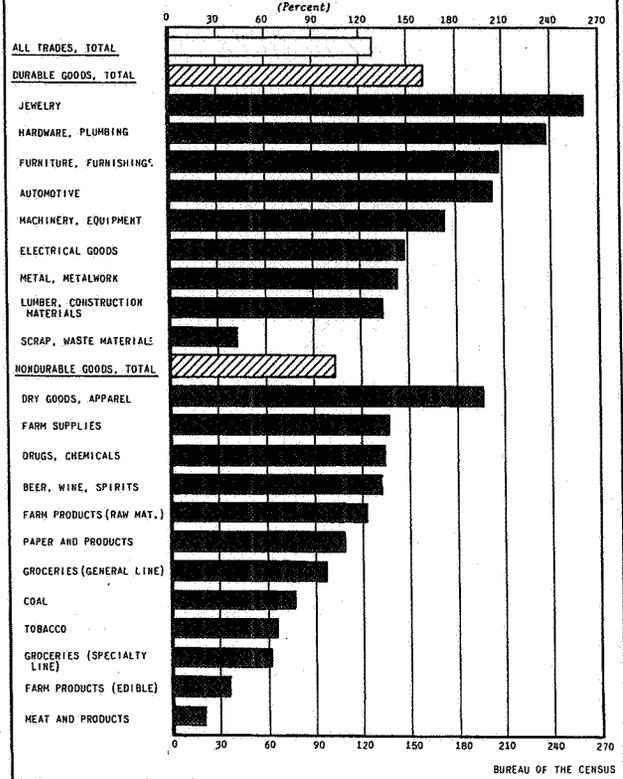
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

Construction materials distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

## Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

Commercial machines, equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

STOCKS--SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS  
JANUARY 1957

## Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

Professional equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists' supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors' apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

Service establishment, supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers' supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers' supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

Other industrial machinery, equipment distributors (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain foods and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
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# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

FEBRUARY 1957

FOR RELEASE  
APRIL 5, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers in February 1957 were 7 percent below January sales but were only slightly (1%) below February sales a year ago. However, cumulative sales for the first two months of 1957 were 5 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1956. (Data in this report are not adjusted for number of days in the month nor for seasonal or price fluctuations.)

Durable goods trades, in total, were off 6 percent from January sales and down 3 percent from a year ago. Nondurable goods trades reported an 8 percent decline from previous month sales but experienced a slight (1%) gain over sales a year ago. Nondurable goods trades, with sales in the first two months 8 percent higher than a year ago, reflected a larger gain than the durable goods trades, which were up only 2 percent over the first two months of 1956.

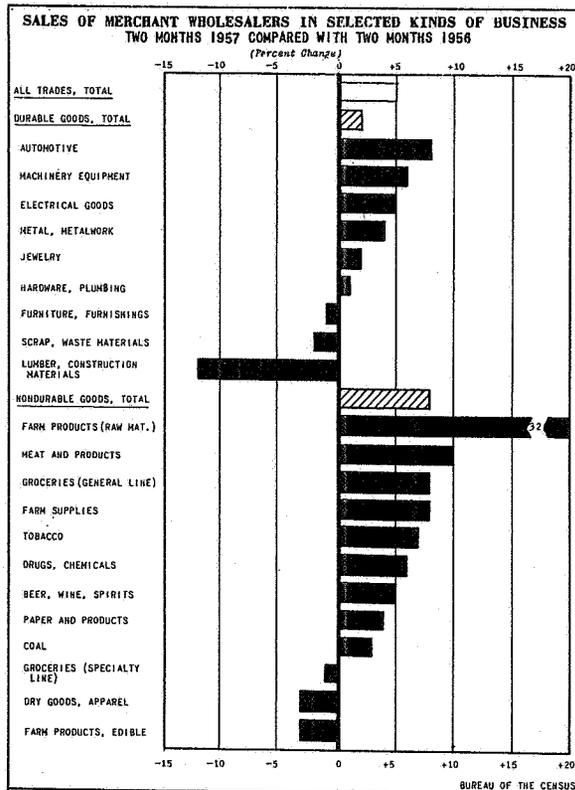
Sharp declines from previous month sales were reported by farm products merchants (20%), iron, steel scrap dealers (18%), and lumber, millwork wholesalers (17%). Most other trades experienced moderate declines: Jewelry wholesalers, up 13 percent, amusement, sporting goods distributors, up 12 percent, and air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors, up 10 percent, reflected the principal increases among the few trades registering gains. In comparison with sales a year ago, most trades reported small gains. These were offset, however, by large declines shown by lumber, millwork wholesalers (24%), waste materials dealers (23%), and specialty-line grocers (11%).

All geographic divisions showed declines from January 1957 sales, the smallest decrease (3%) being shared by the West South Central and Mountain Divisions, the largest (10%) occurring in the Pacific Division. Compared with year-ago sales, geographic division trends varied. One geographic division, the South Atlantic, showed no change; four indicated moderate increases; while the remaining four noted small declines. The largest increase (8%) was registered in the West South Central Division; the largest decline (5%) was experienced in both New England and the Middle Atlantic Divisions.

### Inventories

Wholesalers inventories at the end of February remained at the same level as a month earlier but were 9 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Durable goods trades, in total, were up 2 percent since January while nondurable goods trades declined 3 percent. The February 1957 stock-sales ratio for all merchant wholesalers--at 142 percent--was 9 points above the ratio for January 1956 and 10 points above the ratio for a year ago.

Most trades indicated small changes from previous month inventories. However, farm products merchants reported a drop of 14 percent and farm supplies were off 8 percent. In most trades, inventories were substantially higher than a year ago. The sharpest increase was reported by coal wholesalers (52%). Other large inventory gains were shown by iron, steel



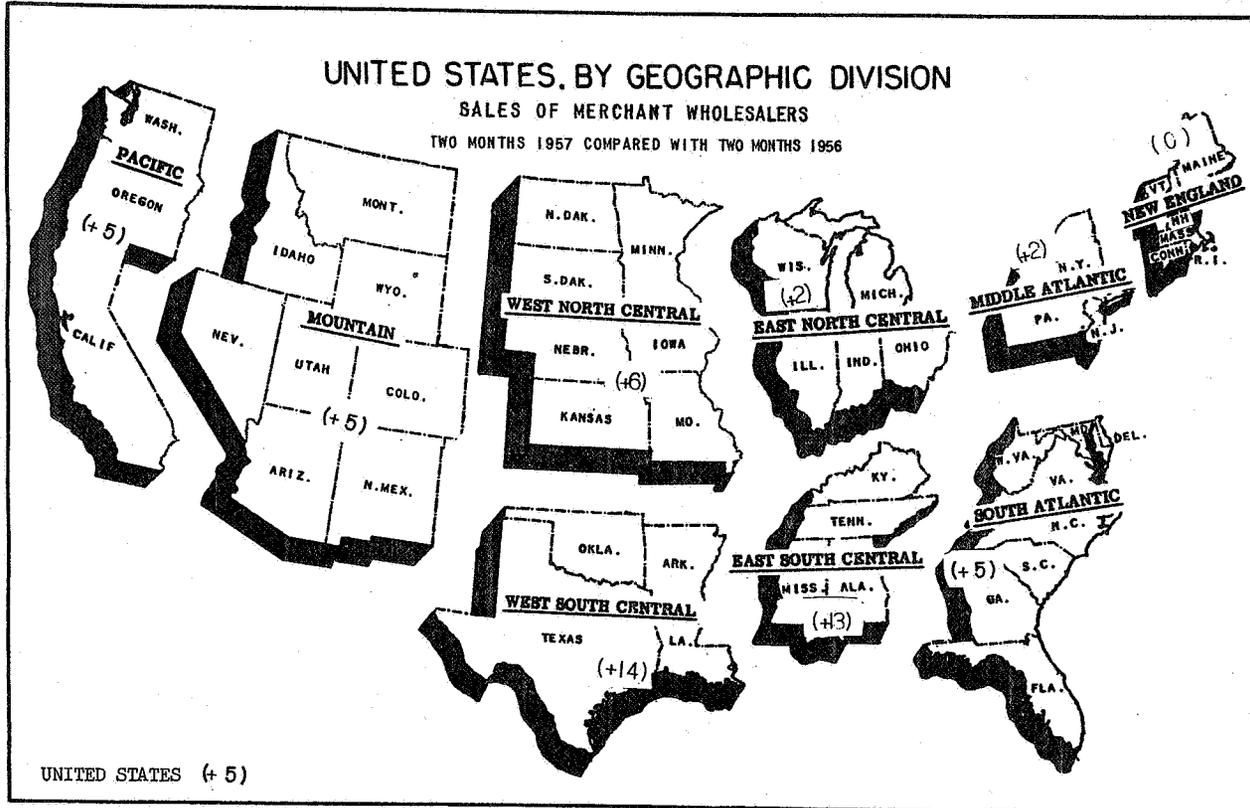
products distributors (29%), farm products merchants (27%), industrial machinery distributors (19%), and iron, steel scrap dealers (16%). Jewelry wholesalers, down 5 percent, and piece goods converters and lumber, millwork wholesalers, each off 6 percent, were among the few trades who noted small decreases from year-ago stocks.

By geographic division, changes from previous month inventories were moderate, ranging from an increase of 3 percent in the East North Central Division to a decline of 4 percent in the West North Central Division. However, all divisions reported inventories from 4 to 14 percent above year-ago levels. The West South Central Division, with stocks up 14 percent, noted the largest increase.

### General

Data shown in this report are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of the revised sample is included on page 2.

Each month approximately one week prior to the publication of this report, an advance release is issued containing percentage changes in sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios for most trades covered by this report. This advance release is available upon request.



## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, TERMINOLOGY AND KINDS OF BUSINESS

**Scope of the Survey.**--Wholesale trade includes several types of establishments: merchant wholesalers; manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; assemblers of farm products; and agents, brokers and commercial merchants. This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade. However, all kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

**Merchant wholesalers** are described in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual developed by the Federal Bureau of the Budget, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials. Firms which operate retail and manufacturing establishments in addition to their wholesale establishments report only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind of business classification shown in this report is included on page 6.

**Sample design.**--Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms. Over 90 percent of this number of firms submit their reports in time for tabulation.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales-size, (c) the degree of reliability desired in the data, and (d) whether geographic division trends were to be shown for the trade.

This sample has been designed to develop monthly dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories by kind of business with a sampling variability for each trade of approximately 5 percent at the one sigma level. The sampling variability of the percentage changes based on this sample is expected to be somewhat lower. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

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.

**Percentage changes.**--For each firm reporting, data are available for each of the three months (current, previous, and year ago) for which comparisons are made. Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes of sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios. Data in this report are not adjusted for number of days in the month nor for seasonal or price fluctuations.

**Sales** include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included. Sales trends shown in this report reflect the operation of firms selected in the sample which were in business in each of the three months compared.

**Inventory, end-of-month** represents stock, at cost value, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. Inventory trends are based on reports from only those firms which included data for all three periods compared. The number of firms reporting inventories is generally smaller than the number reporting sales. Some firms cannot submit inventory data in time for tabulation but furnish sales figures only.

**Stock-sales ratios** are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

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

FEBRUARY 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	Feb. 1957 from--		2 mo. 1957 from 2 mo. 1956	Percent change, Feb. 1957 from--		Feb. 1957	Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957
	Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957		Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957			
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-1	-7	+5	+9	0	142	132	133
Durable goods, total.....	-3	-6	+2	+9	+2	182	164	170
Automotive wholesalers.....	+6	-9	+8	+2	0	210	214	198
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	+2	-2	-4	+5	-2	138	140	133
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+7	-11	+10	+1	0	227	231	213
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	0	-5	+5	+12	+2	196	179	182
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	+2	-1	+7	+13	+5	175	161	166
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-1	-9	+3	+10	0	218	200	197
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-2	+1	-1	+2	+3	193	180	188
Furniture wholesalers.....	0	+1	+2	-1	+4	199	187	186
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	-3	+1	-2	+3	+3	191	178	189
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-1	-7	+1	0	+3	242	241	220
Hardware wholesalers.....	-2	-3	+1	+1	+5	261	251	242
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	0	-10	0	-1	+1	223	230	200
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-15	-8	-12	0	-2	146	130	145
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-24	-17	-18	-6	-2	178	146	164
Construction materials distributors.....	-3	+7	-3	+8	-2	116	112	125
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-1	0	+6	+15	+2	190	169	190
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	+2	+10	0	+6	+6	206	194	222
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	+1	0	0	+12	+4	155	147	159
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-1	0	+10	+19	+2	174	148	168
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+1	-2	+5	+4	0	186	178	182
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+2	+3	+4	+2	0	142	143	147
Service establishment supply houses.....	+6	-2	+6	+9	+2	149	151	149
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-1	-9	+4	+27	+5	193	149	166
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	+2	-8	+7	+29	+6	231	178	200
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-7	-10	-2	+13	-1	96	79	83
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-12	-17	-2	+11	-2	44	36	37
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-6	-18	+6	+16	-3	38	31	32
Waste materials dealers.....	-23	-13	-16	+2	-1	59	46	52
Jewelry wholesalers.....	0	+13	+2	-5	-2	257	304	308
Nondurable goods, total.....	+1	-8	+8	+9	-3	110	105	104
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	-2	-9	+5	+2	+1	84	81	75
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+2	-9	+8	0	0	104	109	97
Voluntary groups.....	+1	-4	+5	+1	+4	93	94	86
Retailer-cooperative.....	+8	-10	+16	+6	+4	81	85	71
Nonaffiliated.....	-5	-12	+4	-2	-1	136	139	126
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	-11	-10	-1	+5	+1	87	71	75
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+1	-6	+4	+2	+1	93	90	86
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+6	-11	+10	+4	+1	20	20	18
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	-6	-7	-3	+9	0	38	29	31
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	-9	-12	-9	+15	+4	33	25	26
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-4	-5	0	+6	-2	40	31	34
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+5	+4	+5	+13	-3	119	112	131
Beer, ale distributors.....	+3	+2	+4	+10	+5	68	64	67
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+5	+5	+6	+14	-5	149	140	171
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+3	-9	+6	+10	0	161	149	145
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+4	-11	+7	+10	+1	178	164	159
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	+4	-7	+5	+11	-1	117	109	105
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	-4	-5	-1	+7	0	209	191	195
Tobacco distributors.....	+1	-4	+7	+2	0	66	61	58
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-7	-3	-3	+1	0	184	169	184
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	-7	+6	-5	+7	+4	211	178	226
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	-5	-6	0	-1	-5	149	142	148
Piece goods converters.....	-8	-7	-5	-6	+3	207	205	197
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	+2	-6	+4	+7	-1	118	121	119
Paper wholesalers.....	+2	-6	+4	+7	-2	115	119	118
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	+4	-6	+7	+4	+3	145	139	132
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+8	-20	+32	+27	-14	r145	r149	r139
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+4	-8	+7	+6	+2	100	100	92
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.....	+8	+12	+6	+7	+8	155	166	164
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+5	-5	+9	+10	+5	139	130	134
Coal wholesalers.....	-1	-12	+3	+52	-7	67	49	61
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	+3	+8	+8	-2	-8	118	120	145

Revised from Press Release of February 1957.

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

FEBRUARY 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (See map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end- of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Feb. 1957 from--		Feb. 1957	Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957
	Feb. 1957 from--		2 mo. 1957 from	Feb. 1957 from--				
	Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957	2 mo. 1956	Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957			
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL</b> .....	-1	-7	+5	+9	0	142	132	133
New England.....	-4	-7	0	+5	+1	136	130	128
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	-9	+2	+6	0	122	111	108
East North Central.....	-2	-5	+2	+12	+3	133	117	124
West North Central.....	+5	-7	+6	+5	-4	146	157	141
South Atlantic.....	0	-8	+5	+12	+2	171	157	156
East South Central.....	+5	-6	+13	+12	-3	171	156	168
West South Central.....	+8	-3	+14	+14	-2	157	151	156
Mountain.....	+3	-3	+5	+4	+1	159	160	157
Pacific.....	-3	-10	+5	+11	-3	143	130	137
<b>Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers</b> .....	+7	-11	+10	+1	0	227	231	213
New England.....	+7	-15	+31	-8	-5	242	277	220
Middle Atlantic.....	+11	-18	+14	+1	+2	207	220	172
East North Central.....	-1	+1	+11	0	-1	190	186	193
West North Central.....	+7	-1	+9	-3	-1	318	361	316
South Atlantic.....	+8	-4	+4	+8	+4	220	215	205
East South Central.....	+13	-3	+11	+11	+4	240	217	220
West South Central.....	+12	-6	+11	0	+1	225	249	210
Mountain.....	+43	-11	+23	0	-7	202	325	192
Pacific.....	+3	-10	+1	+1	-1	255	225	252
<b>Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors</b> .....	+2	-1	+7	+13	+5	175	161	166
New England.....	-4	-8	-17	+6	+11	165	160	152
Middle Atlantic.....	0	-5	+6	+23	+9	162	138	133
East North Central.....	-2	0	+5	+16	+8	167	135	153
West North Central.....	+13	+4	+16	+21	+7	224	212	218
South Atlantic.....	-7	-5	-3	0	+4	179	170	169
East South Central.....	+11	+10	+18	+20	+4	174	175	183
West South Central.....	+13	+12	+10	+15	+5	193	198	208
Mountain.....	+21	+4	+16	+14	+4	148	160	147
Pacific.....	+1	-4	+9	+6	-3	159	154	159
<b>Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distrs.</b> .....	-1	-9	+3	+10	0	218	200	197
New England.....	-6	-5	+2	-1	+1	265	254	253
Middle Atlantic.....	+5	-4	+3	+17	+1	200	191	189
East North Central.....	-1	-11	+1	+15	+2	219	186	195
West North Central.....	-12	-3	-16	-2	+3	233	215	214
South Atlantic.....	-5	-18	+4	+15	-4	225	202	167
East South Central.....	-18	-15	-10	0	+8	250	227	163
West South Central.....	-5	+3	-4	+4	+1	198	165	210
Pacific.....	+10	-14	+12	+33	-10	203	189	194
<b>Furniture home furnishings wholesalers</b> .....	-2	+1	-1	+2	+3	193	180	188
Middle Atlantic.....	-3	+9	0	+4	+3	197	174	211
East North Central.....	-2	0	+2	+2	+1	172	171	173
West North Central.....	-5	-3	-3	+3	+6	209	195	196
South Atlantic.....	+16	+1	0	+7	-1	264	243	206
South Central.....	-3	-7	+2	+4	+5	263	238	244
Pacific.....	-6	-5	+2	+3	+2	160	151	147
<b>Hardware wholesalers</b> .....	-2	-3	+1	+1	+5	261	251	242
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	-8	-6	-6	+2	124	123	105
East North Central.....	-5	+3	+4	+1	+7	255	238	253
West North Central.....	+4	+2	+4	-1	+6	294	309	283
South Atlantic.....	+1	-10	+3	+8	+5	322	311	277
East South Central.....	-2	-9	+1	-2	+6	242	233	208
West South Central.....	+3	+4	0	+4	+6	321	326	333
Pacific.....	+3	-3	+6	0	0	302	292	294
<b>Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors</b> .....	0	-10	0	-1	+1	223	230	200
New England.....	0	+1	-5	0	+4	193	190	191
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	-10	-3	+2	+1	313	284	287
East North Central.....	0	-6	0	-6	-6	171	180	176
West North Central.....	-7	-20	+2	+1	+2	280	256	218
South Atlantic.....	+3	-13	+5	+1	+9	215	227	178
South Central.....	+7	-3	-1	-9	-2	225	253	223
Pacific.....	+8	0	+4	+6	+2	260	283	250
<b>Lumber, construction materials distributors</b> .....	-15	-8	-12	0	-2	146	130	145
New England.....	-4	-11	-9	-1	+1	125	119	110
Middle Atlantic.....	-17	-1	-16	-1	-2	153	137	156
East North Central.....	-19	-1	-16	+2	+1	153	125	146
West North Central.....	-11	-17	-12	-5	+5	179	190	192
South Atlantic.....	-3	-8	0	+8	+12	147	141	129
South Central.....	-10	-1	-7	+5	-7	153	126	152
Pacific.....	-19	-9	-14	-11	-14	119	98	134

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

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Feb. 1957 from--		Feb. 1957	Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957
	Feb. 1957 from--		2 mo. 1957 from 2 mo. 1956	Feb. 1957 from--				
	Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957		Feb. 1956	Jan. 1957			
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-1	0	+10	+19	+2	174	148	168
New England.....	+10	-13	+12	+31	-3	175	164	182
Middle Atlantic.....	-10	+3	+10	+33	+3	216	144	204
East North Central.....	+14	+7	+12	+20	-1	154	151	171
West North Central.....	-1	-13	+2	+21	+4	151	121	136
South Atlantic.....	-6	-14	+2	+9	+2	184	153	149
South Central.....	0	0	+17	+14	+4	161	146	154
Mountain.....	-5	+3	+4	+25	+6	203	193	208
Pacific.....	-9	-2	-1	+20	+1	210	154	194
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+2	-9	+8	0	0	104	109	97
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	-10	+3	-10	+4	123	127	113
East North Central.....	+7	0	+5	+9	+8	78	77	73
West North Central.....	+3	-2	+8	-4	-2	106	113	107
South Atlantic.....	0	-11	+8	-4	+2	102	110	89
East South Central.....	+5	-5	+10	+2	0	135	136	128
West South Central.....	+9	-6	+6	+4	+1	107	116	100
Mountain.....	+3	-13	+12	+9	+2	131	122	111
Pacific.....	-2	-24	+15	+14	-3	81	74	69
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	-11	-10	-1	+5	+1	87	71	75
New England.....	-4	-7	-4	+21	0	61	44	51
Middle Atlantic.....	-15	-13	-3	+13	+7	97	64	71
East North Central.....	-11	-12	+2	+6	+5	80	67	69
West North Central.....	-18	-16	-10	-8	-5	74	72	76
South Atlantic.....	-7	-6	+1	-5	0	130	128	127
South Central.....	+14	-8	+20	+15	+13	90	91	74
Pacific.....	-7	-3	-5	-2	-8	61	63	66
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-4	-5	0	+6	-2	40	31	34
New England.....	-8	-2	+3	+3	+6	32	28	30
Middle Atlantic.....	-3	-2	+2	+33	+9	56	16	21
East North Central.....	-9	-7	0	+7	+4	21	18	19
West North Central.....	-7	-5	-2	+1	-3	49	42	43
South Atlantic.....	+2	-1	+3	+9	+4	31	32	31
South Central.....	+3	+1	+1	+6	-9	40	30	35
Pacific.....	-9	-13	0	+1	-14	52	46	57
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+4	-11	+7	+10	+1	178	164	159
New England.....	+15	-11	+10	+9	+3	163	179	155
Middle Atlantic.....	0	-13	+3	0	0	161	154	146
East North Central.....	+7	-12	+7	+6	+1	161	156	145
West North Central.....	+11	-3	+13	+4	-1	191	209	188
South Atlantic.....	+4	-8	+8	+21	+5	172	153	144
East South Central.....	+7	-6	+7	+16	+4	198	179	171
West South Central.....	+4	-8	+9	+11	+3	205	187	184
Mountain.....	+9	-16	+8	+13	+2	197	190	171
Pacific.....	+5	-15	+11	+24	-5	161	137	145
Tobacco distributors.....	+1	-4	+7	+2	0	66	61	58
New England.....	-1	-3	+6	-3	+2	52	50	50
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	-2	+8	+2	-3	63	62	59
East North Central.....	0	-2	+7	+2	+3	66	66	60
West North Central.....	0	-9	+3	+8	+1	76	74	70
South Atlantic.....	0	-1	+9	+5	-2	80	53	56
South Central.....	-2	-9	+1	+8	+1	61	56	55
Pacific.....	+5	-6	+9	-5	-3	44	47	42
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-7	-3	-3	+1	0	184	169	184
New England.....	-18	+1	-6	-5	-4	183	164	174
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	-4	-4	0	0	180	172	179
East North Central.....	-3	-6	+3	0	0	168	141	168
West North Central.....	-12	+25	-10	+15	0	269	208	323
South Atlantic.....	-13	-2	-7	+8	+7	196	161	198
South Central.....	-15	-7	-9	+2	+8	213	194	174
Pacific.....	+2	+3	+7	-21	-10	105	100	124

## DESCRIPTION OF KINDS OF BUSINESS

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its annual 1954 sales by commodity lines as reported in the 1954 Census of Business. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

## DURABLE GOODS

Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, heating utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

Lumber, construction materials distributors

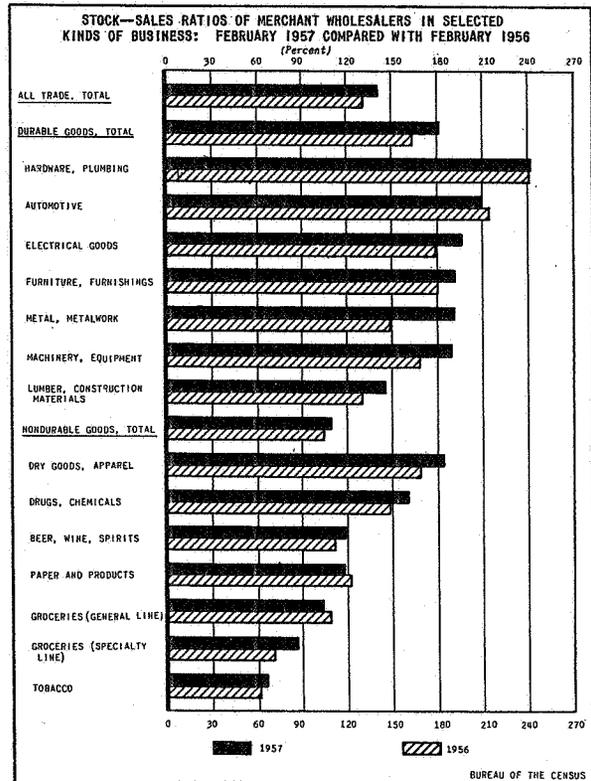
**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other industrial machinery, equipment distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table)--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

NONDURABLE GOODSGrocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, type-writer and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, type-writer ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

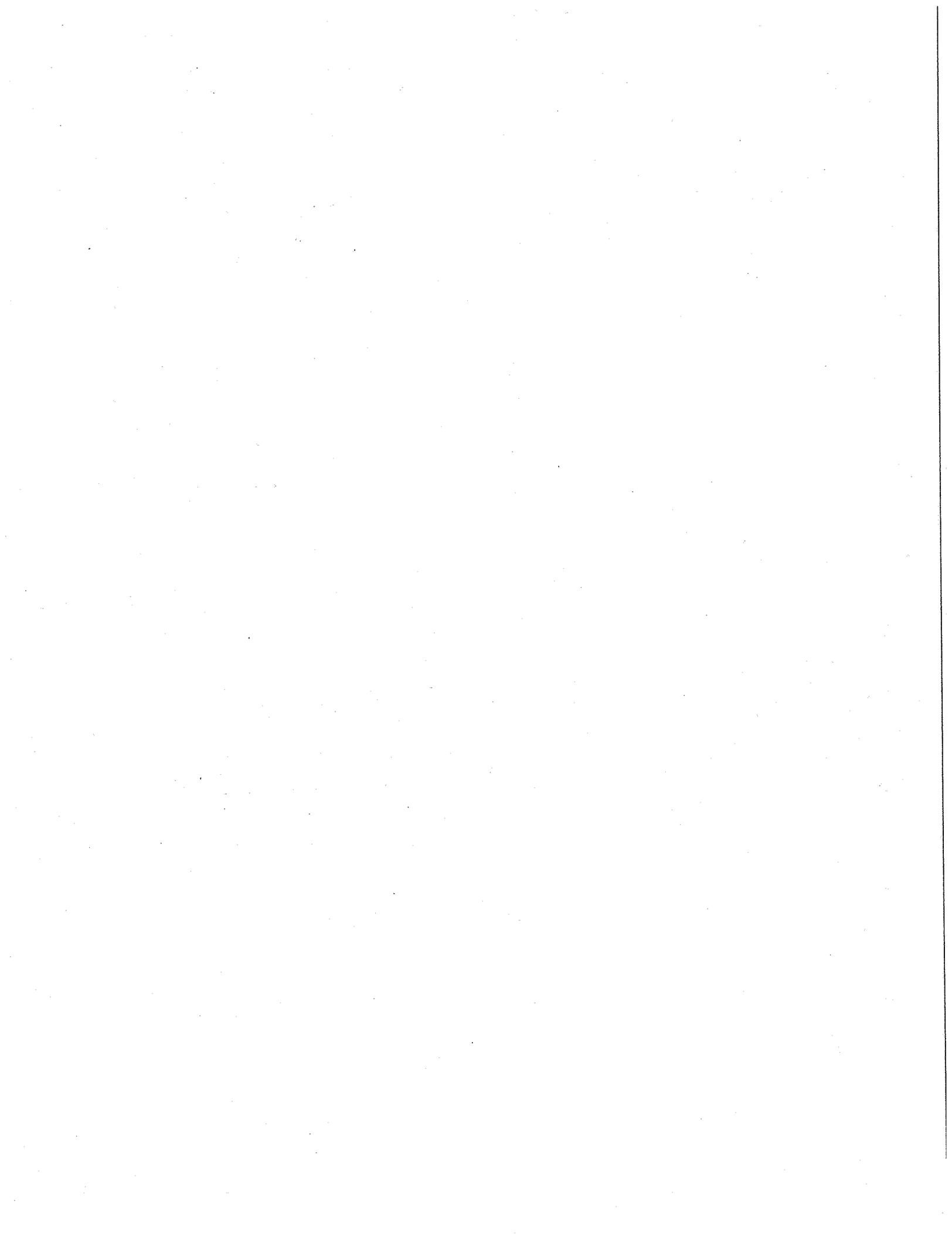
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.



**MONTHLY  
WHOLESALE TRADE  
REPORT**

**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary  
**BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

**MARCH 1957**

FOR RELEASE  
MAY 9, 1957

**SALES AND INVENTORIES**

First Quarter Sales

First quarter 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were 3 percent ahead of sales in the first quarter of 1956. Sales in the nondurable goods trades were generally higher than in the durable goods trades.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants, with quarterly sales up 26 percent over first quarter 1956, reported the most significant increase; in contrast, distributors of edible farm products noted declines. However, most nondurable trades reported increases, with significant gains indicated by retailer-cooperative grocery wholesalers (14%) and by meat wholesalers (11%). The largest increase in quarterly sales reported among the durable goods trades was a 7 percent gain shared by automotive equipment wholesalers, industrial machinery distributors and service establishment supply houses. Declines were noted by 8 durable goods trades, the sharpest drop being shown by lumber, millwork distributors (19%).

With the exception of the New England and East North Central Divisions, which showed no change, all other geographic divisions shared in the increased sales during the first quarter of 1957 compared to 1956. The East South Central and West South Central Divisions, reflecting heavier marketing of farm products (raw materials) this year, registered the principal gains--10 and 12 percent respectively--over first quarter 1956 sales.

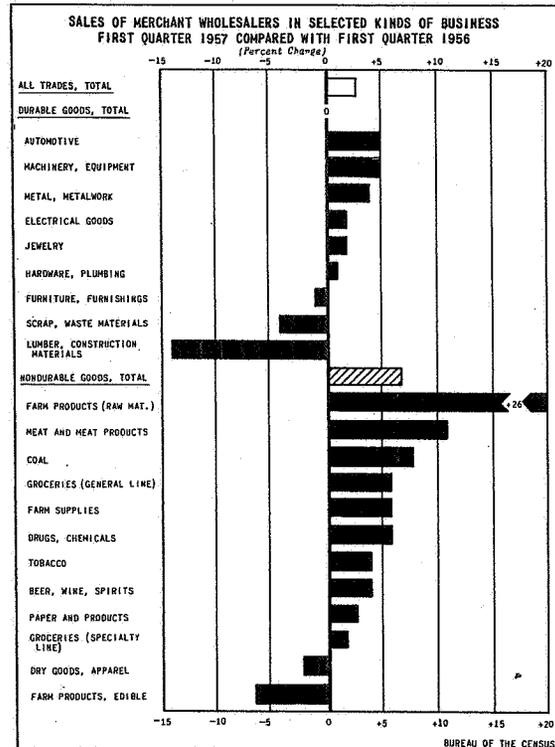
March Sales

March 1957 sales increased seasonally 8 percent above February but were only slightly (1%) above March sales a year ago. Electrical appliance distributors, reporting no change, and scrap and waste materials dealers, with a small decline, were the only trades which failed to show an increase in sales over the previous month. Among the trades showing substantial increases over February were wholesalers of lumber, millwork (20%), jewelry (18%), air conditioning-commercial refrigeration (18%) and industrial chemicals (16%). Most nondurable goods trades reported sales gains over a year ago. These were partially offset by declines in the durable goods trades. Coal wholesalers, with sales up 20 percent over last March indicated the principal increase, while lumber, millwork wholesalers, off 20 percent, showed the sharpest decline from March 1956 sales.

Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of March were only slightly (1%) above the previous month but were 8 percent higher than stocks on hand a year ago. The March 1957 stock-sales ratio of 128 percent for all merchant wholesalers was 12 points below the February ratio but 6 points above the ratio for a year ago. A chart comparing March 1957 and March 1956 stock-sales ratios in selected trades is included on page 6.

Most trades indicated only small changes from previous month inventories. Coal wholesalers, while reporting the sharpest decline (23%) from February inventories, also noted the largest increase (45%)



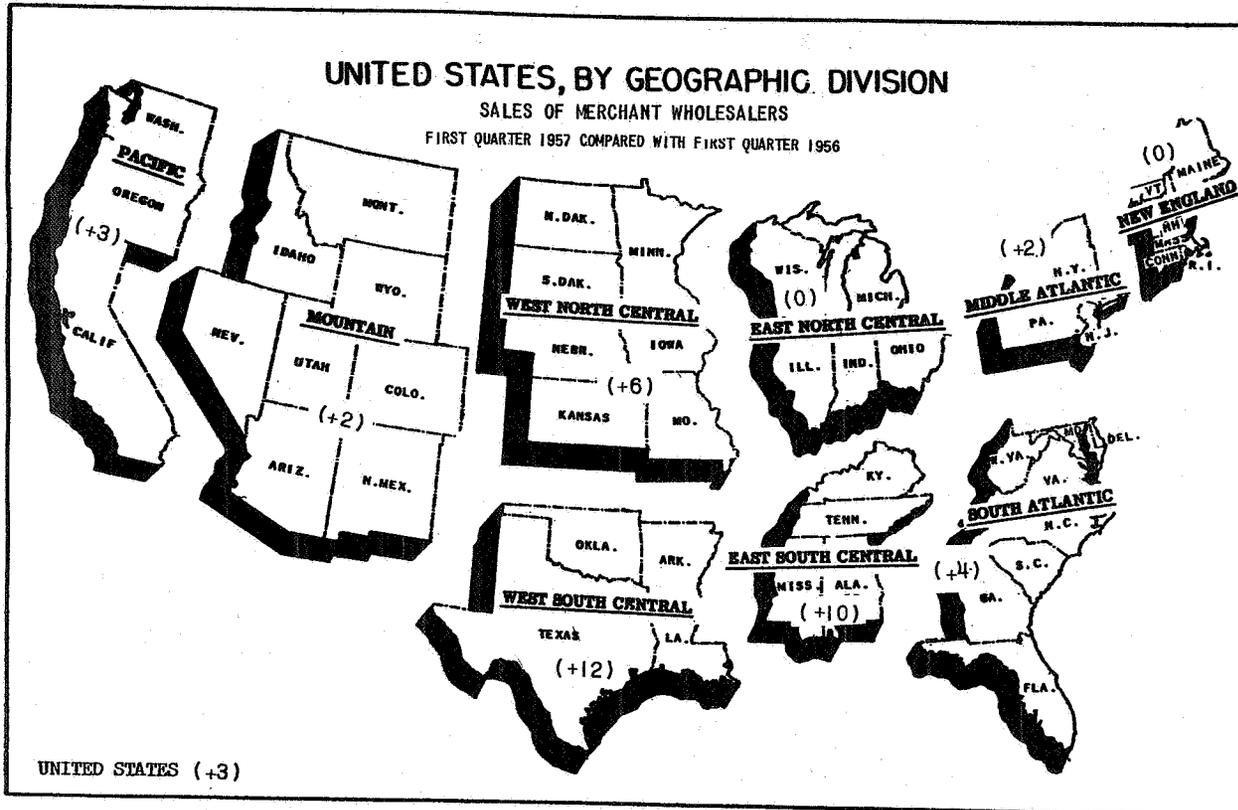
compared with year-ago stocks. Other substantial increases over year-ago inventories were shown by iron and steel products distributors (31%) and farm products merchants (20%). The only large decline from a year ago was reported by piece goods converters (14%).

Inventory changes by geographic division were small compared with a month ago, being limited to 2 percent or less in seven of the nine divisions. However, the East South Central Division reported a 4 percent decline, while the Pacific Division noted a gain of 6 percent. All divisions reported stocks from 5 to 11 percent higher than a year ago. The largest increase was shared by both the West North Central and South Atlantic Divisions.

General

Data shown in this report are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample is included on page 2.

Each month approximately one week prior to the publication of this report, an advance release is issued containing percentage changes in sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios for most trades covered by this report. This advance release is available upon request.



## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, TERMINOLOGY AND KINDS OF BUSINESS

**Scope of the Survey.**--Wholesale trade includes several types of establishments: merchant wholesalers; manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; assemblers of farm products; and agents, brokers and commercial merchants. This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade. However, all kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

**Merchant wholesalers** are described in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual developed by the Federal Bureau of the Budget, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials. Firms which operate retail and manufacturing establishments in addition to their wholesale establishments report only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind of business classification shown in this report is included on page 6.

**Sample design.**--Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms. Over 90 percent of this number of firms submit their reports in time for tabulation.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales-size, (c) the degree of reliability desired in the data, and (d) whether geographic division trends were to be shown for the trade.

This sample has been designed to develop monthly dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories by kind of business with a sampling variability for each trade of approximately 5 percent at the one sigma level. The sampling variability of the percentage changes based on this sample is expected to be somewhat lower. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

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.

**Percentage changes.**--For each firm reporting, data are available for each of the three months (current, previous, and year ago) for which comparisons are made. Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes of sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios. Data in this report are not adjusted for number of days in the month nor for seasonal or price fluctuations.

**Sales** include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included. Sales trends shown in this report reflect the operation of firms selected in the sample which were in business in each of the three months compared.

**Inventory, end-of-month** represents stock, at cost value, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. Inventory trends are based on reports from only those firms which included data for all three periods compared. The number of firms reporting inventories is generally smaller than the number reporting sales. Some firms cannot submit inventory data in time for tabulation but furnish sales figures only.

**Stock-sales ratios** are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

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

MARCH 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Mar. 1957 from--		Mar. 1957	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957
	Mar. 1957 from--		3 mo. 1957 from 3 mo. 1956	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957			
	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957						
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL</b> .....	+1	+8	+3	+8	+1	128	122	140
<b>Durable goods, total</b> .....	-4	+9	0	+8	+2	164	149	179
Automotive wholesalers.....	-1	+8	+5	+5	+1	205	197	220
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	-7	+11	-5	-2	-1	121	118	135
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	0	+7	+7	+6	+1	227	216	241
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	-3	+1	+2	+11	+4	192	167	187
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-2	+1	+3	+14	+5	181	158	174
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-4	0	0	+8	+3	204	177	202
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-1	+9	-1	0	+2	187	184	196
Furniture wholesalers.....	-1	+6	+1	0	+2	184	175	184
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	-1	+10	-2	0	+3	189	189	204
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	0	+11	+1	0	0	233	233	257
Hardware wholesalers.....	+4	+12	+2	0	0	258	262	284
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-3	+9	-1	-2	0	206	203	229
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-17	+17	-14	-1	+1	124	109	144
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-20	+20	-19	-4	0	154	131	183
Construction materials distributors.....	-12	+13	-6	+5	+3	96	85	106
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+2	+12	+5	+10	+1	160	154	179
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	-11	+18	-4	+12	+1	239	197	288
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	+6	+11	+2	+7	0	164	154	175
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+1	+10	+7	+11	+2	134	131	148
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+6	+5	+5	+5	-3	182	181	192
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+5	+2	+4	+1	0	143	147	145
Service establishment supply houses.....	+11	+9	+7	+5	+2	127	131	137
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	+6	+10	+4	+29	+3	171	140	188
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	+3	+10	+5	+31	+4	222	172	227
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	+11	+10	+3	+18	0	62	63	82
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-7	-3	-4	+2	-2	44	42	45
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	+1	-3	+4	+11	-2	33	34	34
Waste materials dealers.....	-19	-1	-17	-5	-2	61	55	60
Jewelry wholesalers.....	+2	+18	+2	+4	-1	227	225	258
<b>Nondurable goods, total</b> .....	+5	+8	+7	+8	-1	97	96	107
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+6	+6	+6	+2	-1	73	77	78
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	+4	+6	-1	-1	97	106	103
Voluntary groups.....	+6	+2	+5	0	+1	84	94	87
Retailer-cooperative.....	+7	+5	+14	+11	-1	73	74	76
Nonaffiliated.....	0	+8	+2	-4	-3	110	114	122
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+7	+8	+2	+5	-2	71	73	80
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+6	+7	+4	+13	+4	95	91	98
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+13	+5	+11	+14	+7	24	22	23
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	-11	+6	-6	+3	+3	25	23	26
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	-11	+5	-10	+11	+5	29	23	29
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-10	+7	-4	-2	+2	22	22	24
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+2	+10	+4	+15	+5	133	114	139
Beer, ale distributors.....	+4	+7	+4	+11	+10	68	60	66
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+1	+12	+4	+16	+4	168	145	178
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+8	+9	+6	+10	+1	136	133	148
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+9	+6	+7	+9	+2	150	152	156
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	+6	+16	+5	+13	+1	97	91	115
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	+2	+15	0	+9	0	167	149	191
Tobacco distributors.....	-1	+6	+4	+8	+1	57	53	62
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	0	+9	-2	-1	0	192	200	222
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	+4	+10	-1	+8	0	169	174	207
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	-1	+10	0	0	+2	223	228	240
Piece goods converters.....	-7	+5	-6	-14	-7	171	185	211
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	+1	+6	+3	+7	0	123	117	130
Paper wholesalers.....	0	+6	+3	+7	0	118	112	124
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	+8	+8	+8	+9	-3	157	156	168
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+14	+4	+26	+20	-8	110	109	135
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+8	+8	+8	+9	-1	88	89	99
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.....	+3	+10	+5	+6	+3	204	219	214
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+7	+6	+9	+16	+3	116	105	131
Coal wholesalers.....	+20	+1	+8	+45	-23	54	41	66
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	+3	+15	+6	+4	-9	97	100	129

r Revised from Press Release of March 1957.

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

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Mar. 1957 from--		Mar. 1957	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957
	Mar. 1957 from--		3 mo. 1957 from 3 mo. 1956	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957			
	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957						
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL</b> .....	+1	+8	+3	+8	+1	128	122	140
New England.....	-1	+6	0	+9	+2	127	121	134
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+10	+2	+6	+1	114	115	129
East North Central.....	-3	+5	0	+6	0	125	117	132
West North Central.....	+6	+14	+6	+11	-2	133	134	154
South Atlantic.....	+2	+3	+4	+11	0	141	130	146
East South Central.....	+5	+6	+10	+5	-4	155	159	177
West South Central.....	+9	+2	+12	+10	+1	143	139	149
Mountain.....	-5	+3	+2	+9	0	179	156	187
Pacific.....	0	+11	+3	+7	+6	126	117	137
<b>Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers</b> .....	0	+7	+7	+6	+1	227	216	241
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	+7	+6	+16	+6	224	206	228
East North Central.....	0	+1	+8	-7	-6	238	234	263
West North Central.....	+17	+11	+13	+7	+2	221	236	239
South Atlantic.....	+1	0	+3	+9	+2	209	181	210
East South Central.....	+4	+4	+10	+5	0	242	246	253
West South Central.....	-8	+6	+2	+9	+2	249	212	258
Mountain.....	-9	-14	+8	+9	+2	367	319	311
Pacific.....	0	+19	+1	+3	+3	209	201	243
<b>Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors</b> .....	-2	+1	+3	+14	+5	181	158	174
New England.....	-4	0	-14	+23	+6	213	180	208
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	+6	+2	+15	+6	150	123	146
East North Central.....	-12	-3	0	+12	+3	188	145	174
West North Central.....	0	-2	+8	+12	+2	205	187	195
South Atlantic.....	+1	+1	-2	+11	+7	191	171	180
East South Central.....	+6	-3	+13	+9	+2	170	181	180
West South Central.....	+3	+1	+7	+15	+5	215	190	206
Mountain.....	+10	+7	+14	+18	+10	181	175	177
Pacific.....	+2	+4	+6	+16	+10	153	137	146
<b>Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distrs.</b> .....	-4	0	0	+8	+3	204	177	202
New England.....	+11	+6	+5	+13	+2	183	182	200
Middle Atlantic.....	-14	-11	-4	+2	+4	210	172	183
East North Central.....	-2	+2	0	+19	+1	189	156	192
West North Central.....	-8	+1	-13	0	+6	221	213	208
South Atlantic.....	+4	+3	+4	+9	+1	212	189	209
East South Central.....	0	+17	-7	+12	-8	228	205	303
West South Central.....	-12	-4	-7	-9	+2	248	192	240
Pacific.....	-3	+12	+6	-4	+5	157	165	170
<b>Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers</b> .....	-1	+9	-1	0	+2	187	184	196
New England.....	+9	+33	-4	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	+7	+1	+7	+2	182	165	194
East North Central.....	-7	+9	-1	+8	+3	189	163	196
West North Central.....	+6	+18	+1	-15	+5	165	205	196
South Atlantic.....	+4	+4	+1	-12	-1	215	261	233
South Central.....	-13	+8	-5	-1	-1	202	189	218
Pacific.....	-5	+6	0	-5	+3	216	225	203
<b>Hardware wholesalers</b> .....	+4	+12	+2	0	0	258	262	284
Middle Atlantic.....	-2	+14	-5	+4	+3	229	218	239
East North Central.....	+14	+20	+7	-1	0	233	264	271
West North Central.....	+4	+15	+4	0	0	273	304	328
South Atlantic.....	-4	0	+1	+9	-2	312	276	318
East South Central.....	-8	-2	-2	-9	-2	254	246	244
West South Central.....	-9	+1	-4	+4	+1	317	277	316
Mountain.....	0	+20	-5	-2	+5	307	319	351
Pacific.....	+7	+13	+7	+1	0	230	242	259
<b>Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors</b> .....	-3	+9	-1	-2	0	206	203	229
New England.....	+9	+7	0	+1	+5	218	222	240
Middle Atlantic.....	-3	+4	-3	-9	+2	229	251	233
East North Central.....	-7	+13	-3	0	+1	179	166	201
West North Central.....	-3	+17	+1	-1	+1	266	267	307
South Atlantic.....	-2	+7	+2	+7	+1	200	178	228
South Central.....	+9	+12	+3	+5	+2	190	189	210
Mountain.....	+5	+17	-3	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific.....	-13	+11	-3	-3	-3	184	173	223
<b>Lumber, construction materials distributors</b> .....	-17	+17	-14	-1	+1	124	109	144
New England.....	-9	+9	-9	-5	+6	117	89	116
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	+22	-13	-5	0	144	166	180
East North Central.....	-18	+10	-17	-6	+2	142	124	163
West North Central.....	-10	+22	-11	-6	-5	163	157	178
South Atlantic.....	-12	+17	-3	-1	-4	95	76	103
South Central.....	-12	+18	-9	+1	+3	130	122	150
Mountain.....	-6	+18	-7	+3	-6	139	117	175
Pacific.....	-25	+17	-18	+3	0	73	42	83

See footnote end of table.

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

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Mar. 1957 from--		Mar. 1957	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957
	Mar. 1957 from--		3 mo. 1957 from 3 mo. 1956	Mar. 1957 from--				
	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957		Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957			
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+1	+10	+7	+11	+2	134	131	148
New England.....	+5	+13	+9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+7	+22	+9	+11	+3	106	101	130
East North Central.....	-7	+6	+4	-1	+1	144	152	151
West North Central.....	-14	-2	-2	-2	-3	135	122	139
South Atlantic.....	+33	-2	+12	+5	+1	123	158	130
South Central.....	+2	+8	+12	+18	-1	130	116	142
Mountain.....	-13	-9	-3	-2	+4	179	188	170
Pacific.....	-9	+16	-3	+5	+5	171	159	201
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	+4	+6	-1	-1	97	106	103
New England.....	+3	+2	+7	+9	0	100	100	100
Middle Atlantic.....	+6	+5	+4	-1	0	95	108	97
East North Central.....	+2	+3	+4	-4	-1	87	95	90
West North Central.....	+4	+1	+7	0	+3	92	98	94
South Atlantic.....	+5	+3	+7	+2	-1	116	115	121
East South Central.....	+2	+5	+8	0	0	129	132	135
West South Central.....	+4	+7	+5	-3	-5	107	116	120
Mountain.....	0	+2	+7	+1	0	117	114	124
Pacific.....	+3	+5	+10	+5	+3	73	72	76
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+7	+8	+2	+5	-2	71	73	80
New England.....	-5	-2	-5	+4	+11	136	122	113
Middle Atlantic.....	+9	+5	+1	+10	-1	76	72	84
East North Central.....	+12	+8	+5	-1	-12	64	75	81
South Atlantic.....	+1	+12	-5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Central.....	+2	+27	+2	-2	-1	56	61	93
Mountain.....	+3	-4	+13	+9	-4	97	95	67
Pacific.....	+8	+11	0	-3	+4	41	51	48
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-10	+7	-4	-2	+2	22	22	24
New England.....	-2	+4	+2	-17	+2	20	33	20
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+7	0	+9	+5	14	12	14
East North Central.....	-8	+10	-4	-2	+3	18	18	20
South Atlantic.....	-20	+2	-4	-2	+8	31	34	32
South Central.....	-8	+6	-3	+3	+6	23	22	25
Pacific.....	-9	+6	-3	-3	+1	23	22	24
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+9	+6	+7	+9	+2	150	152	156
New England.....	+3	+3	+7	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Middle Atlantic.....	+12	+7	+6	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
East North Central.....	+11	+5	+8	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
West North Central.....	+3	+2	+10	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
South Atlantic.....	+12	+9	+9	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
East South Central.....	+7	+2	+8	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
West South Central.....	+8	+6	+9	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Mountain.....	+8	+9	+8	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Pacific.....	+2	+7	+8	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Tobacco distributors.....	-1	+6	+4	+8	+1	57	53	62
New England.....	-1	+9	+3	+10	+4	56	37	59
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	+4	+6	+15	-5	57	50	64
East North Central.....	+4	+8	+6	+5	0	55	56	59
West North Central.....	0	+10	+3	+10	-1	75	72	84
South Atlantic.....	-2	+1	+5	+12	+4	53	49	57
South Central.....	+1	+6	+1	+5	0	53	51	55
Pacific.....	+4	+14	+7	+3	+20	62	63	61
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	0	+9	-2	-1	0	192	200	222
New England.....	+5	+1	-2	-7	+2	226	223	208
Middle Atlantic.....	0	+9	-3	-2	-1	191	205	227
East North Central.....	-3	+22	0	+3	+3	194	172	216
South Atlantic.....	+4	+16	-6	+3	-6	189	227	235
South Central.....	-5	-2	-6	+10	-2	170	156	197
Mountain.....	-4	+3	-8	+16	+5	279	232	271
Pacific.....	-6	+1	+3	-8	-2	173	188	190

<sup>1</sup> Due to incomplete reporting, inventory data by geographic division are being withheld and United States data for this trade are subject to revision. Revised data will be included in the April 1957 report.

X Insufficient data to show separately.

## DESCRIPTION OF KINDS OF BUSINESS

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its annual 1954 sales by commodity lines as reported in the 1954 Census of Business. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

## DURABLE GOODS

## Automotive wholesalers

Motor-vehicle distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

## Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes; electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

## Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

Furniture wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

## Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

Hardware wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

## Lumber, construction materials distributors

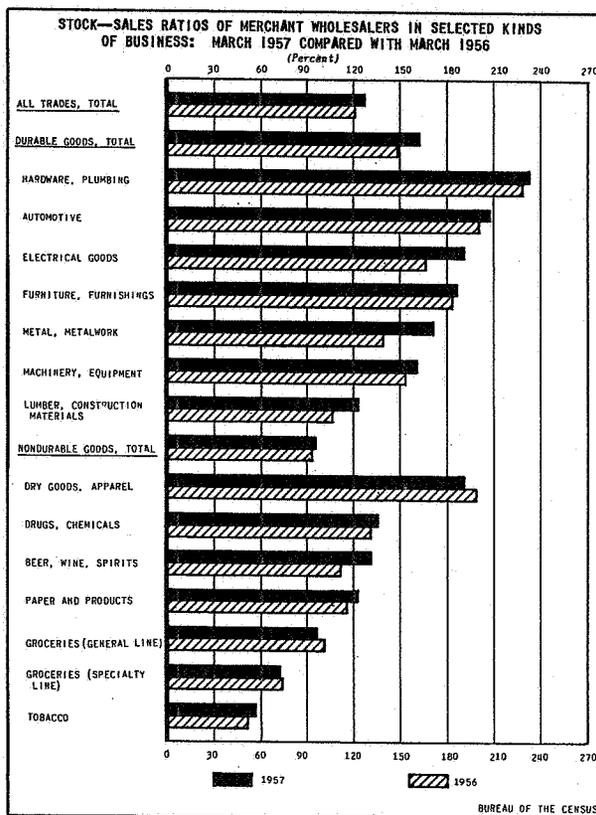
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

Construction materials distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

## Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

Commercial machines, equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.



## Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

Professional equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as staturary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

Service establishment, supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

Other industrial machinery, equipment distributors (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses—primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.—This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frozen and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperative and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers—Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.—Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

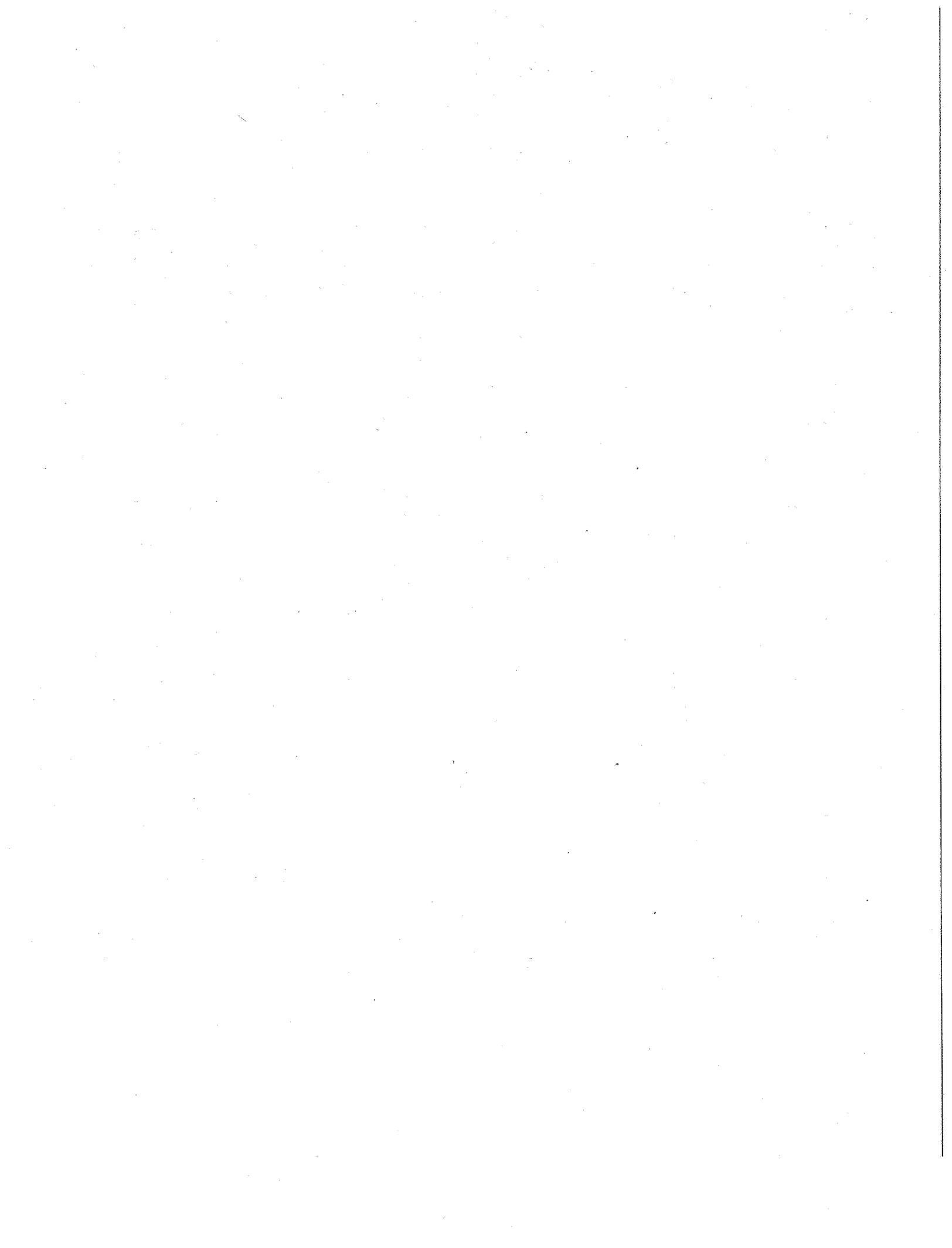
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.—(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.



# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

APRIL 1957

FOR RELEASE  
June 11, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers in April 1957 were at the same level as in March but were 6 percent above sales a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first four months of 1957 were 4 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1956.

Durable goods trades, in total, showed a slight (1%) increase over March sales which was balanced by a slight (1%) decline in the nondurable goods trades totals. Compared with April sales a year ago, the durable goods were off 1 percent but the nondurable goods trades noted an increase of 11 percent. Sales of nondurable goods, up 8 percent during the first 4 months of this year, reflected a larger gain during this period than durable goods sales, which showed no change in the like period.

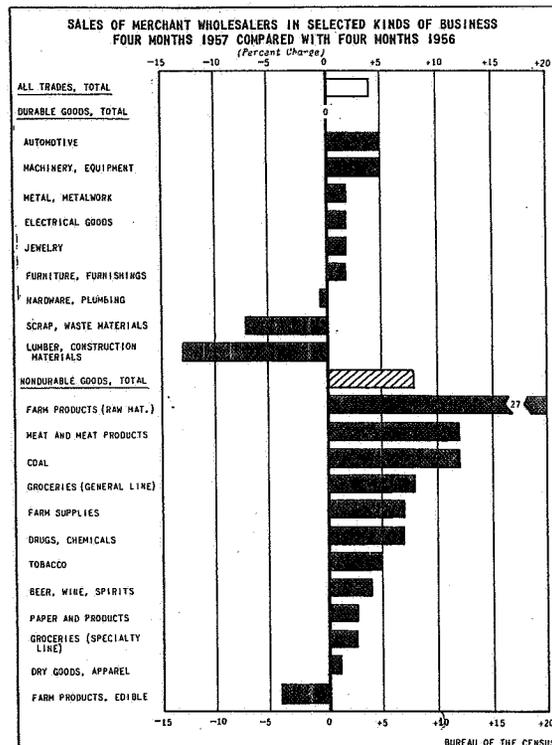
Air conditioning and refrigeration equipment distributors (16%), construction materials distributors (13%), beer, ale distributors (12%) and lumber, millwork wholesalers (10%) reported significant increases over March sales. These were offset, however, by sharp declines by farm supplies wholesalers (14%), electrical appliances distributors (9%) and iron, steel scrap dealers (9%). Substantial increases over year-ago sales were shown by farm products merchants (31%), clothing, furnishings wholesalers (26%) and coal wholesalers (21%). Declines from a year ago were recorded by other kinds of business, the sharpest decline being indicated by waste materials dealers (20%) and smaller decreases by iron, steel scrap dealers (12%) and lumber, millwork wholesalers (11%).

Although sales in the Mountain Division were up 12 percent over the previous month, all other divisions showed smaller changes ranging from an increase of 3 percent in New England to a decline of 3 percent in the Middle Atlantic and West North Central Divisions. Compared with a year ago, sales were up in eight geographic divisions, the smallest increase occurring in the West North Central Division (4%), the largest in the Pacific Division (11%). Sales were off slightly (1%) from a year ago in the East North Central Division.

### Inventories

Wholesalers inventories at the end of April showed a slight (1%) decline from previous month inventories but were 8 percent above stocks on hand during April 1956. The April 1957 stock-sales ratio of 130 percent was 1 point below the ratio for March 1957 but 3 points above the ratio for a year ago.

While most trades indicated small changes from previous month inventories, significant declines were noted by wholesalers of farm supplies (11%) and coal (12%) and a moderate gain was shown by beer, ale distributors (9%). Changes from year-ago inventory levels were greater. Iron and steel products distributors indicated the sharpest increase (29%) while dry goods wholesalers indicated the sharpest decline (13%). Other large increases over year-ago stocks were shown



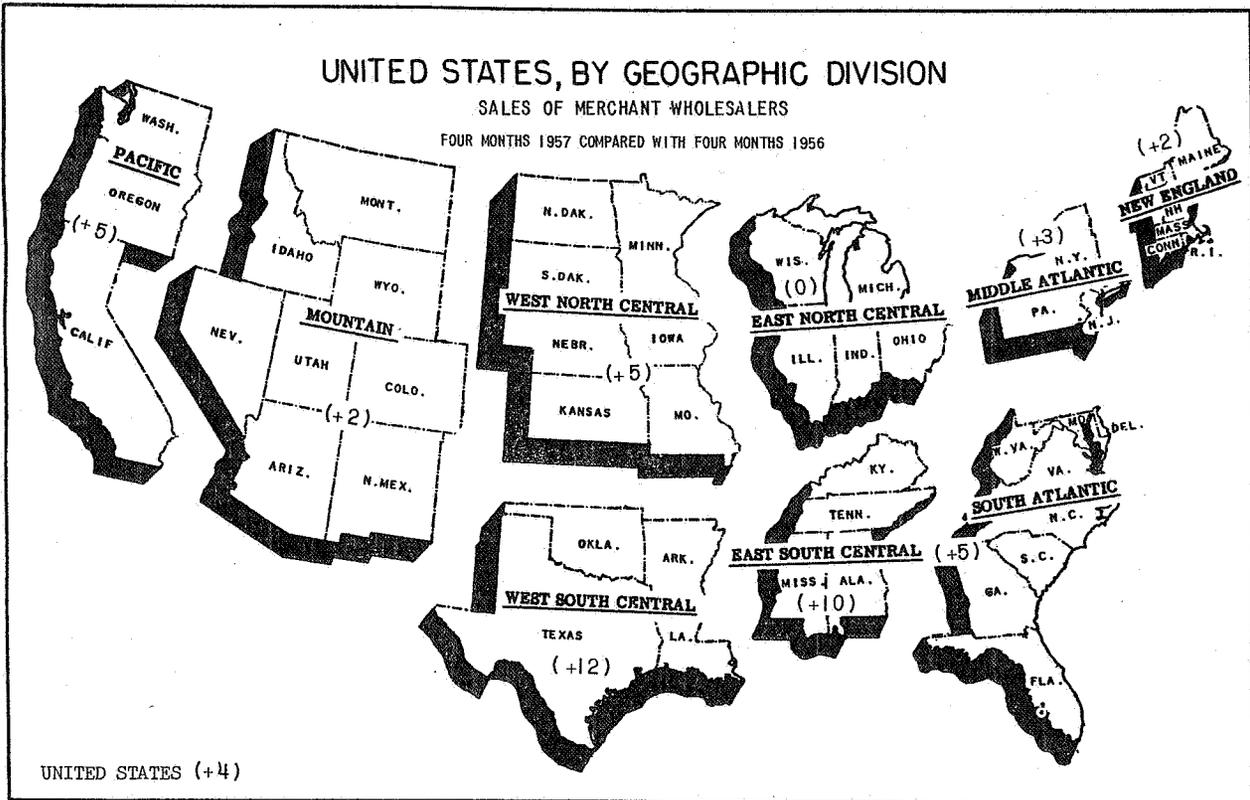
by farm products merchants (25%), coal wholesalers (16%), industrial machinery, equipment distributors (15%) and nonferrous metals distributors (15%). Sizeable drops were indicated by piece goods converters (11%) and by poultry distributors (9%).

By geographic divisions the changes from previous month inventory levels were mostly small and downward. While three divisions--the East North Central, the West South Central and the Mountain--showed no change; the remaining six divisions indicated declines of 1 to 3 percent. Compared with a year ago, however, all divisions registered moderate to substantial increases in inventories ranging from 4 percent in both the Middle Atlantic and the Pacific Divisions to 16 percent in the East South Central Division.

### General

Data shown in this report are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of the revised sample is included on page 2.

Each month approximately one week prior to the publication of this report, an advance release is issued containing percentage changes in sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios for most trades covered by this report. The advance release is available upon request.



## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, TERMINOLOGY AND KINDS OF BUSINESS

**Scope of the Survey.**—Wholesale trade includes several types of establishments: merchant wholesalers; manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; assemblers of farm products; and agents, brokers and commercial merchants. This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade. However, all kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

**Merchant wholesalers** are described in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual developed by the Federal Bureau of the Budget, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials. Firms which operate retail and manufacturing establishments in addition to their wholesale establishments report only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind of business classification shown in this report is included on page 6.

**Sample design.**—Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms. Over 90 percent of this number of firms submit their reports in time for tabulation.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales-size, (c) the degree of reliability desired in the data, and (d) whether geographic division trends were to be shown for the trade.

This sample has been designed to develop monthly dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories by kind of business with a sampling variability for each trade of approximately 5 percent at the one sigma level. The sampling variability of the percentage changes based on this sample is expected to be somewhat lower. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

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.

**Percentage changes.**—For each firm reporting, data are available for each of the three months (current, previous, and year ago) for which comparisons are made. Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes of sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios. Data in this report are not adjusted for number of days in the month nor for seasonal or price fluctuations.

**Sales** include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included. Sales trends shown in this report reflect the operation of firms selected in the sample which were in business in each of the three months compared.

**Inventory, end-of-month** represents stock, at cost value, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. Inventory trends are based on reports from only those firms which included data for all three periods compared. The number of firms reporting inventories is generally smaller than the number reporting sales. Some firms cannot submit inventory data in time for tabulation but furnish sales figures only.

**Stock-sales ratios** are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

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

APRIL 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Apr. 1957 from--		Apr. 1957	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957
	Apr. 1957 from--		4 mo. 1957 from 4 mo. 1956	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957			
	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	+6	0	+4	+8	-1	130	127	131
Durable goods, total.....	-1	+1	0	+8	0	171	157	171
Automotive wholesalers.....	+7	+5	+5	+4	+1	190	186	<sup>r</sup> 197
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	-5	-1	-5	+5	-4	124	105	127
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+9	+6	+7	+4	+1	206	209	215
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	+1	-4	+2	+6	0	188	176	181
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	+1	+1	+3	+7	-1	165	156	170
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	+2	-9	+1	+6	0	220	204	195
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	+9	+1	+2	+4	0	180	183	182
Furniture wholesalers.....	+9	+5	+3	+9	0	212	213	220
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	+9	0	+1	+1	-1	162	168	161
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-4	+4	-1	-1	0	235	228	242
Hardware wholesalers.....	<sup>r</sup> -1	+2	+1	0	0	253	<sup>r</sup> 252	255
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-4	+7	-2	-2	0	215	210	228
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-9	+11	-13	-3	-1	119	109	132
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-11	+10	-17	-6	-4	<sup>r</sup> 153	<sup>r</sup> 134	<sup>r</sup> 164
Construction materials distributors.....	-6	+13	-6	-1	+2	103	103	116
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+6	-1	+5	+14	-1	175	166	173
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	0	+16	-3	+12	+2	172	157	203
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	+12	+8	+5	+7	0	161	174	171
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+3	-8	+6	+15	0	168	153	153
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+15	-1	+8	+8	+1	174	187	173
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+17	+2	+8	+20	+1	143	145	150
Service establishment supply houses.....	+4	0	+6	+1	-1	144	160	148
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-2	+1	+2	+27	+2	191	152	190
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	+2	+3	+4	+29	+2	229	183	229
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-9	-5	0	+15	+2	85	70	83
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-15	-6	-7	+1	-5	51	44	49
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-12	-9	0	-2	-8	43	40	41
Waste materials dealers.....	-20	+1	-18	+4	-1	64	50	65
Jewelry wholesalers.....	+1	-4	+2	-1	+1	211	206	190
Nondurable goods, total.....	+11	-1	+8	+8	-2	98	101	99
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+10	0	+7	+2	-3	79	85	83
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+12	+3	+8	+3	-2	104	110	109
Voluntary groups.....	+13	+4	+7	0	-2	99	104	105
Retailer-cooperative.....	+19	+2	+15	+9	+3	88	91	84
Nonaffiliated.....	+8	+3	+4	+3	-4	128	119	123
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+5	-6	+3	0	-4	80	87	83
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+11	-1	+6	+6	-2	65	72	64
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+13	+5	+12	+5	-3	20	22	22
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	0	+8	-4	<sup>r</sup> -5	-5	23	24	26
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	+3	+9	-6	-9	-7	19	22	23
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-1	+7	-3	-4	-5	25	26	28
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+4	+1	+4	+10	+2	121	119	123
Beer, ale distributors.....	+9	+12	+5	+12	+9	67	66	70
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+1	-6	+3	+9	0	166	161	162
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+9	+1	+7	<sup>r</sup> +8	<sup>r</sup> +1	<sup>r</sup> 143	144	141
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+10	-2	+8	<sup>r</sup> +10	<sup>r</sup> +2	<sup>r</sup> 167	164	160
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	+8	+4	+6	+5	-1	90	97	94
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	+5	+7	+2	+5	-1	162	166	174
Tobacco distributors.....	+8	+2	+5	+7	+1	62	63	63
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+9	-5	+1	-8	-2	179	201	169
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	+26	-6	+4	+1	0	164	180	150
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+4	-4	+1	-13	-2	200	227	189
Piece goods converters.....	-2	-8	-5	-11	-3	168	187	165
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	+3	-2	+3	+4	0	128	128	126
Paper wholesalers.....	+2	-2	+2	+3	0	127	127	125
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	+7	-2	+7	+7	+2	143	134	138
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+31	0	+27	+25	-8	127	126	134
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+17	-7	+10	+14	-3	85	88	78
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.....	+3	+5	+5	+8	+2	194	180	200
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+13	-2	+10	+12	+3	118	117	105
Coal wholesalers.....	+21	0	+12	+16	-12	42	41	39
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	+8	-14	+7	-3	-11	97	107	96

<sup>r</sup>Revised from Press Release of April 1957.

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

Kind of business and geographic division (See map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	percent change			Percent change, Apr. 1957 from--		Apr. 1957	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957
	Apr. 1957 from--		4 mo. 1957 from 4 mo. 1956	Apr. 1957 from--				
	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957		Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957			
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....</b>	+6	0	+4	+8	-1	130	127	131
New England.....	+9	+3	+2	+7	-3	120	123	129
Middle Atlantic.....	+6	-3	+3	+4	-2	108	109	106
East North Central.....	-1	0	0	+10	0	132	119	132
West North Central.....	+4	-3	+5	+6	-1	153	152	148
South Atlantic.....	+9	+2	+5	+7	-3	148	148	152
East South Central.....	+10	+2	+10	+16	0	149	134	153
West South Central.....	+10	-1	+12	+15	-1	134	126	135
Mountain.....	+5	+12	+2	+9	0	141	134	156
Pacific.....	+11	+1	+5	+4	-1	134	147	139
<b>Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....</b>	+9	+6	+7	+4	+1	206	209	215
Middle Atlantic.....	+19	+9	+9	+1	-1	179	193	185
East North Central.....	+9	+5	+8	+2	+1	214	213	226
West North Central.....	+3	+7	+11	+7	+7	269	268	292
South Atlantic.....	+19	+4	+6	+4	0	190	204	199
East South Central.....	+16	+4	+11	+4	+1	263	294	277
West South Central.....	+7	-3	+3	+10	+1	281	267	269
Mountain.....	+1	+5	+5	-6	-1	293	315	313
Pacific.....	+7	+10	+3	0	+2	165	180	183
<b>Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....</b>	+1	+1	+3	+7	-1	165	156	170
New England.....	-2	0	-11	+10	-1	193	170	206
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	+3	+2	+10	-4	124	117	136
East North Central.....	-5	0	-2	+11	0	179	152	182
West North Central.....	+3	-10	+7	+10	+1	198	186	172
South Atlantic.....	+6	+6	+1	-3	-1	173	188	185
East South Central.....	-14	-3	+6	-7	-1	187	159	194
West South Central.....	+3	-8	+6	+5	-3	198	194	187
Mountain.....	+9	+12	+13	+17	-1	206	190	221
Pacific.....	+6	+2	+6	+8	-1	148	146	155
<b>Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distr.....</b>	+2	-9	+1	+6	0	220	204	195
New England.....	+4	-3	+5	+20	0	156	135	142
Middle Atlantic.....	0	-11	-3	+1	-4	188	172	155
East North Central.....	+3	-11	+1	+15	+2	238	208	221
West North Central.....	0	-20	-10	+5	+4	275	232	229
South Atlantic.....	+17	-3	+7	+7	-3	228	250	219
East South Central.....	+3	-3	-5	+2	-1	238	242	229
West South Central.....	-8	0	-7	-6	0	271	256	265
Pacific.....	+3	-12	+6	+11	+4	215	199	170
<b>Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....</b>	+9	+1	+2	+4	0	180	183	182
New England.....	-2	-2	-2	-5	+2	201	218	204
Middle Atlantic.....	+10	-2	+3	0	-2	155	159	151
East North Central.....	+19	+8	+4	+5	-1	178	194	190
West North Central.....	+5	+2	+2	+5	+2	254	258	247
South Atlantic.....	0	-1	+1	+1	+1	180	166	181
South Central.....	+18	+10	0	+10	+1	163	177	179
Pacific.....	+4	+1	+1	+13	+4	172	173	163
<b>Hardware wholesalers.....</b>	-1	+2	+1	0	0	253	252	255
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	-2	-4	-3	-6	212	212	199
East North Central.....	-3	-6	+4	-1	0	264	262	243
West North Central.....	-3	+6	+2	-3	-3	279	280	301
South Atlantic.....	+5	+6	+2	+7	-4	250	250	277
East South Central.....	-5	+6	-3	-7	-3	237	243	259
West South Central.....	-4	+1	-4	0	-1	254	240	257
Pacific.....	+2	+10	+5	+3	+6	280	277	290
<b>Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....</b>	-4	+7	-2	-2	0	215	210	228
New England.....	-9	-4	-3	-4	+10	281	232	244
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	+6	-1	-1	0	164	174	173
East North Central.....	-9	+11	-4	+2	0	249	219	273
West North Central.....	+4	+12	+2	+2	0	251	259	279
South Atlantic.....	+6	+9	+3	-2	0	229	251	247
South Central.....	-20	0	-4	-10	-4	227	202	246
Mountain.....	-17	+10	-7	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific.....	-9	+10	-5	-2	+2	207	188	212
<b>Lumber, construction materials distributors.....</b>	-9	+11	-13	-3	-1	119	109	132
New England.....	-17	+13	-11	-9	-3	64	60	76
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	+18	-8	-6	-1	90	96	114
East North Central.....	-12	+8	-15	-14	+1	129	134	136
West North Central.....	-13	+9	-12	-10	-4	149	135	173
South Atlantic.....	-10	+13	-5	+4	0	92	75	98
South Central.....	-2	+6	-8	-1	+1	113	110	117
Mountain.....	+24	+31	0	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Pacific.....	-17	+7	-18	+21	-3	156	122	168
<b>Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....</b>	+3	-8	+6	+15	0	168	153	153
New England.....	+20	-20	+12	+29	-5	205	196	173
Middle Atlantic.....	+6	-8	+8	+5	+1	164	161	144
East North Central.....	-3	-1	+2	+12	-1	151	131	150
West North Central.....	+1	-2	-1	+19	-3	140	138	136
South Atlantic.....	+8	-11	+11	+30	+2	143	121	108
South Central.....	0	-4	+8	+24	0	160	137	160
Mountain.....	+9	+10	-2	+16	0	191	177	214
Pacific.....	+20	-7	+1	+21	+4	195	192	170

See footnotes at end of table.

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

APRIL 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Apr. 1957 from--		Apr. 1957	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957
	Apr. 1957 from--		4 mo. 1957 from 4 mo. 1956	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957			
	Apr. 1956	Mar. 1957						
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+12	+3	+8	+3	-2	104	110	109
New England.....	+19	+11	+9	-8	-6	69	89	84
Middle Atlantic.....	+5	-1	+4	+7	-6	136	132	144
East North Central.....	+13	-2	+6	+5	-2	98	106	98
West North Central.....	-3	+3	+4	-3	-6	96	96	107
South Atlantic.....	+8	-1	+7	+1	0	127	134	124
East South Central.....	+4	+3	+7	-4	-3	105	112	114
West South Central.....	+15	+6	+8	+7	0	95	104	100
Mountain.....	+13	+9	+8	+5	-1	106	111	115
Pacific.....	+29	+11	+14	+5	+3	79	88	92
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+5	-6	+3	0	-4	80	87	83
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	-5	+1	+18	-4	75	72	81
East North Central.....	+3	-2	+5	+3	+3	80	80	76
West North Central.....	+5	-6	-3	+9	-4	118	103	108
South Atlantic.....	+5	+8	+2	+3	-8	97	102	95
South Central.....	+19	-5	+16	-3	-1	72	89	65
Pacific.....	+21	-7	+3	-21	-13	46	75	60
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-1	+7	-3	-4	-5	25	26	28
New England.....	+2	+9	+2	-19	-25	7	11	11
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	+7	0	+8	+9	20	18	19
East North Central.....	+1	+16	-2	-16	-2	20	25	24
West North Central.....	-9	+8	-5	-7	-7	38	35	46
South Atlantic.....	+10	-7	0	+13	-3	21	22	21
South Central.....	-5	+2	-4	-1	-5	14	13	15
Pacific.....	+3	+12	-1	-15	-17	31	38	39
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+10	-2	+8	+10	+2	167	164	160
New England.....	+10	-4	+8	+5	-7	147	154	151
Middle Atlantic.....	+7	-1	+6	0	0	161	156	155
East North Central.....	+8	-1	+8	+3	+1	148	155	148
West North Central.....	+11	0	+10	+7	+1	153	156	151
South Atlantic.....	+10	-7	+9	+16	+3	184	174	165
East South Central.....	+13	-8	+9	+7	+1	182	190	168
West South Central.....	+4	-6	+8	+10	+3	209	194	187
Mountain.....	+6	+5	+8	+10	+9	219	212	191
Pacific.....	+13	+2	+9	+21	+2	150	145	151
Tobacco distributors.....	+8	+2	+5	+7	+1	62	63	63
New England.....	+9	+3	+5	+4	-6	59	63	65
Middle Atlantic.....	+7	+3	+6	+10	-1	67	63	69
East North Central.....	+10	+3	+7	+2	+5	56	61	55
West North Central.....	+8	+4	+4	+3	-1	64	60	69
South Atlantic.....	+4	-1	+5	+15	-4	78	71	77
South Central.....	+6	+1	+2	0	-2	48	50	49
Pacific.....	+18	+2	+9	+9	+17	78	84	69
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+9	-5	+1	-8	-2	179	201	169
New England.....	+23	-1	+3	-3	-4	179	205	192
Middle Atlantic.....	+9	-7	0	-12	-3	154	180	144
East North Central.....	+8	-1	+2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West North Central.....	+4	-6	-3	-2	+2	279	265	250
South Atlantic.....	+21	-2	0	-9	0	265	315	258
South Central.....	+5	-1	-4	0	-1	263	260	267
Pacific.....	+14	-8	+5	+4	-1	177	208	159

X Insufficient data to show separately.

## ADDENDUM TO THE MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT: MARCH 1957

Kind of business and geographic division	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Mar. 1957 from--		Mar. 1957	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957
	Mar. 1957 from--		3 mo. 1957 from 3 mo. 1956	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957			
	Mar. 1956	Feb. 1957						
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+9	+6	+7	+6	0	147	152	156
New England.....	+3	+3	+7	+7	0	129	139	130
Middle Atlantic.....	+12	+7	+6	-6	-3	130	157	143
East North Central.....	+11	+5	+8	+7	-3	134	139	145
West North Central.....	+3	+2	+10	+7	-1	161	154	167
South Atlantic.....	+12	+9	+9	+12	-1	147	151	162
East South Central.....	+7	+2	+8	+11	0	158	161	159
West South Central.....	+8	+6	+9	+7	-1	198	206	213
Mountain.....	+8	+9	+8	+3	-2	138	131	153
Pacific.....	+2	+7	+8	+15	+6	169	144	171

Data on inventories of drug wholesalers by geographic division presented here were withheld from the March 1957 report because of incomplete reporting of inventories at time of publication. United States inventory data for this trade have been revised from the March report.

DESCRIPTION OF KINDS OF BUSINESS

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its annual 1954 sales by commodity lines as reported in the 1954 Census of Business. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

DURABLE GOODS

Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

Lumber, construction materials distributors

**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

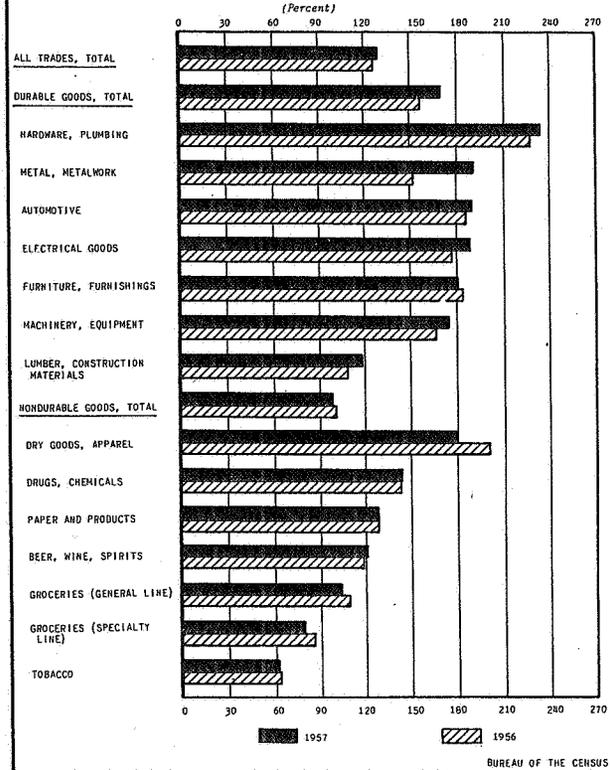
**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: APRIL 1957 COMPARED WITH APRIL 1956



Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other industrial machinery, equipment distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

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Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses—primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

NONDURABLE GOODSGrocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.—This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers—Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.—Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboards and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.—Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.—(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**  
**WASHINGTON 25, D. C.**

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**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

MAY 1957

FOR RELEASE  
JULY 9, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

Sales of merchant wholesalers in May 1957 were 3 percent ahead of April but remained unchanged from a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first five months of 1957 were 3 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1956.

Durable and nondurable goods trades, in total, each showed an increase of 3 percent over April sales. However, compared with a year ago, durable goods trades showed a 4 percent drop—balanced by a gain of 4 percent by nondurable goods trades. During the first five months of 1957 durable goods trades were off 1 percent in comparison with 1956 while nondurable goods trades registered an increase of 6 percent.

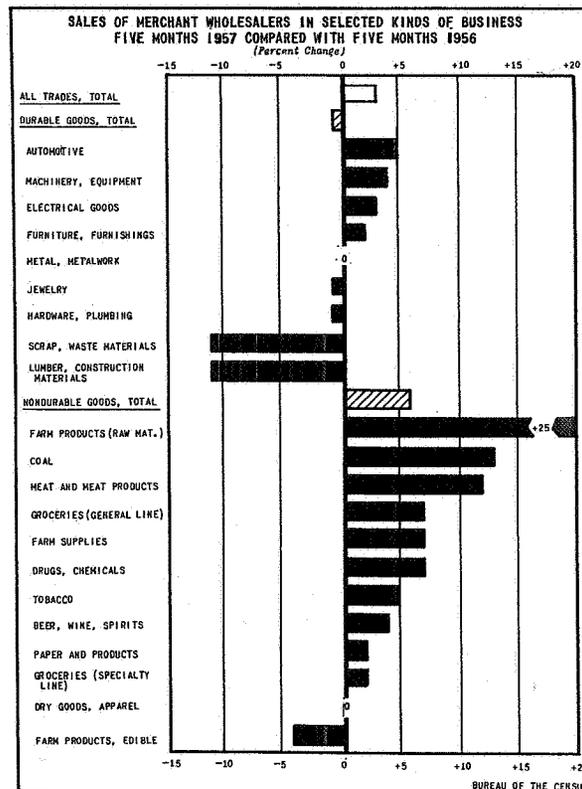
Iron, steel scrap dealers, off 13 percent and clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers down 12 percent, indicated the most notable declines from previous month sales. Significant increases were reported by wholesalers of fresh fruit, vegetables (12%), meat (13%), wine, distilled spirits (14%), air conditioning and commercial refrigeration equipment (15%), beer, ale (16%) and construction materials (16%). The largest declines from year ago sales were noted in such durable goods trades as iron, steel scrap (35%), waste materials (22%) and lumber, millwork (16%). These were offset by large gains by meat wholesalers (12%), electrical appliances distributors (12%), farm products merchants (15%) and coal wholesalers (18%).

All geographic divisions except the West South Central indicated sales gains over the previous month. The West South Central Division noted a small decline (2%) while the West North Central showed the principal gain (8%). Compared with sales in May 1956, trends were mixed. Most divisions indicated small changes ranging from a decline of 2 percent in the East North Central Division to an increase of 3 percent in both the West South Central and Mountain Divisions. However, one division, the East South Central, registered a gain of 11 percent principally due to the increased sales by farm products (cotton) merchants.

### Inventories

Wholesalers inventories at the end of May showed a small (2%) decline from April stocks but were 5 percent above inventories on hand during May 1956. The May stock-sales ratio of 128 percent was six points below the previous month ratio but six points above the ratio for a year ago.

While most trades showed small changes from previous month inventories, a very substantial rise (32%) was reported by coal wholesalers and large drops were noted by farm supplies wholesalers (12%) and farm products merchants (22%). Coal wholesalers (31%) and iron and steel products distributors (32%) registered the largest increases over year ago inventories. Smaller increases were reported by farm products merchants (18%), nonferrous metals distributors (15%), meat wholesalers (12%) and amusement



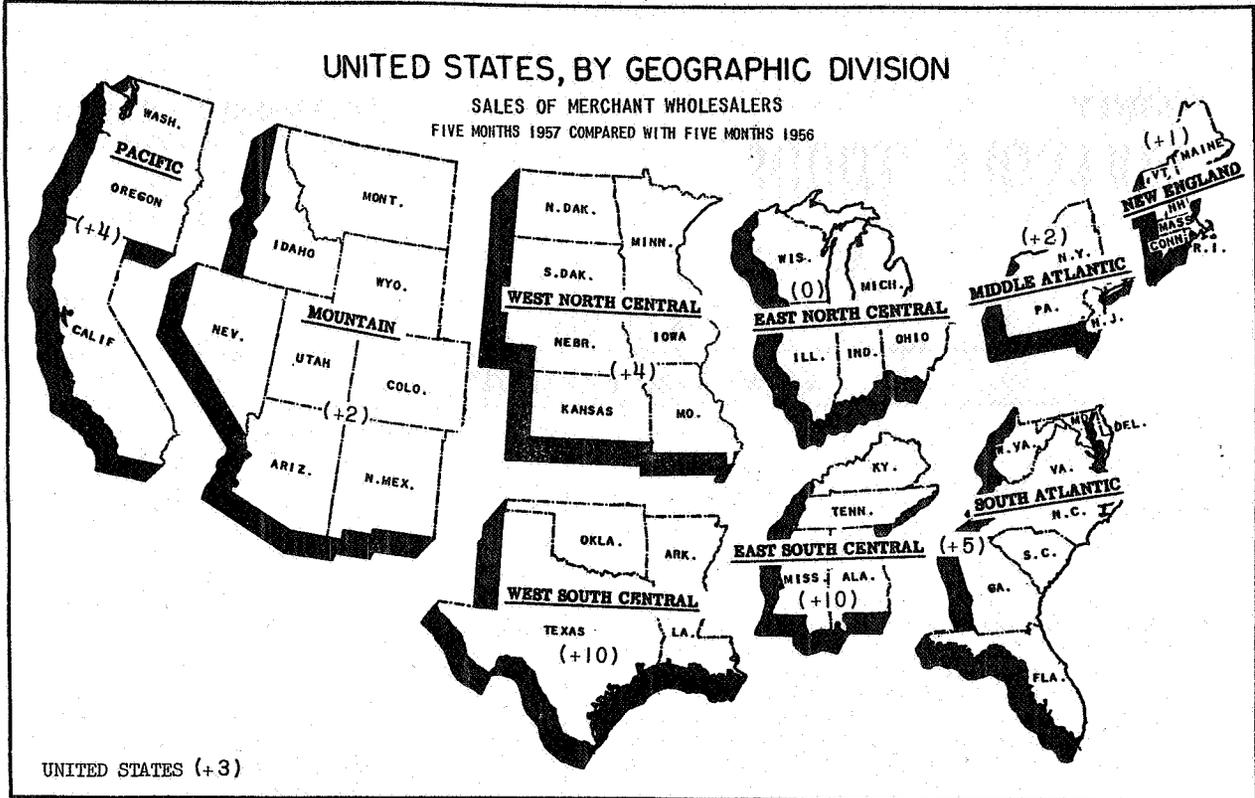
and sporting goods wholesalers (11%). Significant declines from year-ago inventories were shown by fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers (10%), lumber, millwork wholesalers (10%) and piece goods converters (18%).

Inventories in most geographic divisions were down from the previous month by 1 or 2 percent. However, the West South Central and East South Central Divisions were down 5 and 7 percent respectively, while the East North Central Division showed a slight (1%) increase. Compared with year-ago inventories, small to moderate increases were shown in seven geographic divisions, the West South Central reporting the largest increase (11%). Two divisions, New England and the West North Central, noted slight (1%) declines.

### General

Data shown in this report are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of the revised sample is included on page 2.

Each month approximately one week prior to the publication of this report, an advance release is issued containing percentage changes in sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios for most trades covered by this report. The advance release is available upon request.



## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, TERMINOLOGY AND KINDS OF BUSINESS

**Scope of the Survey.**—Wholesale trade includes several types of establishments: merchant wholesalers; manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; assemblers of farm products; and agents, brokers and commercial merchants. This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade. However, all kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are described in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual developed by the Federal Bureau of the Budget, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials. Firms which operate retail and manufacturing establishments in addition to their wholesale establishments report only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind of business classification shown in this report is included on page 6.

**Sample design.**—Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms. Over 90 percent of this number of firms submit their reports in time for tabulation.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales-size, (c) the degree of reliability desired in the data, and (d) whether geographic division trends were to be shown for the trade.

This sample has been designed to develop monthly dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories by kind of business with a sampling variability for each trade of approximately 5 percent at the one sigma level. The sampling variability of the percentage changes based on this sample is expected to be somewhat lower. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

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.

**Percentage changes.**—For each firm reporting, data are available for each of the three months (current, previous, and year ago) for which comparisons are made. Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight and the results summarized to obtain percentage changes of sales and inventories and stock-sales ratios. Data in this report are not adjusted for number of days in the month nor for seasonal or price fluctuations.

**Sales** include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included. Sales trends shown in this report reflect the operation of firms selected in the sample which were in business in each of the three months compared.

**Inventory, end-of-month** represents stock, at cost value, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. Inventory trends are based on reports from only those firms which included data for all three periods compared. The number of firms reporting inventories is generally smaller than the number reporting sales. Some firms cannot submit inventory data in time for tabulation but furnish sales figures only.

**Stock-sales ratios** are percentages derived by dividing stocks, at cost, by total sales for those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade.

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

MAY 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	May 1957 from--		5 mo. 1957 from 5 mo. 1956	Percent change, May 1957 from--		May 1957	May 1956	Apr. 1957
	May 1956	Apr. 1957		May 1956	Apr. 1957			
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0	+3	+3	+5	-2	128	122	134
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-4	+3	-1	+6	-1	165	151	172
Automotive wholesalers.....	+6	+6	+5	+3	+2	198	200	205
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	-10	+2	-6	+2	-4	127	113	131
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+9	+7	+8	+3	+2	211	219	219
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	+3	+4	+3	+5	-3	171	166	188
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-4	+2	+1	+4	-2	162	150	166
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	+12	+7	+4	+6	-4	183	190	218
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	+1	-2	+2	+4	0	190	182	186
Furniture wholesalers.....	+1	+1	+3	+5	0	185	176	193
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	+1	-4	+2	+3	0	192	184	184
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-3	+7	-1	-2	0	221	219	236
Hardware wholesalers.....	-1	+6	0	-1	0	234	233	247
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-4	+8	-2	-3	0	208	204	224
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-11	+12	-11	-5	0	108	99	116
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-16	+8	-16	-10	-1	125	106	125
Construction materials distributors.....	-5	+16	-5	0	0	94	92	108
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+4	+2	+4	+9	-1	160	152	166
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	+9	+15	0	+4	+3	122	133	132
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	+6	-1	+7	+1	-1	177	183	175
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-1	+1	+4	+9	-3	150	140	159
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+8	+1	+8	+7	+4	208	203	198
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+8	-1	+8	-3	-3	179	196	163
Service establishment supply houses.....	+6	+3	+7	+3	-3	107	111	115
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-7	-1	0	+30	0	196	146	200
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-4	-1	+3	+32	0	222	166	227
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-13	0	-3	+15	+1	103	82	107
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-30	-10	-11	-2	+1	55	40	50
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-35	-13	-7	+2	-1	48	33	43
Waste materials dealers.....	-22	-5	-18	-5	+2	65	51	61
Jewelry wholesalers.....	-8	+4	-1	+9	-1	208	190	243
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	+4	+3	+6	+3	-3	94	94	100
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+5	+5	+6	+3	+1	73	73	76
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+5	+2	+7	+3	+1	98	99	100
Voluntary groups.....	+5	+3	+7	+1	0	88	92	87
Retailer-cooperative.....	+6	-2	+13	+7	+5	85	84	77
Nonaffiliated.....	+4	+4	+4	+3	-1	110	111	113
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+1	+5	+2	+1	+3	68	65	71
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+8	+4	+6	+7	+2	58	61	60
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+12	+13	+12	+12	0	19	19	21
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	-5	+10	-4	-6	-7	20	21	24
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	-5	+4	-6	+4	-5	26	24	26
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-6	+12	-3	-10	-9	18	19	23
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+4	+15	+4	+3	0	108	109	122
Beer, ale distributors.....	+3	+16	+5	+8	+5	60	58	67
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+4	+14	+3	+1	-1	146	150	165
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+4	+1	+7	+4	-1	132	133	136
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+6	-1	+8	+5	-1	151	151	154
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	-1	+2	+6	-2	+1	84	87	87
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	+4	+5	+3	+8	0	150	150	155
Tobacco distributors.....	+4	+8	+5	+3	-2	61	62	63
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+1	-7	0	-5	-1	196	207	185
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	+1	-12	+4	+5	0	217	220	197
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+2	-5	+1	-6	-1	175	187	173
Piece goods converters.....	+1	-4	-3	-18	-2	205	228	190
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	0	+1	+2	+5	0	116	114	122
Paper wholesalers.....	-1	+2	+2	+5	0	113	112	119
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	+2	-5	+7	+8	-1	143	131	140
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+15	+2	+25	+18	-22	106	94	124
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+6	-2	+9	+6	-1	100	98	102
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	+9	+1	+7	+11	+7	225	210	204
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+8	0	+10	+6	+8	117	117	110
Coal wholesalers.....	+18	-3	+13	+31	+32	78	68	55
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	+3	-7	+7	+4	-12	93	87	105

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

Kind of business and geographic division. (See map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, May 1957 from--		May 1957	May 1956	Apr. 1957
	May 1957 from--		5 mo. 1957 from 5 mo. 1956	May 1956	Apr. 1957			
	May 1956	Apr. 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0	+3	+3	+5	-2	128	122	134
New England.....	-1	+3	+1	-1	-2	129	128	137
Middle Atlantic.....	0	+3	+2	+2	-1	109	106	115
East North Central.....	-2	+5	0	+6	+1	118	109	124
West North Central.....	+1	+8	+4	-1	-1	136	140	148
South Atlantic.....	+2	+3	+5	+5	-2	143	135	152
East South Central.....	+11	+2	+10	+8	-7	145	145	157
West South Central.....	+3	-2	+10	+11	-5	152	136	157
Mountain.....	+3	+2	+2	+6	-1	149	145	152
Pacific.....	-1	+1	+4	+9	-1	137	127	140
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+9	+7	+8	+3	+2	211	219	219
Middle Atlantic.....	+11	+14	+10	+6	+3	191	183	204
East North Central.....	+23	+23	+11	+3	+13	155	195	177
West North Central.....	+11	+7	+11	+13	+1	259	271	277
South Atlantic.....	+5	+5	+5	-3	0	219	238	231
East South Central.....	+7	+3	+10	+4	-1	246	252	257
West South Central.....	+4	+7	+3	-2	-2	239	254	255
Mountain.....	+8	-6	+12	+9	+1	244	247	223
Pacific.....	-5	-3	+1	-3	+1	266	259	253
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-4	+2	+1	+4	-2	162	150	166
New England.....	-11	-5	-11	+4	-1	199	170	191
Middle Atlantic.....	0	-2	+2	+13	0	141	124	137
East North Central.....	-11	-1	-4	+2	+5	176	145	162
West North Central.....	-2	+3	+5	+8	-2	202	188	210
South Atlantic.....	-8	+4	-1	-1	-3	147	144	163
East South Central.....	-5	+8	+4	+1	-9	185	197	224
West South Central.....	-7	+3	+2	+2	-6	191	173	216
Mountain.....	-2	+11	+9	-2	-8	145	145	161
Pacific.....	+4	+3	+6	-3	-5	144	153	156
Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.....	+12	+7	+4	+6	-4	183	190	218
New England.....	+36	0	+10	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+13	+13	+1	-4	-4	157	183	201
East North Central.....	+11	-2	+3	+4	-1	182	183	205
West North Central.....	-7	+2	-9	-2	-3	176	172	185
South Atlantic.....	+13	+23	+8	+4	-2	199	215	255
East South Central.....	+7	+13	-3	+16	-13	203	174	263
West South Central.....	-6	+10	-7	+4	-8	183	167	228
Pacific.....	+25	+9	+9	+19	-4	214	207	252
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	+1	-2	+2	+4	0	190	182	186
New England.....	-1	-1	-2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	-4	+3	-1	-1	190	190	180
East North Central.....	+4	+3	+4	+9	-1	167	162	176
West North Central.....	+2	-3	+1	+6	+2	200	182	188
South Atlantic.....	+7	+2	+2	+10	-1	215	216	250
South Central.....	-20	-7	-4	-3	-3	248	207	227
Pacific.....	0	-6	+1	+8	+4	192	178	175
Hardware wholesalers.....	-1	+6	0	-1	0	234	233	247
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+1	-2	0	-3	202	210	206
East North Central.....	+2	+4	+4	-5	-2	210	230	225
West North Central.....	+6	+11	+3	-2	-1	253	268	278
South Atlantic.....	+1	+12	+2	+6	-2	244	225	266
East South Central.....	-6	+11	-4	+3	+5	233	212	249
West South Central.....	-10	+5	-5	+5	-3	281	241	304
Pacific.....	-4	0	+4	-7	+1	272	275	267
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-4	+8	-2	-3	0	208	204	224
New England.....	-9	+1	-4	-5	0	305	304	312
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	+7	-3	-5	+2	192	183	199
East North Central.....	0	+12	-2	-1	0	201	200	227
West North Central.....	+5	+15	+2	-2	0	257	258	277
South Atlantic.....	+4	+9	+3	+1	+4	176	185	178
South Central.....	-10	+13	+1	-10	-5	217	209	262
Mountain.....	-14	+3	-8	-11	0	238	219	243
Pacific.....	-9	+3	-5	-2	-2	200	181	212
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-11	+12	-11	-5	0	108	99	116
New England.....	+5	+18	-8	-17	+1	49	69	56
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	+16	-8	-11	-6	122	123	152
East North Central.....	-13	+10	-14	-2	+5	97	85	101
West North Central.....	-18	+11	-13	-14	+6	159	151	164
South Atlantic.....	-10	+7	-6	+9	+1	154	117	160
South Central.....	+1	+17	-6	-10	-3	108	103	108
Pacific.....	-20	+13	-18	-1	+1	75	47	79

See footnotes at end of table.

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

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 2)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, May 1957 from--		May 1957	May 1956	April 1957
	May 1957 from--		5 mo. 1957 from 5 mo. 1956	May 1956	April 1957			
	May 1956	April 1957	5 mo. 1956					
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	-1	+1	+4	+9	-3	150	140	159
New England.....	-10	0	+6	+9	-6	213	158	218
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	+10	+8	+15	-2	116	107	143
East North Central.....	-9	-7	0	+3	-1	131	124	130
West North Central.....	+5	+16	0	-2	-7	119	167	146
South Atlantic.....	+18	-3	+13	+10	0	150	154	138
South Central.....	-7	-5	-10	+15	-4	171	147	173
Mountain.....	+17	+2	-1	+21	-4	224	179	228
Pacific.....	-1	+7	+1	+4	-1	140	143	157
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+5	+2	+7	+3	+1	98	99	100
New England.....	0	+3	+8	-10	-2	105	116	111
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+2	+4	+2	0	111	115	111
East North Central.....	+1	+2	+5	+4	+4	87	85	86
West North Central.....	+3	+8	+4	+6	+3	88	86	92
South Atlantic.....	+4	+2	+5	-2	-2	103	106	105
East South Central.....	+7	+3	+7	+7	+2	99	100	101
West South Central.....	+6	0	+8	+4	-1	110	112	111
Mountain.....	+7	+8	+7	+6	-2	123	125	127
Pacific.....	+12	-6	+13	+5	-4	78	81	84
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+1	+5	+2	+1	+3	68	65	71
Middle Atlantic.....	-6	+6	-2	-3	+3	71	62	76
East North Central.....	+7	+7	+4	-5	+3	62	69	64
West North Central.....	+7	+1	-2	-4	0	117	131	113
South Atlantic.....	+1	-2	+2	+11	-9	102	81	97
South Central.....	+15	+9	+17	+1	+3	53	56	61
Pacific.....	-9	0	+3	+1	+5	48	45	48
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-6	+12	-3	-10	-9	18	19	23
New England.....	+3	+25	+3	-9	-8	15	17	20
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	+27	-1	-19	-11	9	11	12
East North Central.....	+3	+13	-1	-5	-4	16	18	19
West North Central.....	-13	+14	-7	-17	-5	37	38	45
South Atlantic.....	-5	+7	-1	+7	-10	18	14	20
South Central.....	+2	+10	-2	-13	-9	15	16	19
Pacific.....	-5	+10	-2	-1	-17	19	21	26
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+6	-1	+8	+5	-1	151	151	154
New England.....	+7	+4	+8	+14	-2	151	154	158
Middle Atlantic.....	+7	-3	+7	0	-2	148	169	176
East North Central.....	+5	0	+8	+2	-2	150	151	154
West North Central.....	+4	+1	+9	+4	+3	156	156	158
South Atlantic.....	+3	0	+8	+10	0	169	159	169
East South Central.....	+8	+5	+8	-1	-4	192	220	210
West South Central.....	+10	+5	+8	+12	0	170	158	172
Mountain.....	+7	+10	+8	+3	0	198	200	208
Pacific.....	+9	+2	+9	+10	-4	157	158	162
Tobacco distributors.....	+4	+8	+5	+3	-2	61	62	63
New England.....	+1	+12	+6	+7	0	60	57	64
Middle Atlantic.....	+8	+9	+6	+7	+1	76	75	77
East North Central.....	+3	+9	+6	+1	+12	52	55	46
West North Central.....	-3	+5	+1	+3	+3	68	66	67
South Atlantic.....	+6	+9	+6	+2	-2	48	50	54
South Central.....	+5	+6	+3	-1	-2	49	52	51
Pacific.....	+2	0	+8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+1	-7	0	-5	-1	196	207	185
New England.....	+2	+2	+3	-13	-5	155	165	138
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	-8	+1	-6	-1	177	184	167
East North Central.....	+5	-5	+3	+3	+4	226	219	215
West North Central.....	+5	-9	-2	-7	-4	294	343	274
South Atlantic.....	-16	-16	-3	-1	+3	269	232	183
South Central.....	-5	-2	-4	-11	-5	286	295	277
Pacific.....	+5	-5	+5	-8	-2	165	196	160

X Insufficient data to show separately.

## DESCRIPTION OF KINDS OF BUSINESS

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its annual 1954 sales by commodity lines as reported in the 1954 Census of Business. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

## DURABLE GOODS

## Automotive wholesalers

Motor-vehicle distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

## Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

## Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

Furniture wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

## Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

Hardware wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

## Lumber, construction materials distributors

Lumber, millwork wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

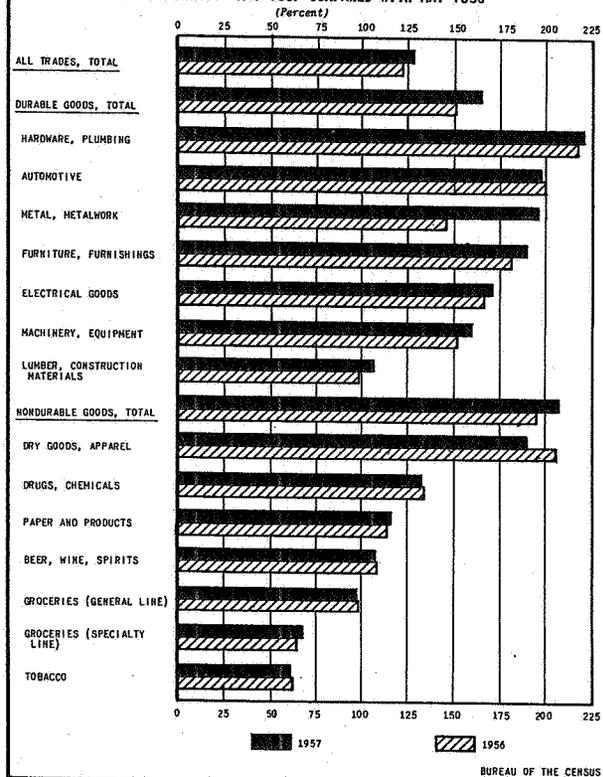
Construction materials distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

## Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

Commercial machines, equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: MAY 1957 COMPARED WITH MAY 1956



## Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

Professional equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

Service establishment, supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

Other industrial machinery, equipment distributors (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

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Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

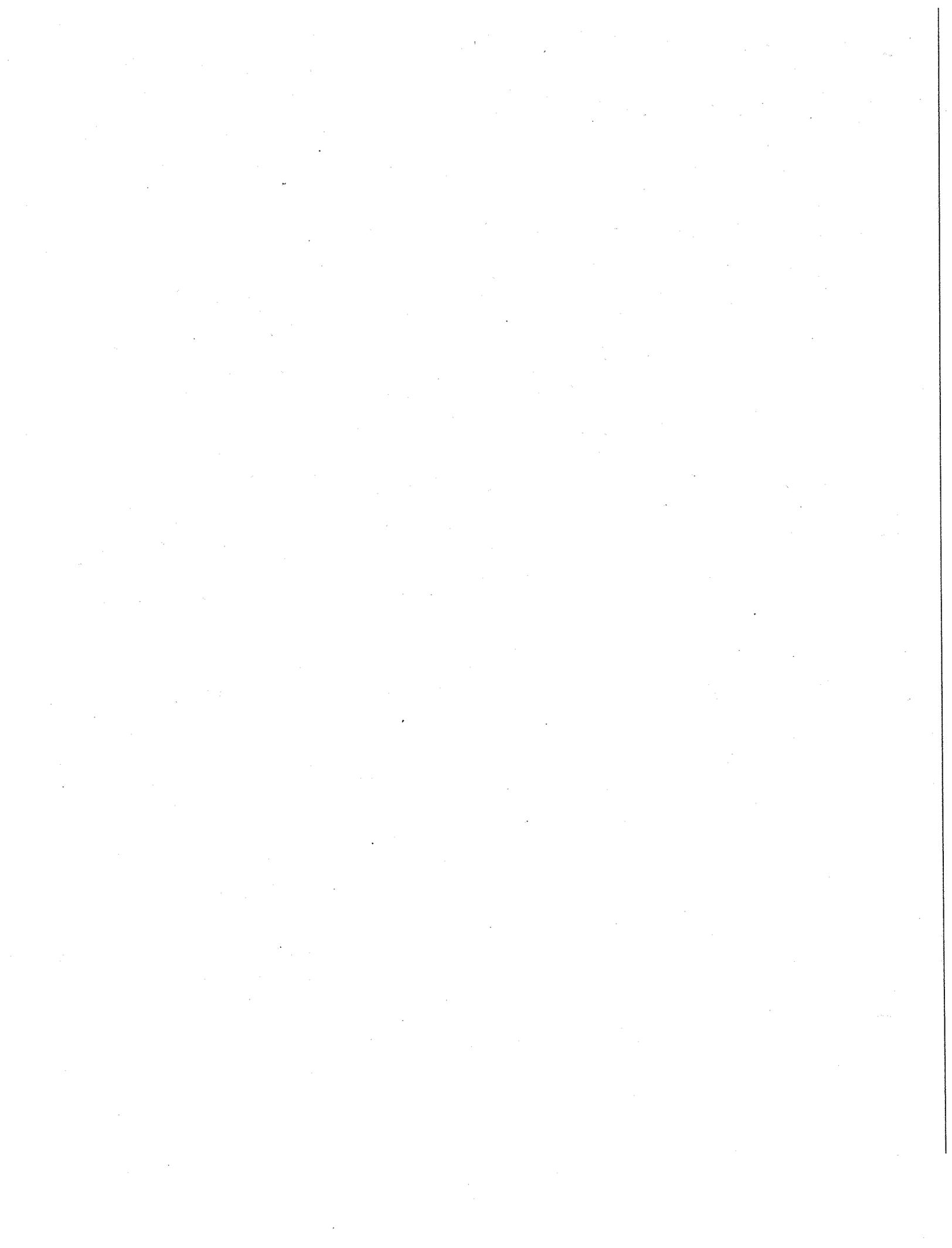
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.



# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

JUNE 1957

FOR RELEASE  
AUGUST 12, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

Beginning this month, the Bureau of the Census presents a new monthly series of dollar volume estimates of merchant wholesalers by kind of business. Included in this report are monthly sales data from January 1956 through June 1957. These monthly sales estimates are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 2 and 6. Also included in this report are sales and inventory trends and stock-sales ratios by kind of business, for the United States as a whole and by geographic division.

### First-half Sales

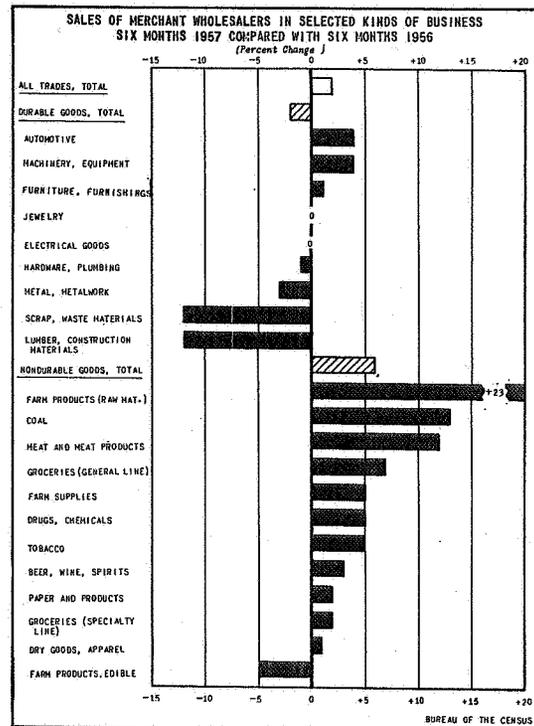
First half 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were estimated at \$58,398 million, about 2 percent higher than sales of \$57,109 million in the first six months of 1956. While sales in the nondurable goods trades, at \$25,558 million, were up 6 percent during the first 6 months, sales in durable goods trades, at \$32,840 million, were off 2 percent during this period.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants, with sales up 23 percent, reported the principal increase over the first half 1956. Gains were also noted in all but three of the nondurable goods trades--piece goods converters (-4%), fresh fruit, vegetables wholesalers (-4%) and poultry distributors (-7%). The sharpest declines from first half 1956 sales were experienced by durable goods trades--lumber and millwork wholesalers, off 16 percent, and waste materials dealers, down 17 percent. However, seven durable goods trades, including professional equipment distributors, automotive wholesalers and commercial equipment distributors, indicated first half gains up to 8 percent.

With the exception of the East North Central Division, which was off slightly (1%), all geographic divisions shared in increased sales during the first half of 1957 compared with 1956. The East and West South Central Divisions both registered the principal gain--8 percent--over first half 1956 sales.

### June Sales

June 1957 sales were estimated at \$9,610 million, a decline of 5 percent from the May 1957 level and 3 percent below June sales a year ago. Most trades reported lower sales in June than in May, with farm supplies wholesalers (28%) and industrial chemicals wholesalers (15%) noting the sharpest decline. Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors, up 15 percent, registered the principal increase. Compared with sales a year ago, the sharpest declines were noted among the durable goods trades. Surgical, medical and hospital supply houses indicated the principal increase (14%) but most year-ago gains were registered by nondurable goods trades.



### Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of June were slightly (1%) below the May 31 level but rose 6 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. The June 1957 stock-sales ratio of 132 percent for all merchant wholesalers was 6 points above the May ratio and 12 points above the ratio for June a year ago. The stock-sales ratio for durable goods trades, in total, was 174 percent in June 1957, compared with the stock-sales ratio of 96 percent for nondurable goods trades.

While most trades noted only small changes from previous month inventories, farm products (raw materials) merchants reported a sharp drop (19%) and coal wholesalers indicated a large increase (22%). Substantial increases over year-ago inventories were reported by iron, steel scrap dealers (31%), book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers (26%), iron, steel products distributors (23%), and coal wholesalers (22%). The largest decline from a year ago was reported by piece goods converters (9%).

Inventory changes during the month in seven of nine geographic divisions were limited to 1 or 2 percent. Only the South Atlantic and West South Central Divisions reported declines of 3 and 4 percent respectively. All divisions reported stocks from 2 to 12 percent higher than a year ago.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURE, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

1. Scope of Survey

This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers, which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade, and excludes other types of wholesale trade such as manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; agents and brokers and assemblers of farm products. All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are defined in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial and distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials." Firms which, in addition to merchant wholesale establishments, operate other types of establishments, e.g., retail, manufacturing, etc., report in this survey only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind-of-business classification shown in this report is included on pages 11 and 12.

2. Sample Design

Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954. The sample is supplemented twice a year for new firms on the BOASI lists.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales size, and (c) whether geographic division trends are to be shown for the trade. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

3. Published Data

Sales.—This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 1) and sales trends (percent changes) derived from these estimates (Table 2). Sales trends are shown in Table 2 for some detailed kind of businesses for which estimates are not shown separately in Table 1. For these kinds of business the trends are based only on the weighted sales of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (Table 3). In Table 3 the trends for geographic division also are based on weighted sales of identical firms.

Sales include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included.

Inventories.—This report presents inventory trends by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). These inventory trends are based on the weighted inventories of identical firms (i.e., firm reporting data for each of the months compared).

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month.

Stock-sales ratios.—These are presented by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing weighted stocks, at cost, by weighted sales for only those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales in all three periods compared. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade. Stock-sales ratios for previous months shown in the current report may differ from those published in previous reports since the reporting panel varies.

4. Estimating Procedure

Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection in the sample. Large firms are selected with certainty, this 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.

For most firms reporting, data are available for each of three months (current, previous, and year ago). New firms reporting provide data for at least two months (current and previous). Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight (the reciprocal of its probability of selection) and the results summarized to obtain the dollar volume estimates, percentage changes and stock-sales ratios shown in this report.

Volume estimates.—The summation of the weighted reports of sales for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months—the current month and the preceding month. However, the published estimate is a "composite" of two estimates (a) the unbiased estimate for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate obtained by multiplying the "composite" estimate for the previous month by the ratio of the current month unbiased to previous month unbiased estimates obtained from the summation of the current reports. The unbiased estimate (a) receives a weight of .3 while the ratio estimate (b) receives a weight of .7. The resulting weighted average provides a "composite" estimate of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than either of the two estimates taken alone. The estimates shown for January-June 1956 were not obtained in this manner. Since unbiased estimates were not available for this period from the new sample which was introduced in July 1956, monthly estimates prior to that date were calculated by dividing the "composite" estimates for January-June 1957 by the year-to-year ratio for each of these months obtained from weighted reports of identical firms.

Percentage changes.—Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report, viz., (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates (2) percent changes based on the weighted data from identical firms (i.e., those reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). The percentage changes based on identicals however, should not be regarded as an unbiased measure of percentage change. Since only those establishments reporting in both periods compared are included, the net change due to births and deaths is not reflected in the ratios shown.

5. Reliability of the Data

Estimates based on a sample are subject to sampling variability and thus are not expected to be in exact agreement with a complete census taken with the same enumeration procedures. For all trades combined, the sampling variability of the "composite" sales estimates for any individual month, is less than one percent at the one sigma level. That is to say, the chances are about two out of three that the estimated sales shown would differ by less than one percent from the results of a complete enumeration. The variability of estimates for kind-of-business groups and individual kinds of business is generally higher than for total merchant wholesale trade but for most trades the sampling variability is less than 5 percent at the one sigma level. Table IA presents these sampling variabilities of the estimates for February, March, April and May 1957. Since these measures are also subject to sampling variability they should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. The sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals has not been evaluated. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

These measures do not include biases that may arise from other nonsampling errors, such as failure of respondent to submit correct figures or to submit a report in time for tabulation. In preparing the dollar volume estimates, an estimate is included for those firms that fail to respond. To the extent that the estimates for these firms may differ from the actual figures, nonresponse affects the reliability of the dollar volume estimate. As a result, dollar volume estimates are not published separately in a few trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 11 percent of the total sales in May 1957 were imputed for nonresponse.

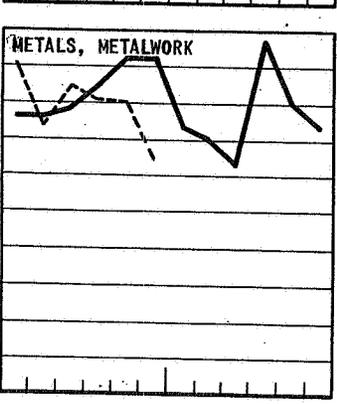
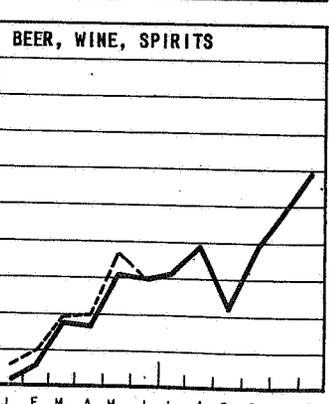
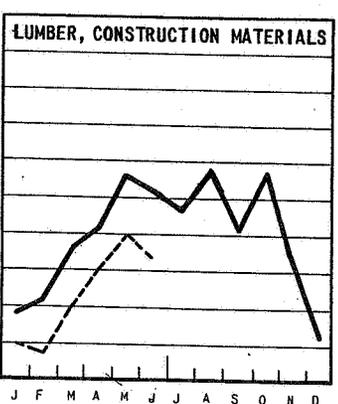
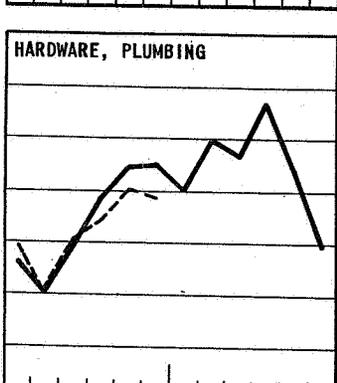
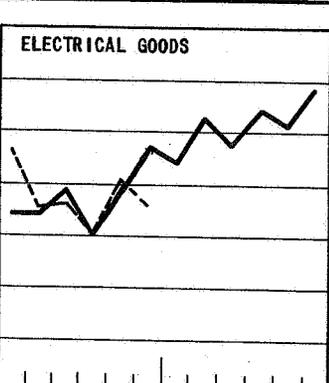
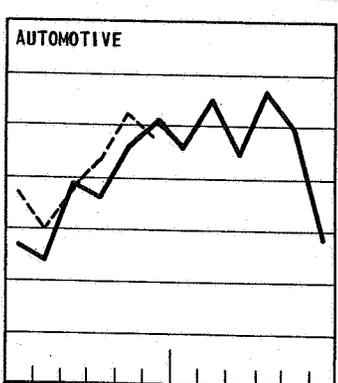
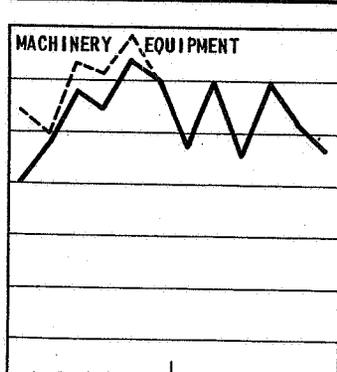
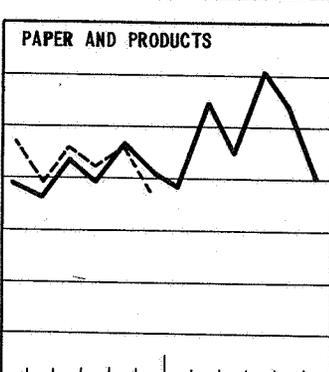
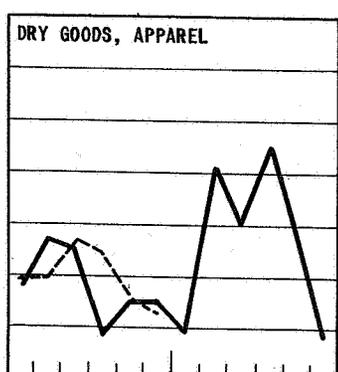
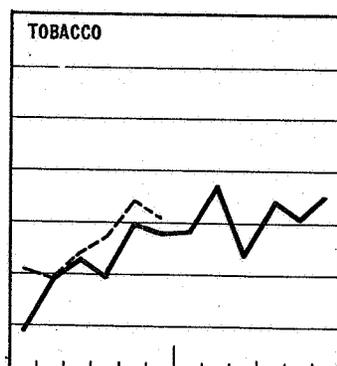
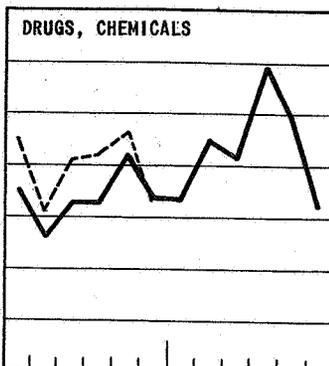
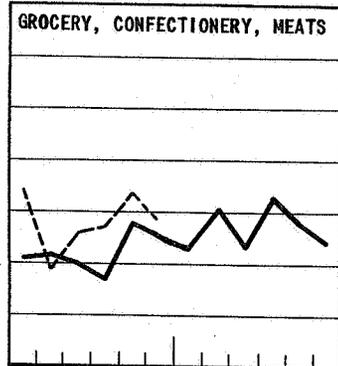
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—KINDS OF BUSINESS  
1956 AND 1957

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

1956 = ———  
1957 = - - - -

Index

Index



J F M A M J J A S O N D

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

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1956 - JUNE 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1956												Total 1956
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL</b> .....	9,032	9,172	9,571	9,296	10,144	9,894	9,414	10,514	9,794	11,217	10,449	9,944	118,441
<b>DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL</b> .....	3,994	4,085	4,372	4,346	4,680	4,589	4,215	4,643	4,324	4,889	4,501	4,192	52,830
Automotive wholesalers.....	353	344	396	384	417	434	415	449	410	453	428	358	4,841
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers....	280	276	318	306	333	351	344	371	344	386	366	296	3,971
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors..	603	602	627	580	616	668	653	701	671	708	692	727	7,848
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors....	272	285	297	295	319	350	326	336	317	338	328	344	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	331	317	330	285	297	318	327	365	354	370	364	383	4,041
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	184	193	212	194	199	197	181	223	216	250	234	210	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers..	125	133	147	133	134	131	118	145	144	170	162	139	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	387	366	404	432	455	458	441	477	463	501	453	398	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	175	176	184	198	206	209	189	205	196	212	198	179	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	212	190	220	234	249	249	252	273	266	289	255	219	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	540	560	636	669	743	725	692	756	664	750	624	511	7,870
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	337	338	361	373	410	398	392	433	363	402	327	279	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	203	222	275	296	333	327	299	323	302	348	297	232	3,457
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,004	1,073	1,158	1,120	1,210	1,170	1,063	1,173	1,048	1,170	1,104	1,054	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	506	541	574	523	569	522	493	546	483	566	564	548	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors..	70	74	78	74	79	79	83	92	85	92	90	84	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	105	103	102	108	116	111	97	112	111	116	104	98	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors....	438	437	442	460	483	483	430	421	399	495	447	428	5,363
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	276	282	303	312	325	325	306	287	274	346	306	269	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	162	155	139	148	158	158	125	133	125	149	141	159	1,752
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	425	439	419	434	470	385	280	361	366	457	420	408	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	267	275	261	267	304	248	167	231	238	306	291	283	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	158	164	158	167	166	137	113	130	128	151	129	125	1,726
<b>NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL</b> .....	5,038	5,087	5,199	4,950	5,464	5,305	5,199	5,871	5,470	6,328	5,948	5,752	65,611
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,459	1,479	1,442	1,405	1,560	1,517	1,492	1,601	1,485	1,627	1,556	1,505	18,128
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	613	624	631	602	667	648	609	658	629	680	657	630	7,648
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	561	583	537	528	587	588	585	620	553	606	578	571	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	46	48	50	45	48	46	45	50	47	52	54	51	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	239	224	224	230	258	235	253	273	256	289	267	253	3,001
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	354	361	384	393	451	469	465	416	345	376	397	409	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	132	116	122	120	131	131	124	133	120	127	148	149	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	222	245	262	273	320	338	341	283	225	249	249	260	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	385	406	459	454	532	520	532	565	482	572	606	657	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	151	152	166	177	220	229	265	270	197	199	182	198	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	234	254	293	277	312	291	267	295	285	373	424	459	3,764
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers....	322	299	316	316	342	319	317	350	341	390	362	315	3,989
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).	204	191	196	189	202	192	201	224	221	246	237	202	2,505
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers...	95	87	96	100	111	97	89	98	93	116	100	92	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	24	27	29	30	27	28	27	28	25	21	310
Tobacco distributors.....	238	264	275	264	295	289	288	314	275	304	298	308	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	464	505	496	448	450	450	420	576	524	594	520	419	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers....	149	172	176	144	154	137	159	238	206	228	201	146	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	183	192	184	182	183	197	170	221	203	223	197	162	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	293	286	306	294	313	299	291	332	309	347	331	296	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	253	247	265	253	273	255	252	287	265	294	280	248	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	70	75	93	96	92	99	98	117	116	133	127	116	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	110	103	87	87	87	99	91	120	118	130	125	117	1,274

Note: Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 1.--ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS--Continued

JANUARY 1956 - JUNE 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1957						6 months	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	1957	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,945	9,097	9,744	9,834	10,168	9,610	58,398	57,109
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	4,278	3,981	4,292	4,314	4,450	4,243	25,558	26,066
Automotive wholesalers.....	389	366	392	408	438	424	2,417	2,328
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	321	298	319	334	362	359	1,993	1,864
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	665	609	613	588	623	614	3,712	3,696
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	301	291	293	297	308	315	1,805	1,818
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	364	318	320	291	315	299	1,907	1,878
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	189	189	205	212	200	193	1,188	1,179
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	127	128	140	144	135	131	805	803
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	398	365	405	420	443	435	2,466	2,502
Hardware wholesalers.....	184	173	191	196	205	196	1,145	1,148
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	214	192	214	224	238	239	1,321	1,354
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	496	476	551	609	659	628	3,419	3,873
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	295	259	307	330	343	329	1,863	2,217
Construction materials distributors.....	201	217	244	279	316	299	1,556	1,656
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,121	1,081	1,194	1,182	1,234	1,166	6,978	6,735
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	590	547	593	540	560	512	3,342	3,235
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	78	77	83	85	85	84	492	454
Service establishment supply houses.....	113	110	113	112	122	116	686	645
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	478	430	459	452	448	404	2,671	2,743
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	317	287	312	317	311	275	1,819	1,823
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	161	143	147	135	137	129	852	920
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	476	393	393	369	328	308	2,267	2,572
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	326	266	263	236	199	193	1,483	1,622
Waste materials dealers.....	150	127	130	133	129	115	784	950
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,667	5,116	5,452	5,520	5,718	5,367	32,840	31,043
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,642	1,433	1,530	1,544	1,630	1,579	9,358	8,862
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	707	627	655	676	698	676	4,039	3,785
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	611	521	566	557	591	591	3,437	3,384
Confectionery wholesalers.....	52	49	53	50	52	49	305	283
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	272	236	256	261	289	263	1,577	1,410
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	357	341	352	394	429	418	2,291	2,412
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	121	106	109	124	127	116	703	752
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	236	235	243	270	302	302	1,588	1,660
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	408	425	468	472	551	520	2,844	2,756
Beer, ale distributors.....	158	158	172	193	227	234	1,142	1,095
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	250	267	296	279	324	286	1,702	1,661
Drugs, chemicals, applied products wholesalers.....	350	312	340	344	354	317	2,017	1,914
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	224	199	213	208	214	196	1,254	1,174
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	103	92	102	108	110	93	608	586
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	25	28	30	28	155	154
Tobacco distributors.....	271	266	280	285	307	297	1,706	1,625
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	468	472	507	491	457	440	2,835	2,813
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	145	160	184	182	156	136	963	932
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	192	183	194	190	187	193	1,139	1,121
Paper, applied products wholesalers.....	313	294	310	302	312	291	1,822	1,791
Paper wholesalers.....	268	252	265	258	271	250	1,564	1,546
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	74	83	96	99	101	104	557	525
Coal wholesalers.....	120	102	106	105	103	109	645	573

Note: Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 1A.--SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months	Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months
	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957		Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957
	(percent)				(percent)		(percent)				(percent)
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	Grocery, confectionery, meat.....	2	2	1	2	2
Automotive.....	3	3	3	3	2	General-line grocery.....	2	2	2	2	2
Automotive equipment, tire-tube....	3	3	4	3	2	Specialty-line grocery.....	4	4	4	4	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances..	2	2	2	2	1	Confectionery.....	4	3	3	3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies.....	2	2	2	3	2	Meat, meat products.....	4	5	4	4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts.....	2	4	4	3	2	Farm products (edible).....	3	3	3	3	2
Furniture, home furnishings.....	3	3	4	4	2	Poultry, poultry products.....	5	3	4	5	2
Home furnishings, floor coverings..	4	4	4	4	2	Fresh fruit, vegetables.....	5	4	4	3	2
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, wine, distilled spirits.....	2	2	2	2	2
Hardware.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, ale.....	4	3	4	3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies.....	3	4	4	4	2	Wine, distilled spirits.....	3	3	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials.....	3	3	3	2	2	Drugs, chemicals, allied products... 2	2	2	2	2	1
Lumber, millwork.....	5	6	6	5	3	Drugs (general and specialty lines)	2	2	2	2	2
Construction materials.....	3	3	3	4	2	Industrial chemicals, explosives..	5	4	5	4	2
Machinery, equipment, supplies.....	2	3	2	2	2	Paint, varnish.....	4	4	3	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies.....	3	5	4	4	3	Tobacco.....	2	3	2	2	1
Professional equipment, supplies..	3	3	4	3	2	Dry goods, apparel.....	3	3	3	3	2
Service establishment supply houses	5	3	4	4	3	Clothing, furnishings, footwear... 5	5	5	5	5	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)....	2	3	3	3	3	Dry goods (general and specialty lines).....	6	6	6	5	3
Iron, steel and products.....	3	5	4	4	4	Paper, allied products.....	3	2	2	2	1
Nonferrous metals.....	3	3	2	4	1	Paper.....	3	2	2	2	1
Scrap, waste materials.....	2	2	3	3	2	Amusement, sporting goods.....	6	4	4	4	4
Iron, steel scrap.....	3	3	4	4	3	Coal wholesalers.....	5	6	6	6	2
Waste materials.....	4	4	6	6	3						

Note: The above table provides approximate measures of the sampling variability of the dollar volume estimates of sales and of the ratio between sales for the two consecutive months specified. The ratio between sales for two consecutive months generally has a smaller sampling error than the level estimates in those months. These sampling errors are themselves subject to sampling variability and thus should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. Differences from month to month may be due to this error in the estimates of sampling error. Differences may also result from seasonal or cyclical fluctuation in the sales of individual firms (see page 2, for statement on nonsampling errors).

The sampling errors shown above can be converted to a range by the following computation: Multiply the sampling error by the estimate (whether it is a dollar volume estimate or a ratio). Add and subtract the resulting product from the published estimate. The resulting range is expected to include the "expected value" (that is, the value which could be obtained from a complete enumeration) about two out of three times. Doubling the sampling error and repeating the above process will give a range which will include the "expected value" about 19 out of 20 times.

To illustrate the computation of these ranges for monthly dollar volume estimates, consider the estimate made for all durable goods in March 1957. The published estimate is \$4,292 million while the sampling error shown for this month is 1.4 percent (or .014). Multiplying \$4,292 million by .014, we obtain \$60 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between \$4,232 and \$4,352 million. Doubling the given sampling error gives us the limits, \$4,172 to \$4,412 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from February 1957 to March 1957 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing \$4,292 million by \$3,981 million, is 1.08 (it can also be expressed as an 8% increase). The sampling error of this statistic is 0.7 percent (.007). Multiplying 1.08 by .007, we obtain .008 as the standard error of the ratio. There is a probability of two out of three that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.07 to 1.09 while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.06 to 1.10.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JUNE 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change		6 mo. 1957 from 6 mo. 1956	Percent change, June 1957 from--		June 1957	June 1956	May 1957
	June 1957 from--	June 1956		June 1956	May 1957			
	June 1956	May 1957	June 1956	May 1957	June 1956	May 1957		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-3	-5	+2	+6	-1	132	120	126
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-8	-5	-2	+7	0	174	150	165
Automotive wholesalers.....	-2	-3	+4	+3	+1	200	186	188
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	-22	-14	-9	+7	0	148	112	127
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+2	-1	+7	+2	+1	210	203	200
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	-8	-1	0	+6	-2	179	150	180
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-10	+2	-1	+7	-3	161	134	171
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-6	-5	+2	+4	-2	204	171	190
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-2	-3	+1	+3	+1	203	197	188
Furniture wholesalers.....	-7	-6	+1	+4	-2	171	163	153
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	0	-3	0	+2	+2	214	210	200
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-5	-2	-1	-1	+1	217	206	210
Hardware wholesalers.....	-6	-4	0	0	0	236	221	227
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-4	0	-2	-2	+2	197	190	191
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-13	-5	-12	+2	+1	117	102	106
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-17	-4	-16	+2	+2	148	124	134
Construction materials distributors.....	-9	-5	-6	+2	0	88	80	80
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	0	-6	+4	+9	-1	176	158	166
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	-6	+15	-1	+8	-7	133	121	171
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	+6	+1	+7	+7	0	138	143	141
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-2	-9	+3	+13	0	165	141	148
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+7	-1	+8	+8	+1	188	184	179
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+14	+3	+9	+4	-1	130	140	127
Service establishment supply houses.....	+5	-5	+6	+3	+2	137	137	123
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-16	-10	-3	+21	+1	216	155	194
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-15	-12	0	+23	+1	249	179	224
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-18	-6	-7	+14	0	107	80	95
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-20	-6	-12	+17	+4	51	35	50
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-22	-3	-9	+31	+6	48	28	49
Waste materials dealers.....	-16	-11	-17	+2	+1	56	48	52
Jewelry wholesalers.....	+3	-6	0	+1	0	310	318	306
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	+1	-6	+6	+4	-2	96	92	92
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+4	-3	+6	-1	0	74	77	73
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+4	-3	+7	-1	-2	95	100	95
Voluntary groups.....	+3	-1	+6	-5	-3	88	96	91
Retailer-cooperative.....	+9	-1	+12	+2	-3	77	82	76
Nonaffiliated.....	+2	-2	+4	+1	-1	110	112	110
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+1	0	+2	-2	+2	81	79	79
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+8	-6	+8	+8	+2	83	85	82
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+12	-9	+12	+13	+8	18	18	15
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	-11	-3	-5	-5	+1	23	22	22
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	-12	-9	-7	-5	+2	34	30	30
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-11	0	-4	-5	0	19	19	19
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	0	-6	+3	+12	+6	115	102	104
Beer, ale distributors.....	+2	+3	+4	+7	+5	61	58	60
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	-2	-12	+2	+13	+6	162	139	136
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	-1	-10	+5	+6	0	153	145	139
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+2	-8	+7	+6	0	173	166	154
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	-4	-15	+4	+7	-1	103	96	96
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	-7	-7	+1	+5	0	152	143	146
Tobacco distributors.....	+3	-3	+5	+2	0	57	57	53
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-2	-4	+1	-6	+1	221	227	205
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	-1	-13	+3	-4	-1	236	256	209
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	-2	+3	+2	-7	+4	203	204	197
Piece goods converters.....	-4	-3	-4	-9	0	228	220	211
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	-3	-7	+2	0	+1	122	118	112
Paper wholesalers.....	-2	-8	+1	-1	+1	116	116	105
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	-7	-5	+5	+5	0	178	160	180
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+11	-11	+23	+14	-19	96	84	103
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	-0	-8	+6	+15	+2	100	87	91
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	+5	+3	+6	+10	+1	185	167	201
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+11	+4	+10	+26	+2	141	117	139
Coal wholesalers.....	+10	+6	+13	+22	+22	74	63	63
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	-2	-28	+5	+6	-5	105	102	82

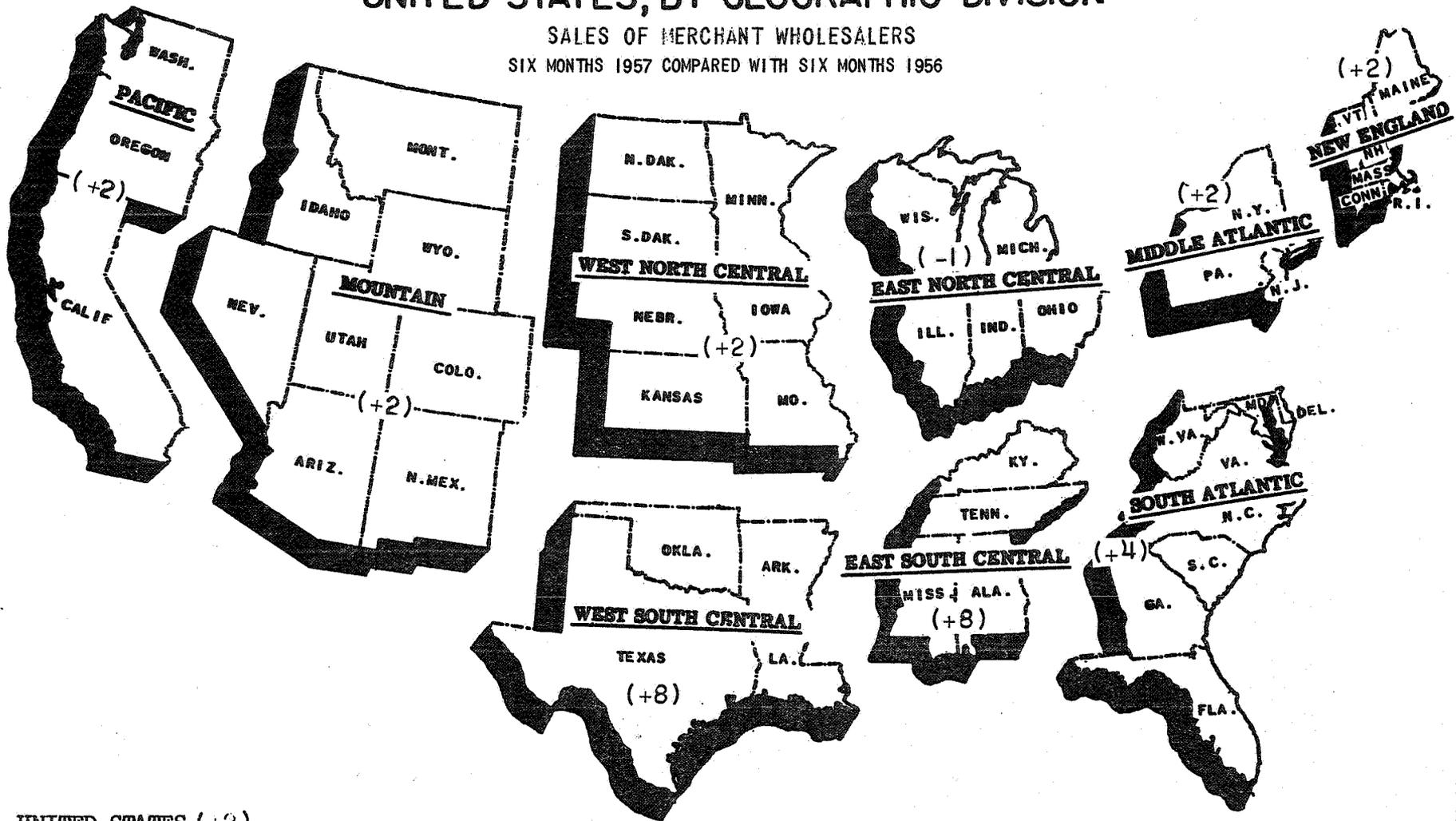
Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

JUNE 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (See map page 9)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, June 1957 from--		June 1957	June 1956	May 1957
	June 1957 from--		6 mo. 1957 from 6 mo. 1956	June 1956	May 1957			
	June 1956	May 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-3	-5	+2	+6	-1	132	120	126
New England.....	+2	-5	+2	+8	-1	125	117	121
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	-4	+2	+4	+1	117	106	109
East North Central.....	-7	-3	-1	+7	+1	127	110	120
West North Central.....	-5	-6	+2	+2	-1	137	129	126
South Atlantic.....	0	-7	+4	+6	-3	145	137	135
East South Central.....	+1	-9	+8	+12	-1	162	145	148
West South Central.....	+2	-4	+8	+7	-4	146	137	146
Mountain.....	+1	+3	+2	+5	-2	149	145	158
Pacific.....	-6	-4	+2	+5	-1	136	125	131
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+2	-1	+7	+2	+1	210	203	200
New England.....	-5	-5	+9	+8	+4	272	239	247
Middle Atlantic.....	+5	-3	+9	+8	+5	197	175	184
East North Central.....	-5	-7	+7	+4	0	216	197	197
West North Central.....	-1	+5	+9	-1	-1	288	290	293
South Atlantic.....	+4	-2	+5	-1	0	180	194	179
East South Central.....	+2	-4	+9	+5	+2	228	217	206
West South Central.....	0	0	+3	-3	+2	199	192	196
Pacific.....	+6	+4	+2	-1	0	185	202	185
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-10	+2	-1	+7	-3	161	134	171
New England.....	-5	+7	-10	+5	-5	164	144	187
Middle Atlantic.....	-3	+13	+1	+23	-5	129	104	156
East North Central.....	-19	+2	-7	+7	-3	140	105	146
West North Central.....	-16	0	+1	+16	-1	228	165	230
South Atlantic.....	-5	+7	-2	0	-4	169	159	190
East South Central.....	-7	-2	+2	+5	+1	186	165	181
West South Central.....	-9	-4	0	+13	+2	191	152	176
Mountain.....	-7	+2	+7	+21	+2	167	129	168
Pacific.....	-8	-3	+4	-5	-7	160	156	166
Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors...	-6	-5	+2	+4	-2	204	171	190
New England.....	+2	-4	+9	+22	0	152	122	160
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	-2	-1	+3	-9	176	150	178
East North Central.....	-6	-5	+1	+6	-1	242	194	213
West North Central.....	-21	-1	-11	+2	+2	247	182	223
South Atlantic.....	-1	-4	+7	+11	+2	226	196	205
East South Central.....	-8	-5	-4	+1	+1	240	207	219
West South Central.....	-16	-4	-9	-9	-4	188	179	181
Pacific.....	+1	-3	+8	+17	+2	187	149	176
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-2	-3	+1	+3	+1	203	197	188
New England.....	0	-2	-1	-2	-3	169	189	175
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	-9	+1	+2	+5	230	211	193
East North Central.....	-1	-3	+3	+5	-6	143	145	145
West North Central.....	+13	-6	+2	+7	-4	225	249	230
South Atlantic.....	-5	-1	+1	+11	-4	245	213	225
South Central.....	-11	+5	-5	+5	-1	250	224	241
Pacific.....	-1	+1	0	-2	+1	210	211	182
Hardware wholesalers.....	-6	-4	0	0	0	236	221	227
Middle Atlantic.....	-6	-7	-3	0	+1	184	166	163
East North Central.....	-17	-5	0	-2	0	246	211	235
West North Central.....	-10	-8	+1	+1	-3	255	222	241
South Atlantic.....	-3	-11	+1	+5	-2	280	255	248
East South Central.....	-8	-14	-4	-9	+4	261	261	215
West South Central.....	-8	-5	-6	+5	-1	303	260	293
Mountain.....	-2	+8	-7	-12	-2	271	301	332
Pacific.....	-11	-9	+1	+6	0	256	232	246
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-4	0	-2	-2	+2	197	190	191
New England.....	-7	-4	-5	+4	+4	197	192	177
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	+5	-2	0	+2	230	224	240
East North Central.....	-6	+5	-3	-7	0	166	167	169
West North Central.....	-21	-3	-3	0	+1	237	186	221
South Atlantic.....	+2	-4	+3	0	+2	172	177	150
South Central.....	-13	-5	-2	-3	+6	239	208	219
Mountain.....	-3	+8	-7	-8	-2	149	164	165
Pacific.....	+3	+5	-4	-2	-3	214	211	218
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-13	-5	-12	+2	+1	117	102	106
New England.....	-6	+1	-8	+17	+16	93	83	89
Middle Atlantic.....	-15	-16	-10	+3	-3	121	101	106
East North Central.....	-21	-5	-16	+8	+5	119	89	107
West North Central.....	-5	+7	-11	+1	-1	176	172	173
South Atlantic.....	-4	-10	-5	-5	-2	129	134	108
South Central.....	-1	-12	-5	-3	0	137	132	122
Pacific.....	-16	-6	-18	-6	-3	70	70	70

# UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS  
SIX MONTHS 1957 COMPARED WITH SIX MONTHS 1956



UNITED STATES (+2)

Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, June 1957 from--		June 1957	June 1956	May 1957
	June 1957 from--		6 mo. 1957 from 6 mo. 1956	June 1956	May 1957			
	June 1956	May 1957						
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	-2	-9	+3	+13	0	165	141	148
New England.....	-8	-21	+5	+26	+3	117	89	93
Middle Atlantic.....	+24	-13	+10	+26	+2	177	179	114
East North Central.....	0	+3	0	+4	-2	149	129	145
West North Central.....	-30	+2	-8	0	-7	138	94	128
South Atlantic.....	-12	-5	+9	0	-4	160	140	151
South Central.....	+3	-4	+5	+15	0	168	157	165
Mountain.....	+11	+7	+1	+25	-2	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-17	-16	-3	+20	+5	193	143	168
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+4	-3	+7	-1	-2	95	100	95
New England.....	0	-1	+8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-3	-1	+3	-8	-5	112	117	115
East North Central.....	+8	+1	+5	+2	-1	77	83	80
West North Central.....	+2	+1	+4	+1	-3	100	102	103
South Atlantic.....	+2	-3	+5	-7	+2	88	100	86
East South Central.....	+3	-9	+6	+5	-3	127	121	118
West South Central.....	+13	-3	+8	+7	-4	85	90	86
Mountain.....	-1	-3	+6	-17	-8	75	88	80
Pacific.....	+13	+3	+13	+5	+4	89	92	82
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+1	0	+2	-2	+2	81	79	79
New England.....	+11	+11	+1	+11	+7	44	43	43
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	+13	-1	0	+11	79	76	73
East North Central.....	-7	-3	+2	-1	0	73	70	70
West North Central.....	+1	+4	-1	-4	-4	94	97	109
South Atlantic.....	+2	-8	+2	+5	-3	109	115	99
South Central.....	+2	-1	+15	-17	-14	82	97	86
Pacific.....	-7	-1	0	-10	-2	81	80	86
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-11	0	-4	-5	0	19	19	19
New England.....	-10	+3	+1	+11	+11	13	10	11
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	+1	-2	-1	-5	8	9	9
East North Central.....	-9	+10	-2	-3	-3	13	11	15
West North Central.....	-25	+1	-11	-1	+9	39	29	35
South Atlantic.....	-8	-12	-2	+1	+1	32	29	25
South Central.....	-6	-6	-3	-14	-13	22	27	24
Pacific.....	-5	+4	-3	-20	+3	21	26	19
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+2	-8	+7	+6	0	173	166	154
New England.....	+3	-5	+7	+7	0	149	147	145
Middle Atlantic.....	-2	-15	+5	-1	-4	137	132	115
East North Central.....	-1	-12	+6	+8	+3	172	156	149
West North Central.....	+3	-4	+7	+3	+2	194	194	183
South Atlantic.....	+3	-12	+7	+7	0	191	177	169
East South Central.....	+6	-9	+7	+7	+2	201	197	176
West South Central.....	+5	-13	+8	+12	0	197	200	177
Mountain.....	-1	-7	+7	+7	-3	203	188	193
Pacific.....	+11	-3	+10	+1	+2	145	163	139
Tobacco distributors.....	+3	-3	+5	+2	0	57	57	53
New England.....	+2	0	+5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	-3	+6	+2	-2	47	46	43
East North Central.....	+2	-5	+5	-1	0	58	59	55
West North Central.....	0	-4	+1	0	-1	67	67	62
South Atlantic.....	-1	-8	+5	+1	0	65	65	60
South Central.....	+6	-6	+3	-3	0	55	60	52
Pacific.....	+5	-7	+7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-2	-4	+1	-6	+1	221	227	205
New England.....	-15	-20	0	-8	0	177	168	145
Middle Atlantic.....	-2	-1	0	-8	0	209	215	201
East North Central.....	+5	-11	+3	+8	+1	254	228	201
West North Central.....	-10	-9	-3	-4	+3	346	326	283
South Atlantic.....	-6	-17	-4	+7	+11	370	347	307
South Central.....	+8	-11	-3	-18	0	247	319	219
Pacific.....	+1	+4	+4	-9	0	126	134	130

X Insufficient data to show separately.

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its annual 1954 sales by commodity lines as reported in the 1954 Census of Business. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

#### DURABLE GOODS

##### Automotive wholesalers

Motor-vehicle distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, buses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

##### Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

##### Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

Furniture wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

##### Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

Hardware wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

##### Lumber, construction materials distributors

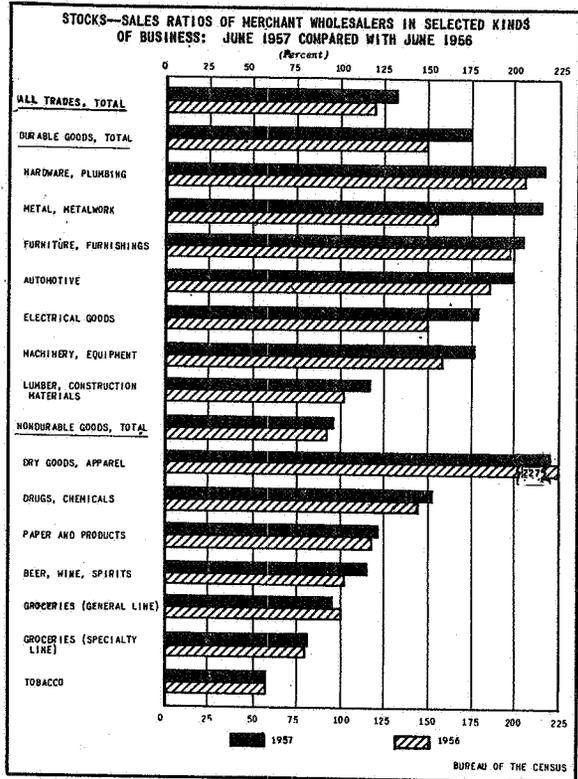
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

Construction materials distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment, and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

Commercial machines, equipment distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.



##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

Professional equipment, supplies distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

Service establishment, supply houses.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial equipment); embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment; upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

Other machinery, equipment supplies distributors (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); fur and furs clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, type-writer and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, type-writer ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broccorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farm farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

JULY 1957

FOR RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 12, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

July 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were estimated at \$9.9 billion, an increase of 3 percent over June 1957 sales and 6 percent above July sales a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first seven months of 1957, totaling \$68.3 billion, were 3 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1956.

Durable goods trades, with sales of \$4.3 billion in July 1957, showed a slight increase (1%) over previous month and year-ago sales but were still down 2 percent from sales in the first 7 months of 1956. The nondurable goods trades, with July sales totaling \$5.6 billion, reported larger sales gains--5 percent over June and 9 percent over last July. For the first 7 months of 1957, sales were 6 percent higher than in the same period of 1956.

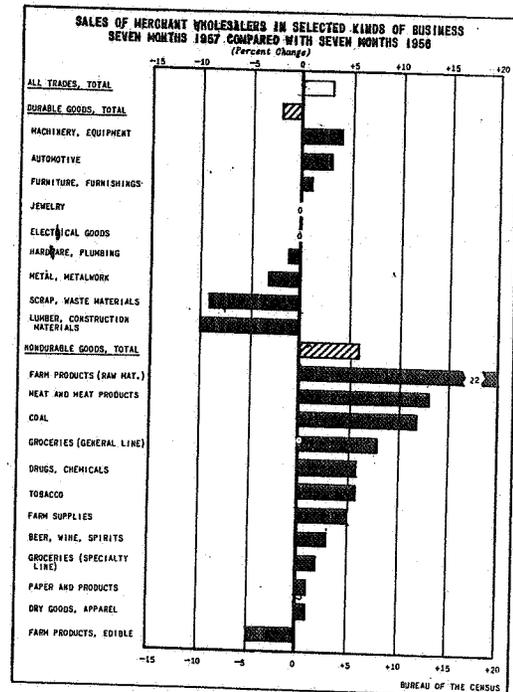
Significant increases over June sales were reported by farm products (raw materials) merchants (20%), book, magazine and newspaper wholesalers (18%), beer, ale distributors (15%), meat wholesalers (13%), poultry distributors (11%) and clothing wholesalers (11%). The sharpest decline from June sales (12%) was noted by piece goods converters. Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers, up 27 percent, and iron and steel scrap dealers, up 25 percent, registered the principal gains over year-ago sales. Substantial declines from a year ago were shown by iron, steel products distributors (11%) and lumber, millwork wholesalers (12%).

New England showed no change from June sales and the Middle Atlantic Division was off slightly (1%). However, all other divisions reported gains, the West North Central Division leading with an increase of 16 percent. This same geographic division noted the principal increase (15%) over year-ago sales. Only one division, New England, reported a decline (1%).

### Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of July showed little or no change from the previous month but were up 6 percent above stocks on hand last July 31. Durable goods trades, in total--with stocks up 8 percent over last July--showed a sharper increase than the nondurable trades, which reported a 2 percent rise over year-ago stocks.

The July 1957 stock-sales ratio for all merchant wholesalers was 124 percent--9 points below the June 1957 ratio and 3 points below the ratio for July a year ago. The July stock-sales ratio for the durable goods trades was 167 percent compared to 89 percent for the nondurable goods trades.



Inventories in most trades showed little or no change from last month. However, substantial increases were noted by farm products (raw materials) merchants (11%) and iron, steel scrap dealers (22%). Iron and steel scrap dealers also reported substantially larger inventories than a year ago (41%). However, iron, steel products distributors registered the principal increase (50%) over year-ago inventories.

Changes from previous month inventory levels were small (2% or less) in all geographic divisions. More significant changes over year-ago inventories were noted, ranging from a decline of 4 percent in the East South Central Division to an increase of 15 percent in New England.

### General

This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales of merchant wholesalers by kind of business from January 1956 through July 1957. These data are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 2 and 6. Also included in this report are sales and inventory trends and stock-sales ratios by kind of business, for the United States as a whole and by geographic division.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURE, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

1. Scope of Survey

This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers, which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade, and excludes other types of wholesale trade such as manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; agents and brokers and assemblers of farm products. All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are defined in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial and distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials." Firms which, in addition to merchant wholesale establishments, operate other types of establishments, e.g., retail, manufacturing, etc., report in this survey only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind-of-business classification shown in this report is included on pages 11 and 12.

2. Sample Design

Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954. The sample is supplemented twice a year for new firms on the BOASI lists.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales size, and (c) whether geographic division trends are to be shown for the trade. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

3. Published Data

Sales.--This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 1) and sales trends (percent changes) derived from these estimates (Table 2). Sales trends are shown in Table 2 for some detailed kind of businesses for which estimates are not shown separately in Table 1. For these kinds of business the trends are based only on the weighted sales of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (Table 3). In Table 3 the trends for geographic division also are based on weighted sales of identical firms.

Sales include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included.

Inventories.--This report presents inventory trends by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). These inventory trends are based on the weighted inventories of identical firms (i.e., firm reporting data for each of the months compared).

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing weighted stocks, at cost, by weighted sales for only those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales in all three periods compared. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade. Stock-sales ratios for previous months shown in the current report may differ from those published in previous reports since the reporting panel varies.

4. Estimating Procedure

Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection in the sample. Large firms are selected with certainty, this 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.

For most firms reporting, data are available for each of three months (current, previous, and year ago). New firms reporting provide data for at least two months (current and previous). Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight (the reciprocal of its probability of selection) and the results summarized to obtain the dollar volume estimates, percentage changes and stock-sales ratios shown in this report.

Volume estimates.--The summation of the weighted reports of sales for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the preceding month. However, the published estimate is a "composite" of two estimates (a) the unbiased estimate for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate obtained by multiplying the "composite" estimate for the previous month by the ratio of the current month unbiased to previous month unbiased estimates obtained from the summation of the current reports. The unbiased estimate (a) receives a weight of .3 while the ratio estimate (b) receives a weight of .7. The resulting weighted average provides a "composite" estimate of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than either of the two estimates taken alone. The estimates shown for January-June 1956 were not obtained in this manner. Since unbiased estimates were not available for this period from the new sample which was introduced in July 1956, monthly estimates prior to that date were calculated by dividing the "composite" estimates for January-June 1957 by the year-to-year ratio for each of these months obtained from weighted reports of identical firms.

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report, viz., (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates (2) percent changes based on the weighted data from identical firms (i.e., those reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). The percentage changes based on identicals however, should not be regarded as an unbiased measure of percentage change. Since only those establishments reporting in both periods compared are included, the net change due to births and deaths is not reflected in the ratios shown.

5. Reliability of the Data

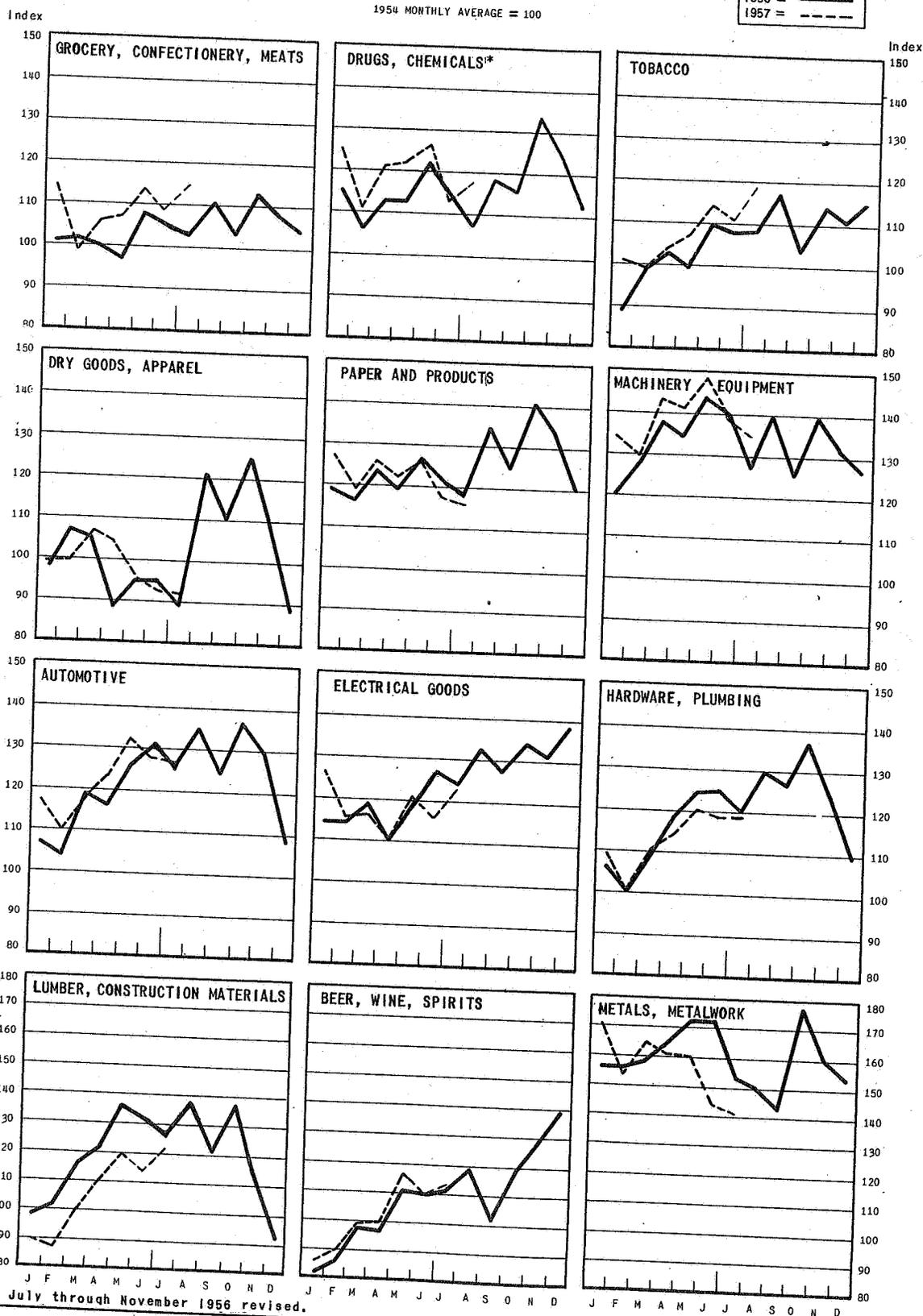
Estimates based on a sample are subject to sampling variability and thus are not expected to be in exact agreement with a complete census taken with the same enumeration procedures. For all trades combined, the sampling variability of the "composite" sales estimates for any individual month, is less than one percent at the one sigma level. That is to say, the chances are about two out of three that the estimated sales shown would differ by less than one percent from the results of a complete enumeration. The variability of estimates for kind-of-business groups and individual kinds of business is generally higher than for total merchant wholesale trade but for most trades the sampling variability is less than 5 percent at the one sigma level. Table IA presents these sampling variabilities of the estimates for February, March, April and May 1957. Since these measures are also subject to sampling variability they should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. The sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals has not been evaluated. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

These measures do not include biases that may arise from other nonsampling errors, such as failure of respondent to submit correct figures or to submit a report in time for tabulation. In preparing the dollar volume estimates, an estimate is included for those firms that fail to respond. To the extent that the estimates for these firms may differ from the actual figures, nonresponse affects the reliability of the dollar volume estimate. As a result, dollar volume estimates are not published separately in a few trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 11 percent of the total sales in May 1957 were imputed for nonresponse.

### SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—KINDS OF BUSINESS 1956 AND 1957

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

1956 = ———  
1957 = - - - -



\* July through November 1956 revised.

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1956 - JULY 1957  
(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1956												Total 1956
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....</b>	9,032	9,172	9,571	9,296	10,144	9,894	9,398	10,498	9,779	11,202	10,435	9,944	118,365
<b>DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....</b>	3,994	4,085	4,372	4,346	4,680	4,589	4,215	4,643	4,324	4,889	4,501	4,192	52,830
Automotive wholesalers.....	353	344	396	384	417	434	415	449	410	453	428	358	4,841
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers....	280	276	318	306	333	351	344	371	344	386	366	296	3,971
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors..	603	602	627	580	616	668	653	701	671	708	692	727	7,848
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors....	272	285	297	295	319	350	326	336	317	338	328	344	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	331	317	330	285	297	318	327	365	354	370	364	383	4,041
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	184	193	212	194	199	197	181	223	216	250	234	210	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers..	125	133	147	133	134	131	118	145	144	170	162	139	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	387	366	404	432	455	458	441	477	463	501	453	398	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	175	176	184	198	206	209	189	205	196	212	198	179	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	212	190	220	234	249	249	252	273	266	289	255	219	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	540	560	636	669	743	725	691	756	664	750	624	511	7,870
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	337	338	361	373	410	398	392	433	363	402	327	279	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	203	222	275	296	333	327	299	323	302	348	297	232	3,457
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,004	1,073	1,158	1,120	1,210	1,170	1,063	1,173	1,048	1,170	1,104	1,054	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	506	541	574	523	569	522	493	546	483	566	564	548	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors..	70	74	78	74	79	79	83	92	85	92	90	84	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	105	103	102	108	116	111	97	112	111	116	104	98	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors....	438	437	442	460	483	483	431	421	399	445	447	428	5,363
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	276	282	303	312	325	325	306	287	274	346	306	269	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	162	155	139	148	158	158	125	133	125	149	141	159	1,752
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	425	439	419	434	470	385	280	361	366	457	420	408	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	267	275	261	267	304	248	167	231	238	306	291	283	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	158	164	158	167	166	137	113	130	128	151	129	125	1,726
<b>NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....</b>	5,038	5,087	5,199	4,950	5,464	5,305	5,183	5,855	5,455	6,313	5,934	5,792	65,535
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,459	1,479	1,442	1,405	1,560	1,517	1,492	1,601	1,485	1,627	1,556	1,505	18,128
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	613	624	631	602	667	648	609	658	629	680	657	630	7,648
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	561	583	537	528	587	588	585	620	553	606	578	571	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	46	48	50	45	48	46	45	50	47	52	54	51	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	239	224	224	230	258	235	253	273	256	289	267	253	3,001
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	354	361	384	393	451	469	465	416	345	376	397	409	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	132	116	122	120	131	131	124	133	120	127	148	149	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	222	245	262	273	320	338	341	283	225	249	249	260	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	385	406	459	454	532	520	532	565	482	572	606	657	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	151	152	166	177	220	229	265	270	197	199	182	198	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	234	254	293	277	312	291	267	295	285	373	424	459	3,764
Chemicals, allied products wholesalers....	322	299	316	316	342	319	301	334	326	375	348	315	3,913
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)..	204	191	196	189	202	192	185	208	206	231	223	202	2,429
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers....	95	87	96	100	111	97	89	98	93	116	100	92	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	24	27	29	30	27	28	27	28	25	21	310
Tobacco distributors.....	238	264	275	264	295	289	288	314	275	304	298	308	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	464	505	496	448	450	450	420	576	524	594	520	419	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers....	149	172	176	144	154	137	159	238	206	228	201	146	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	183	192	184	182	183	197	170	221	203	223	197	162	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	293	286	306	294	313	299	291	332	309	347	331	296	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	253	247	265	253	273	255	252	287	265	294	280	248	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	70	75	93	96	92	99	98	117	116	133	127	116	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	110	103	87	87	87	87	91	120	118	130	125	117	1,274

Note: Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.  
<sup>r</sup> Revised.

Table 1.--ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS--Continued

JANUARY 1956 - JULY 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1957							7 months	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	1957	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,945	9,097	9,744	9,834	10,168	9,610	9,916	68,314	66,507
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	4,278	3,981	4,292	4,314	4,450	4,243	4,267	29,825	30,281
Automotive wholesalers.....	389	366	392	408	438	424	421	2,838	2,743
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	321	298	319	334	362	359	363	2,356	2,208
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	665	609	613	588	623	614	650	4,362	4,349
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	301	291	293	297	308	315	325	2,130	2,144
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	364	318	320	291	315	299	325	2,232	2,205
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	189	189	205	212	200	193	185	1,373	1,360
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	127	128	140	144	135	131	120	925	921
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	398	365	405	420	443	435	436	2,902	2,943
Hardware wholesalers.....	184	173	191	196	205	196	192	1,337	1,337
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	214	192	214	224	238	239	244	1,565	1,606
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	496	476	551	609	659	628	667	4,086	4,564
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	295	259	307	330	343	329	343	2,206	2,609
Construction materials distributors.....	201	217	244	279	316	299	324	1,880	1,955
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,121	1,081	1,194	1,182	1,234	1,166	1,131	8,109	7,798
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	590	547	593	540	560	512	509	3,851	3,728
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	78	77	83	85	85	84	89	581	537
Service establishment supply houses.....	113	110	113	112	122	116	106	792	742
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	478	430	459	452	448	404	396	3,067	3,174
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	317	287	312	317	311	275	272	2,091	2,129
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	161	143	147	135	137	129	124	976	1,045
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	476	393	393	369	328	308	320	2,587	2,852
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	326	266	263	236	199	193	208	1,691	1,789
Waste materials dealers.....	150	127	130	133	129	115	112	896	1,063
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,667	5,116	5,452	5,520	5,718	5,367	5,649	38,489	36,226
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,642	1,433	1,530	1,544	1,630	1,579	1,660	11,018	10,354
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	707	627	655	676	698	676	703	4,742	4,394
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	611	521	566	557	591	591	610	4,047	3,969
Confectionery wholesalers.....	52	49	53	50	52	49	50	355	328
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	272	236	256	261	289	263	297	1,874	1,663
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	357	341	352	394	429	418	442	2,733	2,877
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	121	106	109	124	127	116	129	832	876
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	236	235	243	270	302	302	313	1,901	2,001
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	408	425	468	472	551	520	543	3,387	3,288
Beer, ale distributors.....	158	158	172	193	227	234	269	1,411	1,360
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	250	267	296	279	324	286	274	1,976	1,928
Drugs, chemicals, applied products wholesalers.....	350	312	340	344	354	317	331	2,348	2,215
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	224	199	213	208	214	196	211	1,465	1,359
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	103	92	102	108	110	93	90	698	675
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	25	28	30	28	30	185	181
Tobacco distributors.....	271	266	280	285	307	297	319	2,025	1,913
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	468	472	507	491	457	440	434	3,269	3,233
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	145	160	184	182	156	136	151	1,114	1,091
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	192	183	194	190	187	193	186	1,325	1,291
Paper, applied products wholesalers.....	313	294	310	302	312	291	287	2,109	2,082
Paper wholesalers.....	268	252	265	258	271	250	250	1,814	1,798
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	74	83	96	99	101	104	111	668	623
Coal wholesalers.....	120	102	106	105	103	109	99	744	664

Note: Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 1A.—SAMPLING VARIABILITY—MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months	Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months
	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957		Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957
	(percent)				(percent)		(percent)				(percent)
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	Grocery, confectionery, meat.....	2	2	1	2	2
Automotive.....	3	3	3	3	2	General-line grocery.....	2	2	2	2	2
Automotive equipment, tire-tube....	3	3	4	3	2	Specialty-line grocery.....	4	4	4	4	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances..	2	2	2	2	1	Confectionery.....	4	3	3	3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies.....	2	2	2	3	2	Meat, meat products.....	4	5	4	4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts.....	2	4	4	3	2	Farm products (edible).....	3	3	3	3	2
Furniture, home furnishings.....	3	3	4	4	2	Poultry, poultry products.....	5	3	4	5	2
Home furnishings, floor coverings..	4	4	4	4	2	Fresh fruit, vegetables.....	5	4	4	3	2
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, wine, distilled spirits.....	2	2	2	2	2
Hardware.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, ale.....	4	3	4	3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies.....	3	4	4	4	2	Wine, distilled spirits.....	3	3	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials.....	3	3	3	2	2	Drugs, chemicals, allied products...	2	2	2	2	1
Lumber, millwork.....	5	6	6	5	3	Drugs (general and specialty lines)	2	2	2	2	2
Construction materials.....	3	3	3	4	2	Industrial chemicals, explosives..	5	4	5	4	2
Machinery, equipment, supplies.....	2	3	2	2	2	Paint, varnish.....	4	4	3	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies.....	3	5	4	4	3	Tobacco.....	2	3	2	2	1
Professional equipment, supplies...	3	3	4	3	2	Dry goods, apparel.....	3	3	3	3	2
Service establishment supply houses	5	3	4	4	3	Clothing, furnishings, footwear...	5	5	5	5	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)....	2	3	3	3	3	Dry goods (general and specialty lines).....	6	6	6	5	3
Iron, steel and products.....	3	5	4	4	4	Paper, allied products.....	3	2	2	2	1
Nonferrous metals.....	3	3	2	4	1	Paper.....	3	2	2	2	1
Scrap, waste materials.....	2	2	3	3	2	Amusement, sporting goods.....	6	4	4	4	4
Iron, steel scrap.....	3	3	4	4	3	Coal wholesalers.....	5	6	6	6	2
Waste materials.....	4	4	6	6	3						

Note: The above table provides approximate measures of the sampling variability of the dollar volume estimates of sales and of the ratio between sales for the two consecutive months specified. The ratio between sales for two consecutive months generally has a smaller sampling error than the level estimates in those months. These sampling errors are themselves subject to sampling variability and thus should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. Differences from month to month may be due to this error in the estimates of sampling error. Differences may also result from seasonal or cyclical fluctuation in the sales of individual firms (see page 2, for statement on nonsampling errors).

The sampling errors shown above can be converted to a range by the following computation: Multiply the sampling error by the estimate (whether it is a dollar volume estimate or a ratio). Add and subtract the resulting product from the published estimate. The resulting range is expected to include the "expected value" (that is, the value which could be obtained from a complete enumeration) about two out of three times. Doubling the sampling error and repeating the above process will give a range which will include the "expected value" about 19 out of 20 times.

To illustrate the computation of these ranges for monthly dollar volume estimates, consider the estimate made for all durable goods in March 1957. The published estimate is \$4,292 million while the sampling error shown for this month is 1.4 percent (or .014). Multiplying \$4,292 million by .014, we obtain \$60 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between \$4,232 and \$4,352 million. Doubling the given sampling error gives us the limits, \$4,172 to \$4,412 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from February 1957 to March 1957 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing \$4,292 million by \$3,981 million, is 1.08 (it can also be expressed as an 8% increase). The sampling error of this statistic is 0.7 percent (.007). Multiplying 1.08 by .007, we obtain .008 as the standard error of the ratio. There is a probability of two out of three that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.07 to 1.09 while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.06 to 1.10.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	JULY 1957						Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)					
	Percent change			Percent change, July 1957 from--		July 1957	July 1956	June 1957	
	July 1956	June 1957	7 mo. 1957 from 7 mo. 1956	July 1956	June 1957				
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	+6	+3	+3	+6	0	124	127	133	
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	+1	+1	-2	+8	-1	167	159	174	
Automotive wholesalers.....	+1	-1	+3	+4	-1	198	195	199	
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	-7	-9	-8	+10	+2	148	137	129	
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+6	+1	+7	+4	-1	205	205	212	
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	0	+6	0	+3	-3	163	164	184	
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	0	+3	-1	+1	-5	147	145	169	
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-1	+9	+1	+4	-1	183	188	203	
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	+2	-4	+1	-1	-2	192	202	189	
Furniture wholesalers.....	+8	0	+2	-6	-3	179	207	200	
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	+2	-8	0	+2	-1	199	200	184	
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-1	0	-1	+1	-1	221	215	233	
Hardware wholesalers.....	+2	-2	0	-1	-2	243	249	252	
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-3	+2	-3	+2	-1	200	184	213	
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-3	+6	-10	-2	-1	105	102	118	
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-12	+4	-15	-5	+1	154	151	168	
Construction materials distributors.....	+8	+8	-4	+1	-4	71	66	82	
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+6	-3	+4	+9	0	166	167	168	
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	+3	-6	+1	+4	-4	160	151	151	
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	+8	-3	+7	+5	-1	205	209	204	
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+3	-1	+3	+8	-1	134	138	135	
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+7	+6	+8	+9	0	185	184	198	
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+10	+1	+9	+1	-2	138	150	152	
Service establishment supply houses.....	+9	-9	+7	+4	0	127	132	133	
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-8	-2	-3	+45	+1	222	140	216	
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-11	-1	-2	+50	+1	275	162	271	
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-1	-4	-7	+17	+3	86	76	81	
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	+14	+4	-9	+22	+12	55	51	51	
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	+25	+8	-5	+41	+22	52	48	48	
Waste materials dealers.....	-1	-3	-16	-3	-2	61	56	57	
Jewelry wholesalers.....	0	-10	0	+4	+2	315	302	294	
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	+9	+5	+6	+2	+1	89	98	97	
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+11	+5	+6	+1	0	67	73	72	
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+15	+4	+8	+3	+2	94	100	97	
Voluntary groups.....	+6	+4	+6	-3	-3	79	85	83	
Retailer-cooperative.....	+17	+3	+12	+8	-4	71	71	73	
Nonaffiliated.....	+13	+9	+5	+5	+6	114	123	119	
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+4	+3	+2	-5	-4	63	68	71	
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+11	+2	+8	+3	0	85	92	83	
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+17	+13	+13	+13	+4	20	23	21	
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	-5	+6	-5	-4	-6	18	21	21	
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	+4	+11	-5	-6	-5	24	29	29	
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-8	+4	-5	-3	-6	16	18	18	
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+2	+4	+3	+3	-2	114	119	119	
Beer, ale distributors.....	+2	+15	+4	-8	0	52	60	59	
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+3	-4	+2	+7	-3	176	178	167	
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+10	+4	+6	+8	-1	143	147	150	
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+14	+8	+8	+7	0	167	174	178	
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	+1	-3	+3	+7	-4	93	96	98	
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	+11	+7	+2	+15	0	128	125	128	
Tobacco distributors.....	+11	+7	+6	+5	0	52	54	55	
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+3	-1	+1	-2	+1	242	238	241	
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	-5	+11	+2	+9	+4	240	222	235	
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+9	-4	+3	-6	0	251	292	263	
Piece goods converters.....	+8	-12	-2	-10	-2	221	251	203	
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	-1	-1	+1	+1	-1	121	124	125	
Paper wholesalers.....	-1	0	+1	0	-1	115	118	118	
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	+7	-5	+5	+8	0	185	185	185	
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+18	+20	+22	-6	+11	77	101	96	
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+13	+5	+8	+9	+2	89	96	99	
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	+13	+7	+7	+2	0	184	185	207	
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+27	+18	+14	+12	-1	90	119	106	
Coal wholesalers.....	+9	-9	+12	+8	+6	128	149	112	
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	+4	-0	+5	-3	+2	191	138	121	

Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

JULY 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (See map page 9)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, July 1957 from--		July 1957	July 1956	June 1957
	July 1957 From--		7 mo. 1957 from 7 mo. 1956	July 1956	June 1957			
	July 1956	June 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	+6	+3	+3	+6	0	124	127	133
New England.....	-1	0	+2	+15	+1	134	112	129
Middle Atlantic.....	+6	-1	+3	+3	-1	108	117	114
East North Central.....	+5	+5	0	+8	+2	122	119	127
West North Central.....	+15	+16	+5	+7	+1	117	130	141
South Atlantic.....	+9	+6	+5	0	-1	138	145	149
East South Central.....	+6	+7	+8	-4	-2	136	144	152
West South Central.....	+8	+7	+8	+7	-1	144	143	154
Mountain.....	+5	+1	+2	+7	-1	147	142	151
Pacific.....	+3	+2	+3	+10	0	130	122	135
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+6	+1	+7	+4	-1	205	205	212
Middle Atlantic.....	+7	-4	+9	+14	0	203	190	201
East North Central.....	+6	+4	+7	+8	-1	231	239	253
West North Central.....	+15	-2	+10	+4	-3	212	226	212
South Atlantic.....	+11	0	+5	-3	-2	200	206	213
East South Central.....	-14	+4	+7	+2	-3	214	146	228
West South Central.....	+11	+13	+4	0	-4	193	210	216
Mountain.....	+3	+12	+11	-3	-3	261	270	277
Pacific.....	+22	+1	+5	+16	+1	191	197	189
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	0	+3	-1	+1	-5	147	145	162
New England.....	-13	-6	-10	0	-3	183	156	174
Middle Atlantic.....	-2	-8	+1	+8	-3	129	122	130
East North Central.....	-12	+1	-8	+1	-1	161	138	174
West North Central.....	+15	+22	+3	+11	-8	142	154	198
South Atlantic.....	-6	-9	-2	-5	-6	159	151	161
East South Central.....	+5	+25	+3	+4	-6	127	142	171
West South Central.....	+9	+20	+2	+5	-8	153	161	203
Mountain.....	+9	+7	+8	+17	-6	161	148	190
Pacific.....	+2	+3	+4	-11	-3	138	155	155
Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors...	-1	+9	+1	+4	-1	183	188	203
New England.....	-8	-3	+6	+20	+5	207	156	175
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	0	0	-9	+1	188	226	184
East North Central.....	+1	+6	+1	+3	-3	174	171	200
West North Central.....	-3	+22	-10	+6	+7	206	227	253
South Atlantic.....	+2	+11	+6	+11	-2	182	162	215
East South Central.....	+9	+11	-3	-8	-11	154	196	213
West South Central.....	+10	+23	-7	+4	-5	204	215	248
Pacific.....	+11	+14	+8	+8	+1	159	176	178
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	+2	-4	+1	-1	-2	192	202	189
New England.....	+4	-13	+1	+5	+4	128	139	80
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	-9	+2	+11	0	167	164	168
East North Central.....	+10	-2	+4	+1	-5	210	205	208
West North Central.....	+24	+11	+5	-16	-3	178	223	194
South Atlantic.....	-3	-8	+2	-1	0	201	250	174
South Central.....	-13	+10	-3	-9	-3	220	215	231
Pacific.....	+6	+2	+1	-3	-4	214	232	224
Hardware wholesalers.....	+2	-2	0	-1	-2	243	249	252
Middle Atlantic.....	-6	-16	-3	-5	-1	246	262	213
East North Central.....	-2	+4	-1	-1	-3	237	230	259
West North Central.....	-2	+2	0	-1	-3	276	276	291
South Atlantic.....	+2	+2	+1	+4	+8	249	257	232
East South Central.....	+4	+9	-3	-14	-7	209	251	250
West South Central.....	+13	+15	-3	+1	-4	232	264	277
Mountain.....	+6	-3	-5	-21	-2	322	271	299
Pacific.....	+1	-1	+1	+5	-2	223	217	225
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-3	+2	-3	+2	-1	200	184	213
New England.....	-12	+5	-6	+24	+2	234	146	273
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	+7	-3	-4	-3	186	189	210
East North Central.....	-6	+6	-3	+4	-2	197	177	212
West North Central.....	-12	+9	-5	-6	-3	245	237	276
South Atlantic.....	-4	-3	+2	-1	-3	183	173	185
South Central.....	-3	+13	-2	-6	-1	165	172	190
Pacific.....	-9	-10	-4	+2	-2	194	194	185
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-3	+6	-10	-2	-1	105	102	118
New England.....	-21	+8	-7	-7	-1	111	87	125
Middle Atlantic.....	-12	-5	-10	+14	-1	130	84	133
East North Central.....	0	+9	-13	-9	+2	109	115	122
West North Central.....	-3	-7	-4	+4	-13	85	91	95
South Atlantic.....	+9	+18	-3	-13	-11	60	85	84
South Central.....	+2	+20	-4	+1	+3	128	128	151
Pacific.....	-7	+1	-16	+33	-1	75	55	84

# UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS  
SEVEN MONTHS 1957 COMPARED WITH SEVEN MONTHS 1956

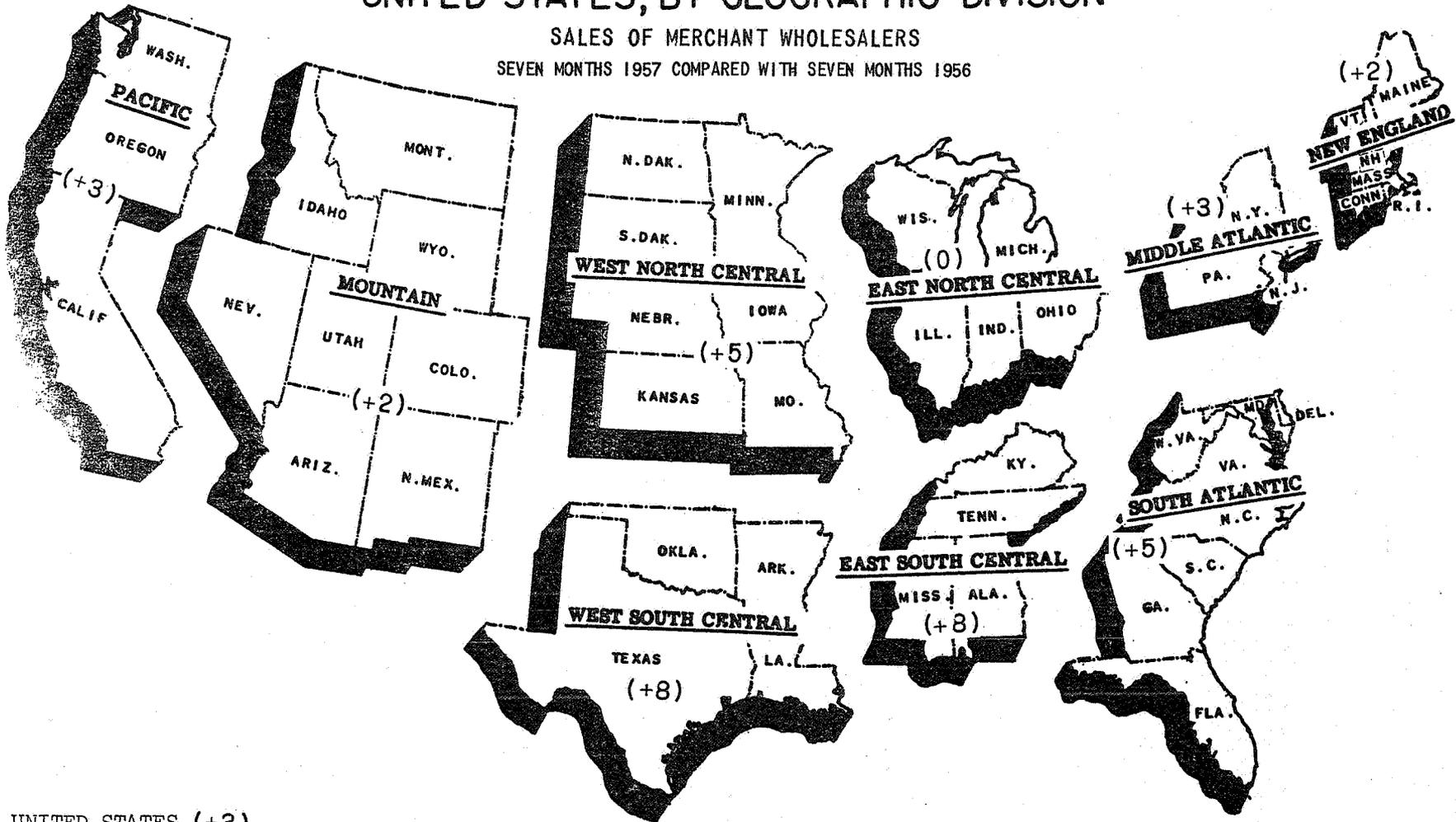


Table 3.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS—Continued

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, July 1957 from--		July 1957	July 1956	June 1957
	July 1957 from--		7 mo. 1957 from 7 mo. 1956	July 1956	June 1957			
	July 1956	June 1957						
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	+3	-1	+3	+8	-1	134	138	135
New England.....	0	-15	+4	+12	-3	125	139	114
Middle Atlantic.....	+18	-6	+11	+15	-2	111	148	108
East North Central.....	+12	+2	+2	-1	-1	130	150	134
West North Central.....	+6	-7	-7	+22	-2	153	132	155
South Atlantic.....	+10	+3	+9	+5	+1	145	141	166
South Central.....	+4	-3	+5	+19	-1	144	127	141
Mountain.....	+24	0	+3	+16	-6	122	114	127
Pacific.....	-5	+3	-3	+33	0	175	118	192
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+15	+4	+8	+3	+2	94	100	97
Middle Atlantic.....	+11	+4	+4	-2	-3	100	109	106
East North Central.....	+10	+5	+6	-4	-3	81	91	88
West North Central.....	+5	+8	+4	-7	+2	73	80	77
South Atlantic.....	+13	+7	+6	0	+5	141	158	145
East South Central.....	+1	+6	+5	+6	+1	118	116	125
West South Central.....	+14	+5	+9	+10	+6	109	113	106
Mountain.....	+16	+3	+7	+9	+16	105	111	93
Pacific.....	+25	+10	+15	+15	+2	70	74	75
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+4	+3	+2	-5	-4	63	68	71
New England.....	+13	+9	+4	+12	-1	113	115	120
Middle Atlantic.....	+9	+9	0	-12	-11	53	66	66
East North Central.....	+15	+5	+4	+12	+2	65	70	80
West North Central.....	+21	+3	+1	-16	-5	103	270	111
South Atlantic.....	0	-5	+2	+6	+8	6	3	3
South Central.....	-3	+6	+12	-22	0	85	80	86
Pacific.....	-1	-3	0	+2	+6	47	41	44
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-8	+4	-5	-3	-6	16	18	18
New England.....	+2	+12	+1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	+12	-2	+17	-10	8	8	10
East North Central.....	-4	+9	-3	-11	-12	14	20	18
South Atlantic.....	-5	-18	-3	-2	-7	19	16	15
South Central.....	-5	-11	-3	-10	-7	28	28	29
Pacific.....	-4	+11	-3	+4	-1	19	18	22
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+14	+8	+8	+7	0	167	174	178
New England.....	+7	+4	+7	+10	-4	159	146	165
Middle Atlantic.....	+17	+3	+7	+5	-1	151	180	169
East North Central.....	+12	+3	+8	+7	+2	145	158	146
West North Central.....	+17	+9	+8	+4	-1	165	172	188
South Atlantic.....	+11	+14	+8	+10	+3	174	173	186
East South Central.....	+16	+16	+9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	+12	+9	+8	+9	0	219	222	236
Mountain.....	+11	+7	+7	+4	+4	180	184	189
Pacific.....	+11	+8	+10	+7	+1	154	156	165
Tobacco distributors.....	+11	+7	+6	+5	0	52	54	55
New England.....	+9	-1	+6	+9	-4	51	43	53
Middle Atlantic.....	+10	+4	+7	+3	-2	46	50	49
East North Central.....	+13	+5	+7	+13	+5	51	51	51
West North Central.....	-2	0	+2	-9	0	66	68	67
South Atlantic.....	+28	+11	+8	+6	-2	55	61	63
South Central.....	+11	+8	+5	+3	+1	50	53	55
Pacific.....	+12	+14	+8	0	-2	64	68	76
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+3	-1	+1	-2	+1	242	258	241
New England.....	-1	+1	0	-14	+1	245	304	237
Middle Atlantic.....	+10	-4	+2	-3	-1	239	186	228
East North Central.....	+18	+10	+5	+8	+6	210	203	210
West North Central.....	-7	+14	-3	+4	+3	281	262	349
South Atlantic.....	-3	+4	-4	-7	+7	230	244	241
South Central.....	-6	+7	-3	-1	+2	384	352	409
Pacific.....	+11	+9	+5	+8	+1	220	253	220

X Insufficient data to show separately.

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its sales by commodity lines as reported to the Bureau of the Census. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

#### DURABLE GOODS

##### Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

##### Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

##### Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

##### Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

##### Lumber, construction materials distributors

**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

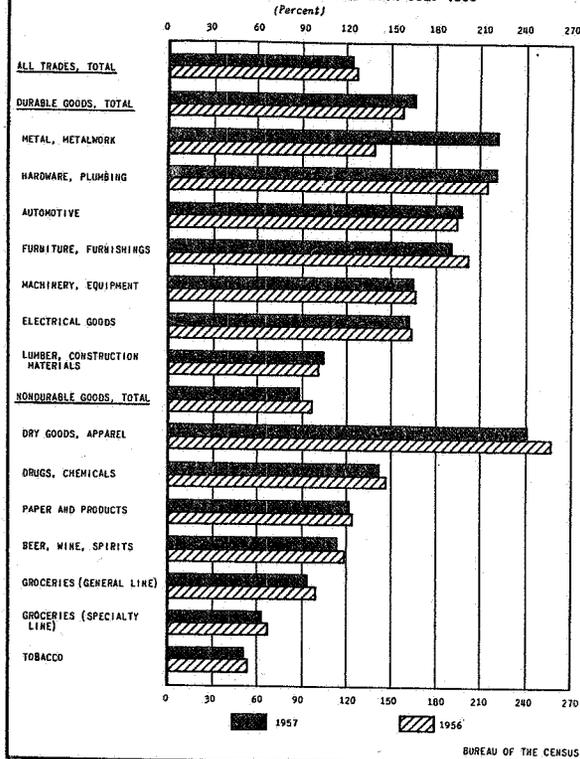
**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

STOCKS--SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: JULY 1957 COMPARED WITH JULY 1956



##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other machinery, equipment supplies distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, taining to agriculture; and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery; millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tape, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

AUGUST 1957

FOR RELEASE  
OCTOBER 11, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

August 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were estimated at \$10.3 billion, an increase of 4 percent over July 1957 sales, but a decline of 2 percent from August sales a year ago. Sales for the first eight months of 1957 totaled \$78.6 billion, 2 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1956.

Durable goods trades, with sales of \$4.3 billion in August 1957, showed a slight (1%) increase over previous month sales but were down 7 percent from a year ago. The nondurable goods trades, with August sales slightly under \$6.0 billion, reported a 5 percent increase over July 1957, as well as a 2 percent gain over last August. Eight month sales in the nondurable goods trades were 6 percent higher than in the first 8 months of 1956, but sales in the durable goods trades, were off 2 percent during this period.

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers, up seasonally 49 percent, reported the most significant increase over previous month sales. Large declines from July sales were noted by air conditioning and commercial refrigeration equipment distributors (13%) and fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers (13%). Farm products (raw materials) merchants registered the principal increase (17%) over year-ago sales. Substantial declines from August 1956 sales levels were reported by lumber, millwork wholesalers (22%), nonferrous metals distributors (18%), iron, steel products dealers (12%), coal wholesalers (12%) and electrical appliances distributors (10%).

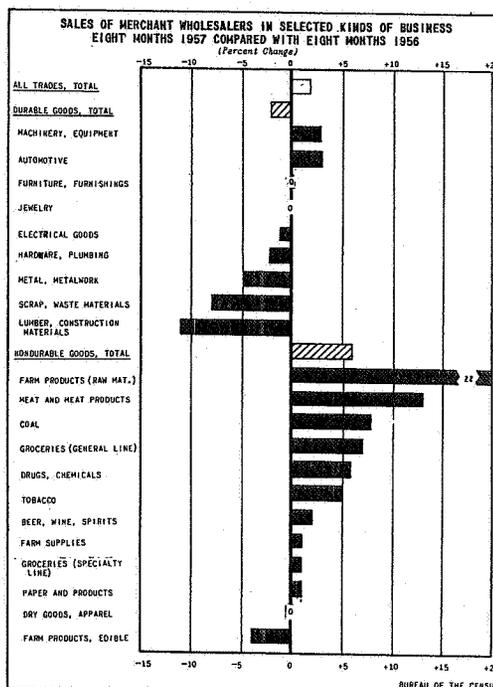
Sales in New England were off slightly (1%) from July but all other geographic divisions showed increases, the East South Central Division leading with a gain of 11 percent. Compared with a year ago, most divisions reported little or no change in sales. However, the West North Central and West South Central Divisions noted 6 and 7 percent increases, respectively.

### Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of August were up 2 percent over the previous month and 4 percent above stocks on hand last August 30. Durable goods trades, in total, reported stocks up 7 percent over last August, while the nondurable goods trades showed no change from year-ago stocks.

The August 1957 stock-sales ratio for all merchant wholesalers was 122 percent--3 points below the July 1957 ratio and 5 points above the ratio for August a year ago. The August stock-sales ratio for durable goods trades was 165 percent compared to 90 percent for the nondurable goods trades.

Most trades indicated little or no change in inventories from a month earlier. However, farm products (raw materials) merchants and coal wholesalers reported sharp increases. Compared with a year ago,



iron, steel products distributors and nonferrous metal distributors noted the principal increases in inventories. Specialty-line grocery wholesalers and piece goods converters showed the sharpest declines from a year ago.

The West South Central and East South Central Divisions, with inventories up 8 and 10 percent respectively, indicated the most significant changes from previous month inventories. Compared with a year ago, all divisions except the Middle Atlantic noted increases in inventories ranging from 2 to 9 percent. However, the Middle Atlantic Division showed no change from last year.

### General

This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales of merchant wholesalers by kind of business from January 1956 through August 1957. These data are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 2 and 6. Also included in this report are sales and inventory trends and stock-sales ratios by kind of business, for the United States as a whole and by geographic division.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURE, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

1. Scope of Survey

This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers, which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade, and excludes other types of wholesale trade such as manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; agents and brokers and assemblers of farm products. All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are defined in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial and distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials." Firms which, in addition to merchant wholesale establishments, operate other types of establishments, e.g., retail, manufacturing, etc., report in this survey only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind-of-business classification shown in this report is included on pages 11 and 12.

2. Sample Design

Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954. The sample is supplemented twice a year for new firms on the BOASI lists.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales size, and (c) whether geographic division trends are to be shown for the trade. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

3. Published Data

Sales.—This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 1) and sales trends (percent changes) derived from these estimates (Table 2). Sales trends are shown in Table 2 for some detailed kind of businesses for which estimates are not shown separately in Table 1. For these kinds of business the trends are based only on the weighted sales of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (Table 3). In Table 3 the trends for geographic division also are based on weighted sales of identical firms.

Sales include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included.

Inventories.—This report presents inventory trends by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). These inventory trends are based on the weighted inventories of identical firms (i.e., firm reporting data for each of the months compared).

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month.

Stock-sales ratios.—These are presented by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing weighted stocks, at cost, by weighted sales for only those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales in all three periods compared. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade. Stock-sales ratios for previous months shown in the current report may differ from those published in previous reports since the reporting panel varies.

4. Estimating Procedure

Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection in the sample. Large firms are selected with certainty, this 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.

For most firms reporting, data are available for each of three months (current, previous, and year ago). New firms reporting provide data for at least two months (current and previous). Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight (the reciprocal of its probability of selection) and the results summarized to obtain the dollar volume estimates, percentage changes and stock-sales ratios shown in this report.

Volume estimates.—The summation of the weighted reports of sales for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months—the current month and the preceding month. However, the published estimate is a "composite" of two estimates (a) the unbiased estimate for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate obtained by multiplying the "composite" estimate for the previous month by the ratio of the current month unbiased to previous month unbiased estimates obtained from the summation of the current reports. The unbiased estimate (a) receives a weight of .3 while the ratio estimate (b) receives a weight of .7. The resulting weighted average provides a "composite" estimate of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than either of the two estimates taken alone. The estimates shown for January-June 1956 were not obtained in this manner. Since unbiased estimates were not available for this period from the new sample which was introduced in July 1956, monthly estimates prior to that date were calculated by dividing the "composite" estimates for January-June 1957 by the year-to-year ratio for each of these months obtained from weighted reports of identical firms.

Percentage changes.—Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report, viz., (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates (2) percent changes based on the weighted data from identical firms (i.e., those reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). The percentage changes based on identicals however, should not be regarded as an unbiased measure of percentage change. Since only those establishments reporting in both periods compared are included, the net change due to births and deaths is not reflected in the ratios shown.

5. Reliability of the Data

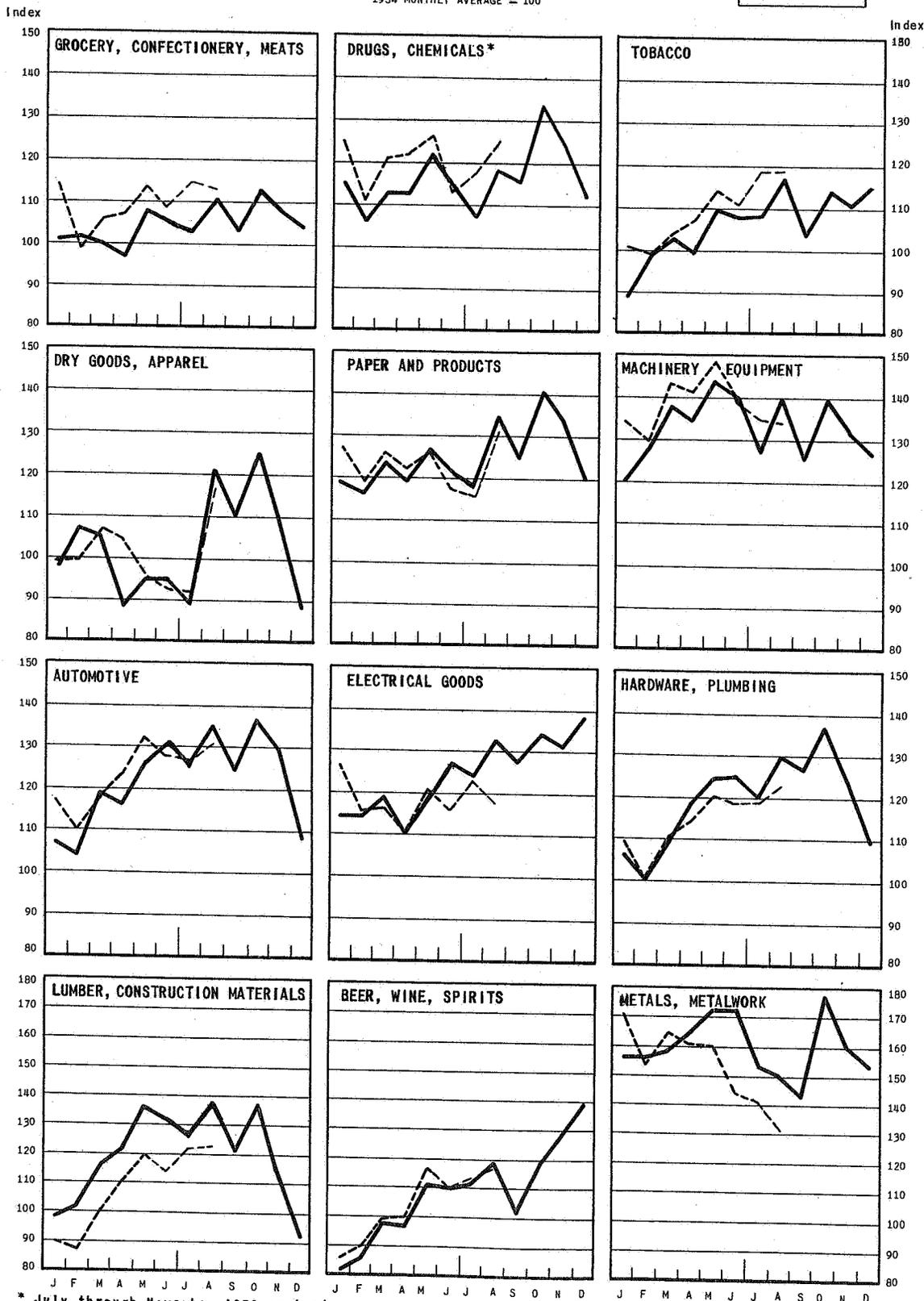
Estimates based on a sample are subject to sampling variability and thus are not expected to be in exact agreement with a complete census taken with the same enumeration procedures. For all trades combined, the sampling variability of the "composite" sales estimates for any individual month, is less than one percent at the one sigma level. That is to say, the chances are about two out of three that the estimated sales shown would differ by less than one percent from the results of a complete enumeration. The variability of estimates for kind-of-business groups and individual kinds of business is generally higher than for total merchant wholesale trade but for most trades the sampling variability is less than 5 percent at the one sigma level. Table IA presents these sampling variabilities of the estimates for February, March, April and May 1957. Since these measures are also subject to sampling variability they should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. The sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals has not been evaluated. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

These measures do not include biases that may arise from other nonsampling errors, such as failure of respondent to submit correct figures or to submit a report in time for tabulation. In preparing the dollar volume estimates, an estimate is included for those firms that fail to respond. To the extent that the estimates for these firms may differ from the actual figures, nonresponse affects the reliability of the dollar volume estimate. As a result, dollar volume estimates are not published separately in a few trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 11 percent of the total sales in May 1957 were imputed for nonresponse.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—KINDS OF BUSINESS  
1956 AND 1957

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

1956 = ———  
1957 = - - - -



\* July through November 1956 revised.

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

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1956 - AUGUST 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1956												Total
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,032	9,172	9,571	9,296	10,144	9,894	r9,408	r10,498	r9,790	r11,211	r10,435	9,944	r118,395
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	3,994	4,085	4,372	4,346	4,680	4,589	r4,219	r4,638	r4,331	r4,895	4,501	4,192	r52,842
Automotive wholesalers.....	353	344	396	384	417	434	r411	r436	410	453	428	358	r4,824
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers....	280	276	318	306	333	351	r344	r365	344	386	366	296	r3,965
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors..	603	602	627	580	616	668	r641	r690	r661	r700	692	727	r7,807
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors....	272	285	297	295	319	350	326	336	317	338	328	344	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	331	317	330	285	297	318	r315	r354	r344	r362	364	383	r4,000
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	184	193	212	194	199	197	181	223	216	250	234	210	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers..	125	133	147	133	134	131	118	145	144	170	162	139	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	387	366	404	432	455	458	441	477	463	501	453	398	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	175	176	184	198	206	209	189	205	196	212	198	179	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	212	190	220	234	249	249	252	273	266	289	255	219	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	540	560	636	669	743	725	r705	r769	r675	r759	624	511	r7,916
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	337	338	361	373	410	398	392	433	363	402	327	279	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	203	222	275	296	333	327	r313	r336	r312	r357	297	232	r3,503
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,004	1,073	1,158	1,120	1,210	1,170	1,063	1,173	1,048	1,170	1,104	1,054	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	506	541	574	523	569	522	493	546	483	566	564	548	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors..	70	74	78	74	79	79	83	92	85	92	90	84	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	105	103	102	108	116	111	97	112	111	116	104	98	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors....	438	437	442	460	483	483	r438	r428	r405	r501	447	428	r5,390
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	276	282	303	312	325	325	306	287	274	346	306	269	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	162	155	139	148	158	158	r132	r141	r131	r155	141	159	r1,779
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	425	439	419	434	470	385	280	361	366	457	420	408	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	267	275	261	267	304	248	167	231	238	306	291	283	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	158	164	158	167	166	137	113	130	128	151	129	125	1,726
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,038	5,087	5,199	4,950	5,464	5,305	r5,189	r5,860	r5,459	r6,316	r5,934	5,752	r65,553
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,459	1,479	1,442	1,405	1,560	1,517	r1,498	r1,606	r1,489	r1,630	1,556	1,505	r18,146
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	613	624	631	602	667	648	620	r669	r639	690	657	630	r7,690
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	561	583	537	528	587	588	585	620	553	606	578	571	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	46	48	50	45	48	46	45	50	47	52	54	51	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	239	224	224	230	258	235	r248	r267	r250	r282	267	253	r2,977
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	354	361	384	393	451	469	465	416	345	376	397	409	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	132	116	122	120	131	131	124	133	120	127	148	149	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	222	245	262	273	320	338	341	283	225	249	249	260	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	385	406	459	454	532	520	532	565	482	572	606	657	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	151	152	166	177	220	229	265	270	197	199	182	198	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	234	254	293	277	312	291	267	295	285	373	424	459	3,764
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers....	322	299	316	316	342	319	301	334	326	375	348	315	3,913
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).	204	191	196	189	202	192	185	208	206	231	223	202	2,429
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers...	95	87	96	100	111	97	89	98	93	116	100	92	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	24	27	29	30	27	28	27	28	25	21	310
Tobacco distributors.....	238	264	275	264	295	289	288	314	275	304	298	308	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	464	505	496	448	450	450	420	576	524	594	520	419	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers....	149	172	176	144	154	137	159	238	206	228	201	146	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	183	192	184	182	183	197	170	221	203	223	197	162	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	293	286	306	294	313	299	291	332	309	347	331	296	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	253	247	265	253	273	255	252	287	265	294	280	248	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	70	75	93	96	92	99	98	117	116	133	127	116	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	110	103	87	87	87	99	91	120	118	130	125	117	1,274

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Note: Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 1.--ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS--Continued

JANUARY 1956 - AUGUST 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1957								8 months	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	1957	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,945	9,097	9,744	9,834	10,168	9,610	9,916	10,286	78,600	77,015
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	4,278	3,981	4,292	4,314	4,450	4,243	4,267	4,329	34,154	34,923
Automotive wholesalers.....	389	366	392	408	438	424	421	439	3,277	3,175
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	321	298	319	334	362	359	363	377	2,733	2,573
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors....	665	609	613	588	623	614	650	624	4,986	5,027
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	301	291	293	297	308	315	325	307	2,437	2,480
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	364	318	320	291	315	299	325	317	2,549	2,547
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	189	189	205	212	200	193	185	210	1,583	1,583
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers....	127	128	140	144	135	131	120	135	1,060	1,066
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	398	365	405	420	443	435	436	452	3,354	3,420
Hardware wholesalers.....	184	173	191	196	205	196	192	197	1,534	1,542
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	214	192	214	224	238	239	244	255	1,820	1,879
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	496	476	551	609	659	628	667	675	4,761	5,347
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	295	259	307	330	343	329	343	342	2,548	3,042
Construction materials distributors.....	201	217	244	279	316	299	324	333	2,213	2,305
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,121	1,081	1,194	1,182	1,234	1,166	1,131	1,121	9,230	8,971
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	590	547	593	540	560	512	509	512	4,363	4,274
Professional equipment, supplies distributors....	78	77	83	85	85	84	89	96	677	629
Service establishment supply houses.....	113	110	113	112	122	116	106	115	907	854
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	478	430	459	452	448	404	396	368	3,435	3,609
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	317	287	312	317	311	275	272	252	2,343	2,416
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	161	143	147	135	137	129	124	116	1,092	1,193
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	476	393	393	369	328	308	320	361	2,948	3,213
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	326	266	263	236	199	193	208	232	1,923	2,020
Waste materials dealers.....	150	127	130	133	129	115	112	129	1,025	1,193
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,667	5,116	5,452	5,520	5,718	5,367	5,649	5,957	44,446	42,092
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,642	1,433	1,530	1,544	1,630	1,579	1,660	1,630	12,648	11,966
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	707	627	655	676	698	676	703	692	5,434	5,074
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	611	521	566	557	591	591	610	593	4,640	4,589
Confectionery wholesalers.....	52	49	53	50	52	49	50	51	406	378
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	272	236	256	261	289	263	297	294	2,168	1,925
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	357	341	352	394	429	418	442	413	3,146	3,293
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	121	106	109	124	127	116	129	142	974	1,009
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	236	235	243	270	302	302	313	271	2,172	2,284
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	408	425	468	472	551	520	543	556	3,943	3,853
Beer, ale distributors.....	158	158	172	193	227	234	269	254	1,665	1,630
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	250	267	296	279	324	286	274	302	2,278	2,223
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	350	312	340	344	354	317	331	350	2,698	2,549
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)...	224	199	213	208	214	196	211	222	1,687	1,567
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	103	92	102	108	110	93	90	99	797	773
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	25	28	30	28	30	29	214	209
Tobacco distributors.....	271	266	280	285	307	297	319	319	2,344	2,227
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	468	472	507	491	457	440	434	556	3,825	3,809
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	145	160	184	182	156	136	151	225	1,339	1,329
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	192	183	194	190	187	193	186	220	1,545	1,512
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	313	294	310	302	312	291	287	323	2,432	2,414
Paper wholesalers.....	268	252	265	258	271	250	250	279	2,093	2,085
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	74	83	96	99	101	104	111	119	787	740
Coal wholesalers.....	120	102	106	105	103	109	99	106	850	784

Note: Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 1A.--SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months	Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months
	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957		Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957
	(percent)				(percent)		(percent)				(percent)
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	Grocery, confectionery, meat.....	2	2	1	2	2
Automotive.....	3	3	3	3	2	General-line grocery.....	2	2	2	2	2
Automotive equipment, tire-tube....	3	3	4	3	2	Specialty-line grocery.....	4	4	4	4	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances..	2	2	2	2	1	Confectionery.....	4	3	3	3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies....	2	2	2	3	2	Meat, meat products.....	4	5	4	4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts.....	2	4	4	3	2	Farm products (edible).....	3	3	3	3	2
Furniture, home furnishings.....	3	3	4	4	2	Poultry, poultry products.....	5	3	4	5	2
Home furnishings, floor coverings..	4	4	4	4	2	Fresh fruit, vegetables.....	5	4	4	3	2
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, wine, distilled spirits.....	2	2	2	2	2
Hardware.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, ale.....	4	3	4	3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies.....	3	4	4	4	2	Wine, distilled spirits.....	3	3	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials.....	3	3	3	2	2	Drugs, chemicals, allied products...	2	2	2	2	1
Lumber, millwork.....	5	6	6	5	3	Drugs (general and specialty lines)	2	2	2	2	2
Construction materials.....	3	3	3	4	2	Industrial chemicals, explosives..	5	4	5	4	2
Machinery, equipment, supplies.....	2	3	2	2	2	Paint, varnish.....	4	4	3	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies.....	3	5	4	4	3	Tobacco.....	2	3	2	2	1
Professional equipment, supplies...	3	3	4	3	2	Dry goods, apparel.....	3	3	3	3	2
Service establishment supply houses	5	3	4	4	3	Clothing, furnishings, footwear...	5	5	5	5	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)....	2	3	3	3	3	Dry goods (general and specialty-lines).....	6	6	6	5	3
Iron, steel and products.....	3	5	4	4	4	Paper, allied products.....	3	2	2	2	1
Nonferrous metals.....	3	3	2	4	1	Paper.....	3	2	2	2	1
Scrap, waste materials.....	2	2	3	3	2	Amusement, sporting goods.....	6	4	4	4	4
Iron, steel scrap.....	3	3	4	4	3	Coal wholesalers.....	5	6	6	6	2
Waste materials.....	4	4	6	6	3						

Note: The above table provides approximate measures of the sampling variability of the dollar volume estimates of sales and of the ratio between sales for the two consecutive months specified. The ratio between sales for two consecutive months generally has a smaller sampling error than the level estimates in those months. These sampling errors are themselves subject to sampling variability and thus should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. Differences from month to month may be due to this error in the estimates of sampling error. Differences may also result from seasonal or cyclical fluctuation in the sales of individual firms (see page 2, for statement on nonsampling errors).

The sampling errors shown above can be converted to a range by the following computation: Multiply the sampling error by the estimate (whether it is a dollar volume estimate or a ratio). Add and subtract the resulting product from the published estimate. The resulting range is expected to include the "expected value" (that is, the value which could be obtained from a complete enumeration) about two out of three times. Doubling the sampling error and repeating the above process will give a range which will include the "expected value" about 19 out of 20 times.

To illustrate the computation of these ranges for monthly dollar volume estimates, consider the estimate made for all durable goods in March 1957. The published estimate is \$4,292 million while the sampling error shown for this month is 1.4 percent (or .014). Multiplying \$4,292 million by .014, we obtain \$60 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between \$4,232 and \$4,352 million. Doubling the given sampling error gives us the limits, \$4,172 to \$4,412 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from February 1957 to March 1957 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing \$4,292 million by \$3,981 million, is 1.08 (it can also be expressed as an 8% increase). The sampling error of this statistic is 0.7 percent (.007). Multiplying 1.08 by .007, we obtain .008 as the standard error of the ratio. There is a probability of two out of three that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.07 to 1.09 while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.06 to 1.10.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS  
AUGUST 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, August 1957 from--		August 1957	August 1956	July 1957
	August 1957 from--		8 mo. 1957 from 8 mo. 1956	August 1956	July 1957			
	August 1956	July 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-2	+4	+2	+4	+2	122	117	125
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-7	+1	-2	+7	0	165	148	168
Automotive wholesalers.....	+1	+3	+3	+4	0	170	179	184
Motor-vehicle distributors.....	0	-1	-8	+7	0	115	109	111
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+3	+4	+6	+4	0	190	197	203
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	-10	-4	-1	+2	+1	166	147	155
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-9	-6	-2	+4	0	152	129	143
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-10	-2	0	+1	+2	184	170	170
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-6	+14	0	+1	-1	174	167	209
Furniture wholesalers.....	-1	+16	+2	0	-4	151	157	198
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	-7	+13	-1	+2	+1	195	175	218
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-5	+4	-2	0	0	218	206	226
Hardware wholesalers.....	-4	+3	-1	0	+1	238	230	243
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-7	+5	-3	0	0	196	180	207
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-12	+1	-11	-4	-4	99	95	106
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-22	0	-16	-4	-4	117	111	126
Construction materials distributors.....	-1	+3	-4	-4	-3	83	79	89
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-4	-1	+3	+11	0	178	161	177
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors.....	-1	-13	+1	+4	-1	149	126	136
Commercial machines, equipment distributors.....	-4	+1	+5	+10	-2	191	170	185
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-6	+1	+2	+11	0	164	144	163
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+4	+8	+8	+12	0	155	152	166
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.....	+3	+6	+8	+8	0	114	116	109
Service establishment supply houses.....	+3	+8	+6	-4	0	122	130	133
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-14	-7	-5	+1	0	224	146	214
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-12	-7	-3	+4	0	273	184	254
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-18	-6	-8	+25	-2	94	60	98
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	0	+13	-8	+2	-5	53	55	60
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	0	+12	-5	+2	-10	46	51	55
Waste materials dealers.....	-1	+15	-14	+2	+3	67	61	70
Jewelry wholesalers.....	+1	+23	0	+1	+1	202	184	245
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	+2	+5	+6	0	+4	90	93	92
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+1	-2	+6	-1	-1	71	74	71
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	-2	+7	+4	0	92	93	93
Voluntary groups.....	+4	-2	+6	0	+1	81	85	79
Retailer-cooperative.....	+10	-5	+12	+2	-2	73	79	76
Nonaffiliated.....	+3	+2	+5	+7	+1	107	103	108
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	-4	-3	+1	-10	-2	72	78	71
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+2	+2	+7	+3	+1	57	65	60
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+10	-1	+13	+3	-3	17	19	18
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	-1	-7	-4	-2	-3	19	20	18
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	+7	+10	-3	-9	-4	18	20	20
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-4	-13	-5	0	-3	19	19	17
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	-2	+2	+2	+4	-3	103	98	106
Beer, ale distributors.....	-6	-6	+2	+5	-4	51	47	51
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+2	+10	+2	+3	-3	160	159	177
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+5	+6	+6	+10	+1	158	135	150
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+7	+5	+8	+14	+3	160	152	164
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	+1	+10	+3	0	-1	100	94	102
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	+4	-3	+2	+13	-3	172	160	174
Tobacco distributors.....	+2	0	+5	+9	+1	53	51	53
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-3	+28	0	-7	-4	r 196	r 167	r 213
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	-5	+49	+1	+5	-4	149	148	218
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	0	+18	+2	-10	-3	166	159	207
Piece goods converters.....	+2	+16	-2	-13	-5	200	213	216
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	-3	+13	+1	-4	-3	114	111	126
Paper wholesalers.....	-3	+12	0	-4	-3	109	110	122
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.....	+4	+19	+5	+4	+1	158	164	177
Farm products (raw materials) merchants.....	+17	+16	+22	-4	+38	97	117	91
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+4	+4	+8	+6	+2	107	105	107
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	+2	+7	+6	0	-2	165	165	187
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.....	+15	+5	+15	+16	+5	117	87	113
Coal wholesalers.....	-12	+7	+8	+7	+14	133	120	136
Farm supplies wholesalers.....	+6	+15	+5	-2	+3	126	134	146

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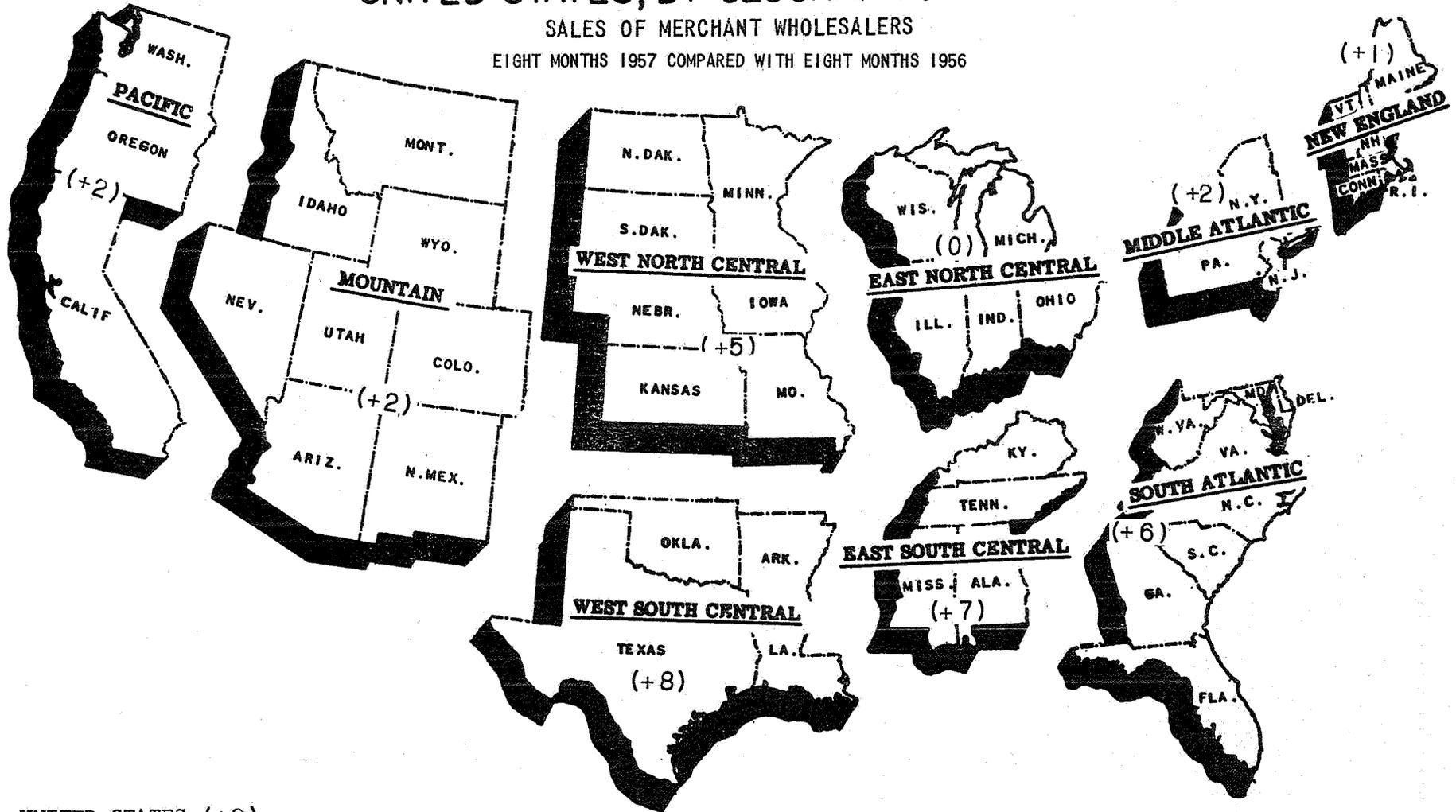
Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION; FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

Kind of business and geographic division (See map page 9)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	August 1957 from--		8 mo. 1957 from 8 mo. 1956	Percent change, August 1957 from--		August 1957	August 1956	July 1957
	August 1956	July 1957		August 1956	July 1957			
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-2	+4	+2	+4	+2	122	117	125
New England.....	-2	-1	+1	+9	-1	110	95	104
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	+1	+2	0	0	113	108	114
East North Central.....	+1	+5	0	+6	0	121	116	126
West North Central.....	+6	+8	+5	+2	+3	110	123	116
South Atlantic.....	+1	+3	+6	+4	+1	138	137	145
East South Central.....	0	+11	+7	+4	+10	138	131	135
West South Central.....	+7	+3	+8	+9	+8	134	127	133
Mountain.....	-1	+1	+2	+4	+1	121	115	119
Pacific.....	-2	+1	+2	+6	-1	123	113	123
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+3	+4	+6	+4	0	190	197	203
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	-11	+7	+6	0	188	177	198
East North Central.....	+20	+13	+9	+4	+4	164	173	183
West North Central.....	+6	+11	+9	+4	-3	226	235	250
South Atlantic.....	+3	+6	+5	+1	-1	196	202	215
East South Central.....	+11	+7	+7	+5	-2	210	221	231
West South Central.....	+7	-3	+5	+6	-2	249	241	258
Mountain.....	+1	-3	+9	-6	-2	236	253	243
Pacific.....	+2	+4	+4	+9	0	204	195	210
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-9	-6	-2	+4	0	152	129	143
New England.....	-14	-10	-11	-1	-4	168	140	158
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	-1	-1	+9	-2	122	99	118
East North Central.....	-13	-2	-9	+8	+3	171	138	163
West North Central.....	-11	-6	+2	+8	-3	169	139	163
South Atlantic.....	-10	-4	-3	-6	-1	154	145	149
East South Central.....	-11	-11	+2	+5	-1	147	124	149
West South Central.....	-16	-19	0	+1	-4	163	137	135
Mountain.....	-6	+4	+5	+20	+3	181	139	180
Pacific.....	-10	-6	+2	-3	+2	139	130	128
Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors...	-10	-2	0	+1	+2	184	170	170
New England.....	+2	+2	+5	+50	-1	138	88	138
Middle Atlantic.....	+10	-1	+1	-12	+2	147	174	141
East North Central.....	-14	+2	-1	+2	+5	212	181	196
West North Central.....	-12	-22	-9	+3	+2	224	185	179
South Atlantic.....	-3	+1	+5	+11	0	223	185	217
East South Central.....	-8	-5	-4	-3	+6	201	188	188
West South Central.....	-15	-16	-8	-7	-1	316	203	246
Pacific.....	+7	+2	+7	+17	+2	164	150	162
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-6	+14	0	+1	-1	174	167	209
New England.....	-13	+16	-1	-10	+1	204	212	291
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	+24	+1	-1	+1	177	169	215
East North Central.....	-2	+15	+4	+4	0	165	158	193
West North Central.....	+2	+4	+5	+17	-2	234	210	240
South Atlantic.....	-16	+7	-2	+10	-2	132	109	172
South Central.....	0	+13	-3	-12	-1	166	218	198
Pacific.....	-6	+2	0	+8	-1	161	142	187
Hardware wholesalers.....	-4	+3	-1	0	+1	238	230	243
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	-2	-4	-5	+1	260	231	267
East North Central.....	-6	+6	-1	0	0	228	221	242
West North Central.....	-5	+10	0	-8	-3	226	234	259
South Atlantic.....	-2	+9	+1	+1	+4	241	245	232
East South Central.....	+1	+7	-3	-7	+5	212	230	214
West South Central.....	+5	-4	-2	+7	0	254	253	240
Mountain.....	+4	+1	-5	+6	0	343	347	324
Pacific.....	-7	-2	0	+8	-1	240	206	245
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-7	+5	-3	0	0	196	180	207
New England.....	-12	-4	-7	+4	-3	207	146	202
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	+2	-4	+4	0	212	182	222
East North Central.....	-11	+17	-4	-1	0	180	164	207
West North Central.....	-5	+1	-5	+3	-1	224	205	231
South Atlantic.....	0	+4	+2	-2	-1	193	201	205
South Central.....	-3	-4	-2	-3	+1	180	185	174
Pacific.....	-16	+9	-6	-5	+3	227	183	225
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-12	+1	-11	-4	-4	99	95	106
New England.....	-16	0	-8	-8	-4	74	68	84
Middle Atlantic.....	-14	+6	-12	0	-2	74	69	84
East North Central.....	-7	+2	-12	-5	-7	104	100	111
West North Central.....	-10	+7	-9	-12	-6	114	95	117
South Atlantic.....	-6	+6	-4	+2	-2	71	67	76
South Central.....	+3	+3	-2	-2	-2	115	114	114
Pacific.....	-25	-1	-18	-1	-3	141	128	159

# UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS

EIGHT MONTHS 1957 COMPARED WITH EIGHT MONTHS 1956



UNITED STATES (+2)

Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

AUGUST 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	Aug. 1957 from--		8 mo. 1957 from 8 mo. 1956	Percent change, Aug. 1957 from--		Aug. 1957	Aug. 1956	July 1957
	Aug. 1956	July 1957		Aug. 1956	July 1957			
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	-6	+1	+2	+11	0	164	144	163
New England.....	+1	+4	+4	+10	+1	267	206	264
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	-3	+9	+5	+1	192	175	185
East North Central.....	-1	+1	+2	+9	+1	141	123	140
West North Central.....	+6	+20	-5	+29	+6	127	94	130
South Atlantic.....	+13	-5	+9	+9	-9	144	117	154
South Central.....	+12	-5	+6	+21	-2	148	133	148
Pacific.....	-7	0	-4	+10	-1	189	161	196
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	-2	+7	+4	0	92	93	93
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	-2	+3	0	+1	118	119	114
East North Central.....	+7	-1	+6	+7	+1	87	88	87
West North Central.....	-1	-3	+3	+8	-2	90	83	90
South Atlantic.....	0	-1	+5	+4	+1	106	100	111
East South Central.....	+8	+3	+6	-5	0	94	111	99
West South Central.....	+5	+6	+8	+7	+1	94	92	95
Mountain.....	+13	+9	+8	-3	+1	91	104	99
Pacific.....	+12	-6	+14	+5	0	73	78	71
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	-4	-3	+1	-10	-2	72	78	71
New England.....	+29	+8	+4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	-10	0	-19	-1	66	71	57
East North Central.....	+9	-5	+5	-8	-6	83	92	82
West North Central.....	-25	0	-1	-23	0	88	78	90
South Atlantic.....	+16	+5	+4	+21	-3	122	112	146
South Central.....	+3	+11	+9	-5	+6	73	85	80
Pacific.....	-2	-8	-1	-7	-3	60	70	58
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-4	-13	-5	0	-3	19	19	17
New England.....	+7	-14	+2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	-15	-2	+3	-7	9	8	8
East North Central.....	+3	-20	-2	-16	-13	13	18	13
West North Central.....	-2	-32	-8	-2	-2	37	36	31
South Atlantic.....	+7	+4	-1	+2	+6	23	25	22
South Central.....	+3	+9	-3	+18	+3	27	17	27
Pacific.....	-5	-18	-3	-8	+7	49	43	36
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+7	+5	+8	+14	+3	160	152	164
New England.....	+4	+3	+7	+3	0	128	151	132
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	+11	+6	+4	-2	145	148	163
East North Central.....	+2	+6	+7	+11	+4	163	144	164
West North Central.....	+3	+12	+7	+12	+1	156	143	164
South Atlantic.....	+5	+5	+7	+17	+6	175	158	172
East South Central.....	+7	+3	+9	+7	+5	162	167	161
West South Central.....	+7	+12	+8	+15	+4	191	173	212
Mountain.....	-8	-2	+6	+7	+3	228	192	202
Pacific.....	+4	+2	+9	+18	+5	135	127	131
Tobacco distributors.....	+2	0	+5	+9	+1	53	51	53
New England.....	+10	-3	+6	+25	+3	61	56	56
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+3	+6	-2	-4	49	51	54
East North Central.....	+4	-1	+7	+10	+2	54	46	52
West North Central.....	+10	-1	+3	+7	+3	57	53	57
South Atlantic.....	+7	+1	+8	+11	+5	48	48	48
South Central.....	0	0	+4	-7	-3	44	46	45
Pacific.....	+5	-2	+8	+16	+6	94	91	81
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-3	+28	0	-7	-4	196	167	213
New England.....	+6	+39	+1	+4	-4	136	148	183
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	+26	+2	-11	-3	158	164	194
East North Central.....	+11	+36	+7	+21	-4	160	140	226
West North Central.....	-11	+20	-4	-11	-10	197	216	260
South Atlantic.....	-8	+37	-4	-4	-1	191	181	307
South Central.....	+4	+55	-2	-2	-3	180	198	266
Pacific.....	-3	+12	+5	+5	0	187	161	218

X Insufficient data to show separately.

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its sales by commodity lines as reported to the Bureau of the Census. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

#### DURABLE GOODS

##### Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

##### Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

##### Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

##### Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

##### Lumber, construction materials distributors

**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

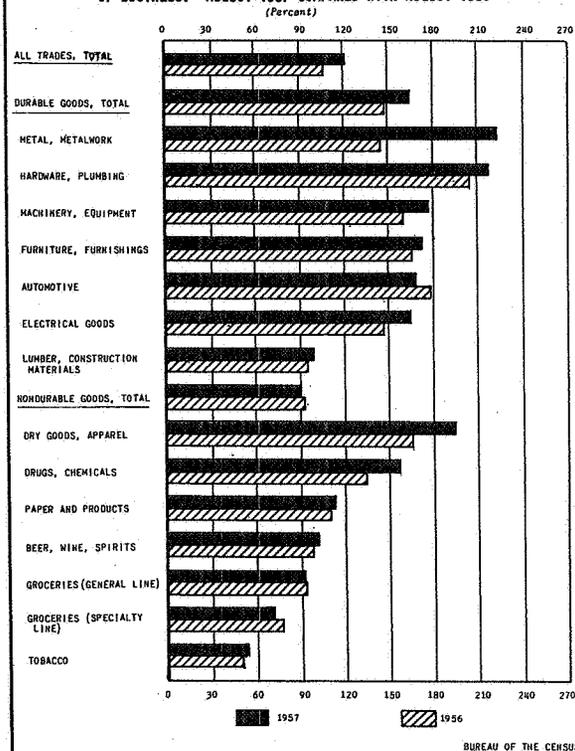
**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

STOCKS--SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: AUGUST 1957 COMPARED WITH AUGUST 1956



##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other machinery, equipment supplies distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general- or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

NONDURABLE GOODSGrocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, type-writer and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, type-writer ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

SEPTEMBER 1957

FOR RELEASE  
NOVEMBER 14, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

September 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were estimated at \$9.8 billion, a decrease of 4 percent from August 1957 sales, but no change from September sales a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first nine months of 1957, totaling \$88.3 billion, were 2 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1956.

Durable goods trades, with sales of \$4.2 billion in September 1957, showed small declines from the previous month (2%) as well as a year ago (3%). The nondurable goods trades, with September sales of \$5.6 billion, reported a 5 percent decrease from August 1957, but were up 2 percent over last September. While sales in the nondurable goods trades at \$49.9 billion, were 5 percent higher than in the first 9 months of 1956, sales in the durable goods trades, at \$38.4 billion were off 2 percent during this period.

Jewelry wholesalers, up 16 percent, registered the most notable increase over August 1957 sales. Substantial declines from last month were shown by beer, ale distributors (19%), air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors (17%), waste materials dealers (17%) and fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers (13%). Most large decreases from September 1957 sales were reported by durable goods trades such as nonferrous metals distributors (18%), iron, steel products distributors (16%), waste materials dealers (16%) and lumber millwork wholesalers (15%). Most of the year-ago gains occurred in the nondurable goods trades such as book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers (20%), drug wholesalers (17%) and confectionery wholesalers (17%). However, professional equipment, supplies distributors, among the durable goods trades, showed a 16 percent increase over last year sales.

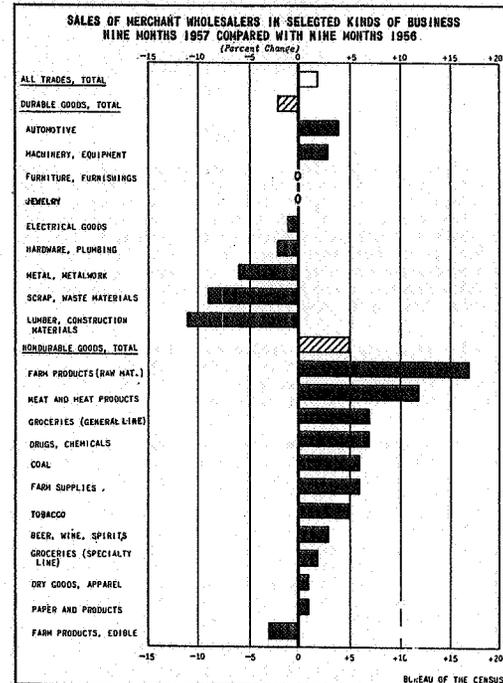
Sales in all geographic divisions fell below their August levels, the sharpest decline, 11 percent being reported in the West South Central Division. Compared with a year ago, the West North Central Division noted the principal gain, 8%.

### Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of September were up slightly (1%) over August and were 4 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Stocks in the durable goods trades were 7 percent higher than last September, while nondurable goods were up only 1 percent.

The September 1957 stock-sales ratio of 135 percent for all merchant wholesalers was 6 points above the August ratio and 2 points higher than the ratio for September a year ago. The September stock-sales ratio for durable goods trades was 178 compared to the nondurable goods trades ratio of 101.

Most trades reported little or no change from the August inventory level. Coal wholesalers, up 8 per-



cent, noted the largest change. Significant changes from a year ago were indicated by iron, steel products distributors, up 48 percent, and by piece goods converters and waste materials dealers whose inventories were off 14 and 13 percent, respectively.

By geographic division, changes from previous month inventory levels ranged from a 3 percent decline in the East South Central Division to a 5 percent increase in the South Atlantic Division. However, all but two divisions reflected higher inventories than a year ago. The West North Central and East South Central Divisions reported no change from September 1957 stocks.

### General

This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales of merchant wholesalers by kind of business from January 1956 through August 1957. These data are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 2 and 6. Also included in this report are sales and inventory trends and stock-sales ratios by kind of business, for the United States as a whole and by geographic division.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURE, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

1. Scope of Survey

This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers, which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade, and excludes other types of wholesale trade such as manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; agents and brokers and assemblers of farm products. All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are defined in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial and distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials." Firms which, in addition to merchant wholesale establishments, operate other types of establishments, e.g., retail, manufacturing, etc., report in this survey only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind-of-business classification shown in this report is included on pages 11 and 12.

2. Sample Design

Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954. The sample is supplemented twice a year for new firms on the BOASI lists.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales size, and (c) whether geographic division trends are to be shown for the trade. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

3. Published Data

Sales.—This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 1) and sales trends (percent changes) derived from these estimates (Table 2). Sales trends are shown in Table 2 for some detailed kind of businesses for which estimates are not shown separately in Table 1. For these kinds of business (identified by \* in Table 2) the trends are based only on the weighted sales of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (Table 3). In Table 3 the trends for geographic division are based on weighted sales of identical firms; however, sales trends at the United States level are derived from the dollar volume estimates shown in Table 1.

Sales include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are also included.

Inventories.—This report presents inventory trends by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). These inventory trends are based on the weighted inventories of identical firms (i.e., firm reporting data for each of the months compared).

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month.

Stock-sales ratios.—These are presented by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing weighted stocks, at cost, by weighted sales for only those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales in all three periods compared. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade. Stock-sales ratios for previous months shown in the current report may differ from those published in previous reports since the reporting panel varies.

4. Estimating Procedure

Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection in the sample. Large firms are selected with certainty, this 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.

For most firms reporting, data are available for each of three months (current, previous, and year ago). New firms reporting provide data for at least two months (current and previous). Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight (the reciprocal of its probability of selection) and the results summarized to obtain the dollar volume estimates, percentage changes and stock-sales ratios shown in this report.

Volume estimates.—The summation of the weighted reports of sales for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months—the current month and the preceding month. However, the published estimate is a "composite" of two estimates (a) the unbiased estimate for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate obtained by multiplying the "composite" estimate for the previous month by the ratio of the current month unbiased to previous month unbiased estimates obtained from the summation of the current reports. The unbiased estimate (a) receives a weight of .3 while the ratio estimate (b) receives a weight of .7. The resulting weighted average provides a "composite" estimate of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than either of the two estimates taken alone. The estimates shown for January-June 1956 were not obtained in this manner. Since unbiased estimates were not available for this period from the new sample which was introduced in July 1956, monthly estimates prior to that date were calculated by dividing the "composite" estimates for January-June 1957 by the year-to-year ratio for each of these months obtained from weighted reports of identical firms.

Percentage changes.—Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report, viz., (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates (2) percent changes based on the weighted data from identical firms (i.e., those reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). The percentage changes based on identicals however, should not be regarded as an unbiased measure of percentage change. Since only those establishments reporting in both periods compared are included, the net change due to births and deaths is not reflected in the ratios shown.

5. Reliability of the Data

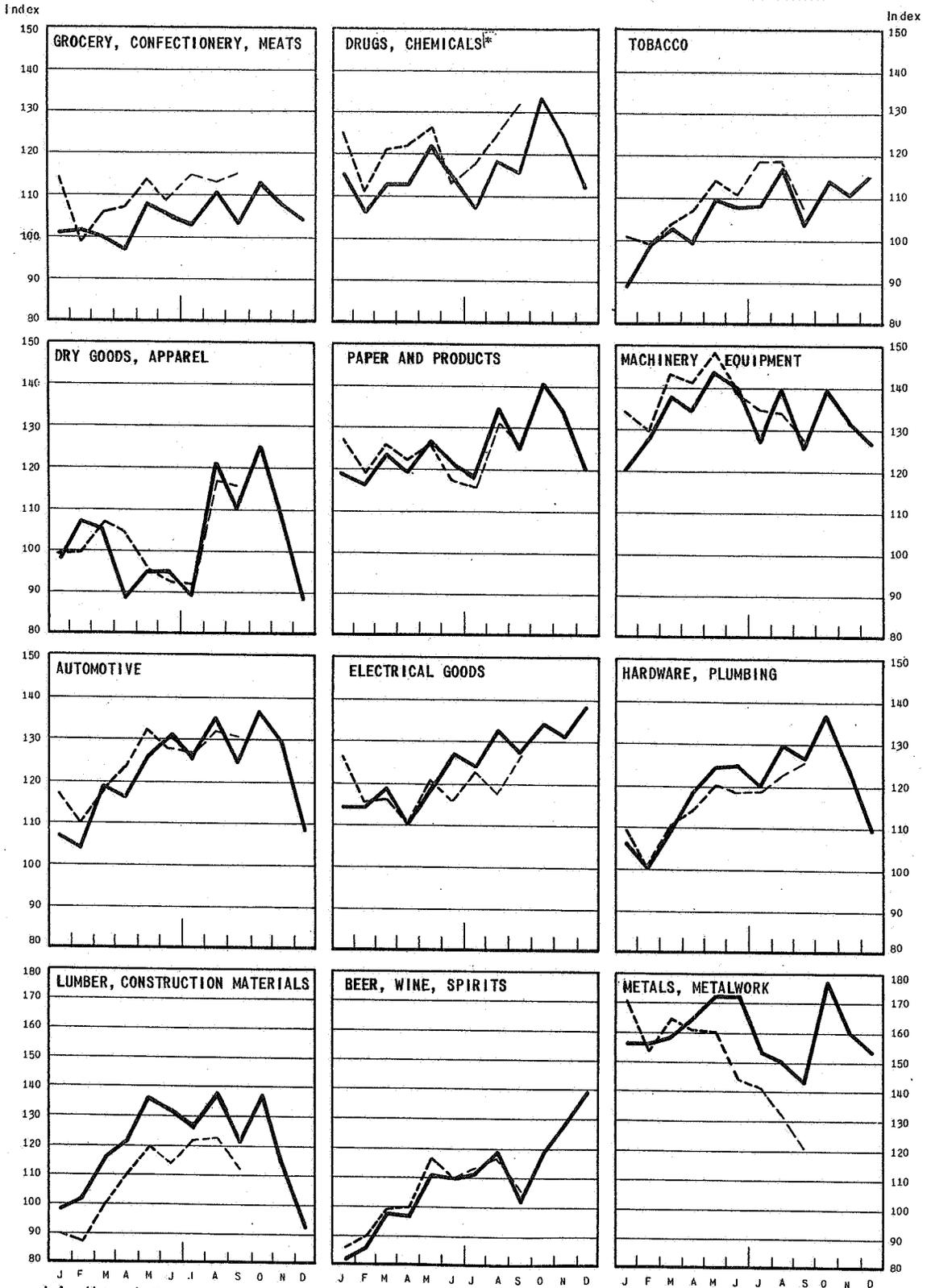
Estimates based on a sample are subject to sampling variability and thus are not expected to be in exact agreement with a complete census taken with the same enumeration procedures. For all trades combined, the sampling variability of the "composite" sales estimates for any individual month, is less than one percent at the one sigma level. That is to say, the chances are about two out of three that the estimated sales shown would differ by less than one percent from the results of a complete enumeration. The variability of estimates for kind-of-business groups and individual kinds of business is generally higher than for total merchant wholesale trade but for most trades the sampling variability is less than 5 percent at the one sigma level. Table IA presents these sampling variabilities of the estimates for February, March, April and May 1957. Since these measures are also subject to sampling variability they should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. The sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals has not been evaluated. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

These measures do not include biases that may arise from other nonsampling errors, such as failure of respondent to submit correct figures or to submit a report in time for tabulation. In preparing the dollar volume estimates, an estimate is included for those firms that fail to respond. To the extent that the estimates for these firms may differ from the actual figures, nonresponse affects the reliability of the dollar volume estimate. As a result, dollar volume estimates are not published separately in a few trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 11 percent of the total sales in May 1957 were imputed for nonresponse.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—KINDS OF BUSINESS  
1956 AND 1957

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

1956 = ———  
1957 = - - - -



July through November 1956 revised.

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1956 - SEPTEMBER 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1956												Total 1956
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,032	9,172	9,571	9,296	10,144	9,894	9,408	10,498	9,790	11,211	10,435	9,944	118,395
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	3,994	4,085	4,372	4,346	4,680	4,589	4,219	4,638	4,331	4,895	4,501	4,192	52,842
Automotive wholesalers.....	353	344	396	384	417	434	411	436	410	453	428	358	4,824
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers....	280	276	318	306	333	351	344	365	344	386	366	296	3,965
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors..	603	602	627	580	616	668	641	690	661	700	692	727	7,807
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors....	272	285	297	295	319	350	326	336	317	338	328	344	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	331	317	330	285	297	318	315	354	344	362	364	383	4,000
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	184	193	212	194	199	197	181	223	216	250	234	210	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers..	125	133	147	133	134	131	118	145	144	170	162	139	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	387	366	404	432	455	458	441	477	463	501	453	398	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	175	176	184	198	206	209	189	205	196	212	198	179	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	212	190	220	234	249	249	252	273	266	289	255	219	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	540	560	636	669	743	725	705	769	675	759	624	511	7,916
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	337	338	361	373	410	398	392	433	363	402	327	279	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	203	222	275	296	333	327	313	336	312	357	297	232	3,503
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,004	1,073	1,158	1,120	1,210	1,170	1,063	1,173	1,048	1,170	1,104	1,054	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	506	541	574	523	569	522	493	546	483	566	564	548	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors..	70	74	78	74	79	79	83	92	85	92	90	84	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	105	103	102	108	116	111	97	112	111	116	104	98	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors....	438	437	442	460	483	483	438	428	405	501	447	428	5,390
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	276	282	303	312	325	325	306	287	274	346	306	269	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	162	155	139	148	158	158	132	141	131	155	141	159	1,779
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	425	439	419	434	470	385	280	361	366	457	420	408	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	267	275	261	267	304	248	167	231	238	306	291	283	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	158	164	158	167	166	137	113	130	128	151	129	125	1,726
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,038	5,087	5,199	4,950	5,464	5,305	5,189	5,860	5,459	6,316	5,934	5,752	65,553
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,459	1,479	1,442	1,405	1,560	1,517	1,498	1,606	1,489	1,630	1,556	1,505	18,146
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	613	624	631	602	667	648	620	669	639	690	657	630	7,690
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	561	583	537	528	587	588	585	620	553	606	578	571	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	46	48	50	45	48	46	45	50	47	52	54	51	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	239	224	224	230	258	235	248	267	250	282	267	253	2,977
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	354	361	384	393	451	469	465	416	345	376	397	409	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	132	116	122	120	131	131	124	133	120	127	148	149	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	222	245	262	273	320	338	341	283	225	249	249	260	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	385	406	459	454	532	520	532	565	482	572	606	657	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	151	152	166	177	220	229	265	270	197	199	182	198	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	234	254	293	277	312	291	267	295	285	373	424	459	3,764
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers....	322	299	316	316	342	319	301	334	326	375	348	315	3,913
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)..	204	191	196	189	202	192	185	208	206	231	223	202	2,429
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers...	95	87	96	100	111	97	89	98	93	116	100	92	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	24	27	29	30	27	28	27	28	25	21	310
Tobacco distributors.....	238	264	275	264	295	289	288	314	275	304	298	308	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	464	505	496	448	450	450	420	576	524	594	520	419	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers....	149	172	176	144	154	137	159	238	206	228	201	146	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	183	192	184	182	183	197	170	221	203	223	197	162	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	293	286	306	294	313	299	291	332	309	347	331	296	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	253	247	265	253	273	255	252	287	265	294	280	248	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	70	75	93	96	92	99	98	117	116	133	127	116	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	110	103	87	87	87	99	91	120	118	130	125	117	1,274

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS<sup>1</sup>—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS—Continued

JANUARY 1956 - SEPTEMBER 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

	1957									9 months	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	1957	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,945	9,097	9,744	9,834	10,168	9,610	9,916	<sup>r</sup> 10,197	9,814	<sup>r</sup> 88,325	86,805
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	4,278	3,981	4,292	4,314	4,450	4,243	4,267	4,329	4,222	38,377	39,254
Automotive wholesalers.....	389	366	392	408	438	424	421	439	434	3,720	3,585
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	321	298	319	334	362	359	363	377	373	3,106	2,917
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors....	665	609	613	588	623	614	650	624	673	5,659	5,688
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	301	291	293	297	308	315	325	307	332	2,769	2,797
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	364	318	320	291	315	299	325	317	341	2,890	2,891
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	189	189	205	212	200	193	185	210	216	1,799	1,799
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers....	127	128	140	144	135	131	120	135	142	1,202	1,210
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	398	365	405	420	443	435	436	452	463	3,817	3,883
Hardware wholesalers.....	184	173	191	196	205	196	192	197	201	1,735	1,738
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	214	192	214	224	238	239	244	255	262	2,082	2,145
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	496	476	551	609	659	628	667	675	613	5,374	6,022
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	295	259	307	330	343	329	343	342	307	2,855	3,405
Construction materials distributors.....	201	217	244	279	316	299	324	333	305	2,518	2,617
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,121	1,081	1,194	1,182	1,234	1,166	1,131	1,121	1,071	10,301	10,019
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	590	547	593	540	560	512	509	512	490	4,853	4,757
Professional equipment, supplies distributors....	78	77	83	85	85	84	89	96	99	776	714
Service establishment supply houses.....	113	110	113	112	122	116	106	115	113	1,020	965
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	478	430	459	452	448	404	396	368	339	3,774	4,014
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	317	287	312	317	311	275	272	252	230	2,573	2,690
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	161	143	147	135	137	129	124	116	108	1,200	1,324
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	476	393	393	369	328	308	320	361	319	3,267	3,579
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	326	266	263	236	199	193	208	232	212	2,135	2,258
Waste materials dealers.....	150	127	130	133	129	115	112	129	107	1,132	1,321
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,667	5,116	5,452	5,520	5,718	5,367	5,649	<sup>r</sup> 5,868	5,591	<sup>r</sup> 49,948	47,551
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,642	1,433	1,530	1,544	1,630	1,579	1,660	1,630	1,633	14,281	13,455
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	707	627	655	676	698	676	703	692	701	6,135	5,713
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	611	521	566	557	591	591	610	593	600	5,240	5,142
Confectionery wholesalers.....	52	49	53	50	52	49	50	51	55	461	425
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	272	236	256	261	289	263	297	294	278	2,446	2,175
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	357	341	352	394	429	418	442	413	375	3,521	3,638
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	121	106	109	124	127	116	129	142	138	1,112	1,129
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	236	235	243	270	302	302	313	271	237	2,409	2,500
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	408	425	468	472	551	520	543	556	501	4,444	4,335
Beer, ale distributors.....	158	158	172	193	227	234	269	254	205	1,870	1,827
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	250	267	296	279	324	286	274	302	297	2,575	2,508
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	350	312	340	344	354	317	331	350	373	3,071	2,875
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)...	224	199	213	208	214	196	211	222	241	1,928	1,773
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	103	92	102	108	110	93	90	99	103	900	866
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	25	28	30	28	30	29	28	242	236
Tobacco distributors.....	271	266	280	285	307	297	319	319	288	2,632	2,502
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	468	472	507	491	457	440	434	<sup>r</sup> 567	549	4,385	4,333
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	145	160	184	182	156	136	151	<sup>r</sup> 236	212	1,562	1,535
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	192	183	194	190	187	193	186	220	223	1,768	1,715
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	313	294	310	302	312	291	287	323	310	2,742	2,723
Paper wholesalers.....	268	252	265	258	271	250	250	279	267	2,360	2,350
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	74	83	96	99	101	104	111	119	125	912	856
Coal wholesalers.....	120	102	106	105	103	109	99	106	102	952	902

<sup>r</sup> Revised<sup>1</sup> Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

Table 1A.--SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months	Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months
	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957		Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957
	(percent)				(percent)		(percent)				(percent)
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	Grocery, confectionery, meat.....	2	2	1	2	2
Automotive.....	3	3	3	3	2	General-line grocery.....	2	2	2	2	2
Automotive equipment, tire-tube....	3	3	4	3	2	Specialty-line grocery.....	4	4	4	4	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances..	2	2	2	2	1	Confectionery.....	4	3	3	3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies.....	2	2	2	3	2	Meat, meat products.....	4	5	4	4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts.....	2	4	4	3	2	Farm products (edible).....	3	3	3	3	2
Furniture, home furnishings.....	3	3	4	4	2	Poultry, poultry products.....	5	3	4	5	2
Home furnishings, floor coverings..	4	4	4	4	2	Fresh fruit, vegetables.....	5	4	4	3	2
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, wine, distilled spirits.....	2	2	2	2	2
Hardware.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, ale.....	4	3	4	3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies.....	3	4	4	4	2	Wine, distilled spirits.....	3	3	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials.....	3	3	3	2	2	Drugs, chemicals, allied products...	2	2	2	2	1
Lumber, millwork.....	5	6	6	5	3	Drugs (general and specialty lines)	2	2	2	2	2
Construction materials.....	3	3	3	4	2	Industrial chemicals, explosives..	5	4	5	4	2
Machinery, equipment, supplies.....	2	3	2	2	2	Paint, varnish.....	4	4	3	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies.....	3	5	4	4	3	Tobacco.....	2	3	2	2	1
Professional equipment, supplies...	3	3	4	3	2	Dry goods, apparel.....	3	3	3	3	2
Service establishment supply houses	5	3	4	4	3	Clothing, furnishings, footwear...	5	5	5	5	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)....	2	3	3	3	3	Dry goods (general and specialty-lines).....	6	6	6	5	3
Iron, steel and products.....	3	5	4	4	4	Paper, allied products.....	3	2	2	2	1
Nonferrous metals.....	3	3	2	4	1	Paper.....	3	2	2	2	1
Scrap, waste materials.....	2	2	3	3	2	Amusement, sporting goods.....	6	4	4	4	4
Iron, steel scrap.....	3	3	4	4	3	Coal wholesalers.....	5	6	6	6	2
Waste materials.....	4	4	6	6	3						

Note: The above table provides approximate measures of the sampling variability of the dollar volume estimates of sales and of the ratio between sales for the two consecutive months specified. The ratio between sales for two consecutive months generally has a smaller sampling error than the level estimates in those months. These sampling errors are themselves subject to sampling variability and thus should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. Differences from month to month may be due to this error in the estimates of sampling error. Differences may also result from seasonal or cyclical fluctuation in the sales of individual firms (see page 2, for statement on nonsampling errors).

The sampling errors shown above can be converted to a range by the following computation: Multiply the sampling error by the estimate (whether it is a dollar volume estimate or a ratio). Add and subtract the resulting product from the published estimate. The resulting range is expected to include the "expected value" (that is, the value which could be obtained from a complete enumeration) about two out of three times. Doubling the sampling error and repeating the above process will give a range which will include the "expected value" about 19 out of 20 times.

To illustrate the computation of these ranges for monthly dollar volume estimates, consider the estimate made for all durable goods in March 1957. The published estimate is \$4,292 million while the sampling error shown for this month is 1.4 percent (or .014). Multiplying \$4,292 million by .014, we obtain \$60 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between \$4,232 and \$4,352 million. Doubling the given sampling error gives us the limits, \$4,172 to \$4,412 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from February 1957 to March 1957 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing \$4,292 million by \$3,981 million, is 1.08 (it can also be expressed as an 8% increase). The sampling error of this statistic is 0.7 percent (.007). Multiplying 1.08 by .007, we obtain .008 as the standard error of the ratio. There is a probability of two out of three that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.07 to 1.09 while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.06 to 1.10.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS  
SEPTEMBER 1957

Kind of business	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Sept. 1957 from--		September 1957	September 1956	August 1957
	September 1957 from--		9 mo. 1957 from 9 mo. 1956	September 1956	August 1957			
	September 1956	August 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0	-4	+2	+4	+1	135	133	129
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-3	-2	-2	+7	+1	178	163	171
Automotive wholesalers.....	+6	-1	+4	+6	0	199	203	194
Motor-vehicle distributors*.....	+10	-6	-6	+13	-4	134	133	131
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+8	-1	+6	+5	+1	215	219	209
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	+2	+8	-1	+2	+3	164	161	171
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	+5	+8	-1	+2	+3	157	154	162
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-1	+8	0	+3	+4	173	169	180
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	0	+3	0	+1	0	181	181	194
Furniture wholesalers*.....	+3	-2	+1	-1	-2	178	188	186
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	-1	+5	-1	+2	0	183	178	197
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	0	+2	-2	0	-1	206	204	211
Hardware wholesalers.....	+3	+2	0	-2	-2	227	233	232
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-2	+3	-3	+3	+1	186	177	191
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-9	-9	-11	-2	-1	129	111	117
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-15	-10	-16	-2	-1	36	121	126
Construction materials distributors.....	-2	-8	-4	-2	0	121	101	107
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+2	-4	+3	+4	+1	188	177	175
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*.....	-3	-17	0	-3	-4	155	162	134
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*.....	+5	-8	+5	+4	+1	179	179	177
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	+1	-4	+2	+7	+2	184	159	165
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+16	+3	+9	+5	-3	180	193	178
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*.....	+12	+1	+9	-5	-4	194	215	198
Service establishment supply houses.....	+1	-6	+6	+12	+3	87	132	85
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-16	-8	-6	+42	0	241	162	219
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-16	-9	-4	+48	+1	293	192	261
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-18	-7	-9	+9	-2	106	89	103
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-13	-12	-9	0	-1	63	54	56
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-11	-9	-5	+14	-4	52	41	49
Waste materials dealers.....	-16	-17	-14	-13	+2	81	76	66
Jewelry wholesalers*.....	0	+16	0	0	+5	237	247	253
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	+2	-5	+5	+1	+1	101	106	95
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+10	+1	+6	+1	+1	71	76	68
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+10	+1	+7	+3	+2	94	100	91
Voluntary groups*.....	+14	0	+7	0	+3	86	95	84
Retailer-cooperative*.....	+11	-1	+12	+5	+3	85	88	79
Nonaffiliated*.....	+8	-3	+5	+5	+1	109	113	108
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+8	+1	+2	-4	0	68	69	65
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+17	+8	+8	+14	+7	49	60	47
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+11	-4	+12	-3	0	18	23	18
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	+9	-9	-3	-9	+4	21	24	19
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	+15	-3	-2	-8	+2	21	26	20
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	+5	-13	-4	-10	+6	21	23	18
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+4	-10	+3	+1	+2	118	119	106
Beer, ale distributors.....	+4	-19	+2	-7	-3	62	66	51
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+4	-2	+3	+4	+4	161	162	160
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+14	+7	+7	+7	+3	133	136	129
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+17	+9	+9	+10	+4	150	153	145
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	+11	+4	+4	-3	+1	89	95	89
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	+4	-3	+3	+2	0	148	159	141
Tobacco distributors.....	+5	-10	+5	+4	+4	63	66	54
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+5	-3	+1	-2	-2	173	184	176
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	+3	-10	+2	0	-3	173	189	172
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+1	+1	+3	+3	-3	157	153	154
Piece goods converters*.....	+6	+3	-1	-14	-1	204	232	236
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	0	-4	+1	+3	-1	112	114	108
Paper wholesalers.....	+1	-4	0	+2	-2	109	113	106
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*.....	+4	-2	+5	+10	+1	132	123	126
Farm products (raw materials) merchants <sup>2</sup> *.....	+6	-10	+17	0	0	153	153	140
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+5	-5	+8	+3	+1	102	111	95
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	+8	+5	+7	+14	-2	158	152	165
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*.....	+20	-7	+15	+19	0	128	131	119
Coal wholesalers.....	-14	-4	+6	-2	+8	136	121	132
Farm supplies wholesalers*.....	+5	0	+6	-3	+6	112	129	111

\* See text, page 2.

<sup>2</sup> See page 10 for August 1957 revisions.

Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

SEPTEMBER 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (See map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	September 1957 from--		9 mo. 1957 from 9 mo. 1956	Percent change, Sept. 1957 from--		September 1957	September 1956	August 1957
	September 1956	August 1957		September 1956	August 1957			
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0	-4	+2	+4	+1	135	133	129
New England.....	+2	-3	+1	+3	+1	136	131	129
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	-4	+2	+2	0	118	114	112
East North Central.....	+1	-4	0	+6	+1	124	122	118
West North Central.....	+8	-2	+3	0	+1	133	146	130
South Atlantic.....	+4	-2	+4	+3	+5	155	148	144
East South Central.....	+2	-5	+7	0	-3	164	168	163
West South Central.....	+5	-11	+8	+11	0	166	156	152
Mountain.....	+2	-8	+2	+9	+3	138	137	127
Pacific.....	+1	-3	+2	+6	0	146	138	140
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+8	-1	+6	+5	+1	215	219	209
New England.....	+5	-2	+9	+3	+4	241	245	228
Middle Atlantic.....	-2	-2	+6	0	-4	221	192	212
East North Central.....	+4	-4	+9	+2	+1	142	161	138
West North Central.....	+20	0	+11	+8	-1	245	272	251
South Atlantic.....	-4	-2	+4	+5	0	239	222	233
East South Central.....	+13	-1	+8	+12	+3	223	229	220
West South Central.....	+16	-7	+6	+7	+3	232	262	213
Mountain.....	+30	-4	+11	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	+4	+2	+4	-9	-3	227	240	233
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	+5	+8	-1	+2	+3	157	154	162
New England.....	(X)	+10	(X)	0	+1	168	140	183
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	+12	-1	+6	+2	154	131	153
East North Central.....	+9	+4	-7	+5	+3	149	151	158
West North Central.....	+4	+7	+2	+2	+3	179	184	194
South Atlantic.....	+12	+7	-2	-1	+7	151	151	152
East South Central.....	(X)	-3	(X)	(X)	+8	212	(X)	189
West South Central.....	+14	0	+1	-2	+3	178	207	186
Mountain.....	+15	+5	+7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-1	+9	+1	-8	+3	140	150	149
Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.....	-1	+8	0	+3	+4	173	169	180
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	+7	0	-1	+8	169	162	175
East North Central.....	0	+7	-1	-3	+1	166	171	191
West North Central.....	-10	-3	-9	-1	+7	178	168	168
South Atlantic.....	+9	-1	+6	+13	+3	188	198	188
West South Central.....	-2	-11	-7	+8	+6	215	172	177
Pacific.....	+1	+7	+6	+16	+4	204	201	222
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	0	+3	0	+1	0	181	181	194
New England.....	-19	-19	-2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+5	+1	-5	-2	165	171	198
East North Central.....	+6	+1	+4	+6	-1	162	165	175
West North Central.....	+10	+1	+6	0	-1	150	169	157
South Atlantic.....	+11	+4	-1	+11	+4	210	192	205
East South Central.....	+12	+7	0	-5	-2	201	198	206
Mountain.....	-18	-9	-5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-8	-1	-1	+5	+3	186	164	178
Hardware wholesalers.....	+3	+2	0	-2	-2	227	233	232
New England.....	-2	+9	+4	+6	+2	173	165	184
Middle Atlantic.....	+10	+4	-3	+10	+3	217	214	227
East North Central.....	+3	+9	-1	-6	-4	204	219	216
West North Central.....	+4	+2	0	-5	-2	221	241	233
South Atlantic.....	-1	0	+1	+4	-2	251	244	263
East South Central.....	0	-7	-2	-6	-3	217	235	212
West South Central.....	+1	-4	-2	+2	-1	278	275	265
Mountain.....	-12	+1	-5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-10	+6	-1	-6	-4	247	237	237
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-2	+3	-3	+3	+1	186	177	191
New England.....	-15	+1	-8	(X)	+4	272	204	254
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	+2	-5	-2	-1	161	152	163
East North Central.....	+3	+4	-3	+16	-1	159	143	170
West North Central.....	+6	+12	-3	-2	-3	192	186	188
South Atlantic.....	-13	-9	0	(X)	+1	179	171	165
East South Central.....	-15	+6	-9	-4	0	131	116	137
West South Central.....	+16	-1	+2	-10	+1	248	305	247
Mountain.....	+5	-5	-6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-6	+11	-4	-4	+3	187	207	183
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-9	-9	-11	-2	-1	129	111	117
New England.....	(X)	0	(X)	+5	-3	98	94	96
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	-14	-11	-5	0	135	119	117
East North Central.....	-12	-5	-12	-12	-3	111	108	102
West North Central.....	-1	-1	-9	-3	-8	112	116	127
South Atlantic.....	-1	-10	-3	0	+2	144	137	120
West South Central.....	-3	-11	-3	-4	+3	120	120	110
Pacific.....	-19	-12	-18	+10	+3	112	80	96

See Page 10 for footnotes.

# UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS  
 NINE MONTHS 1957 COMPARED WITH NINE MONTHS 1956

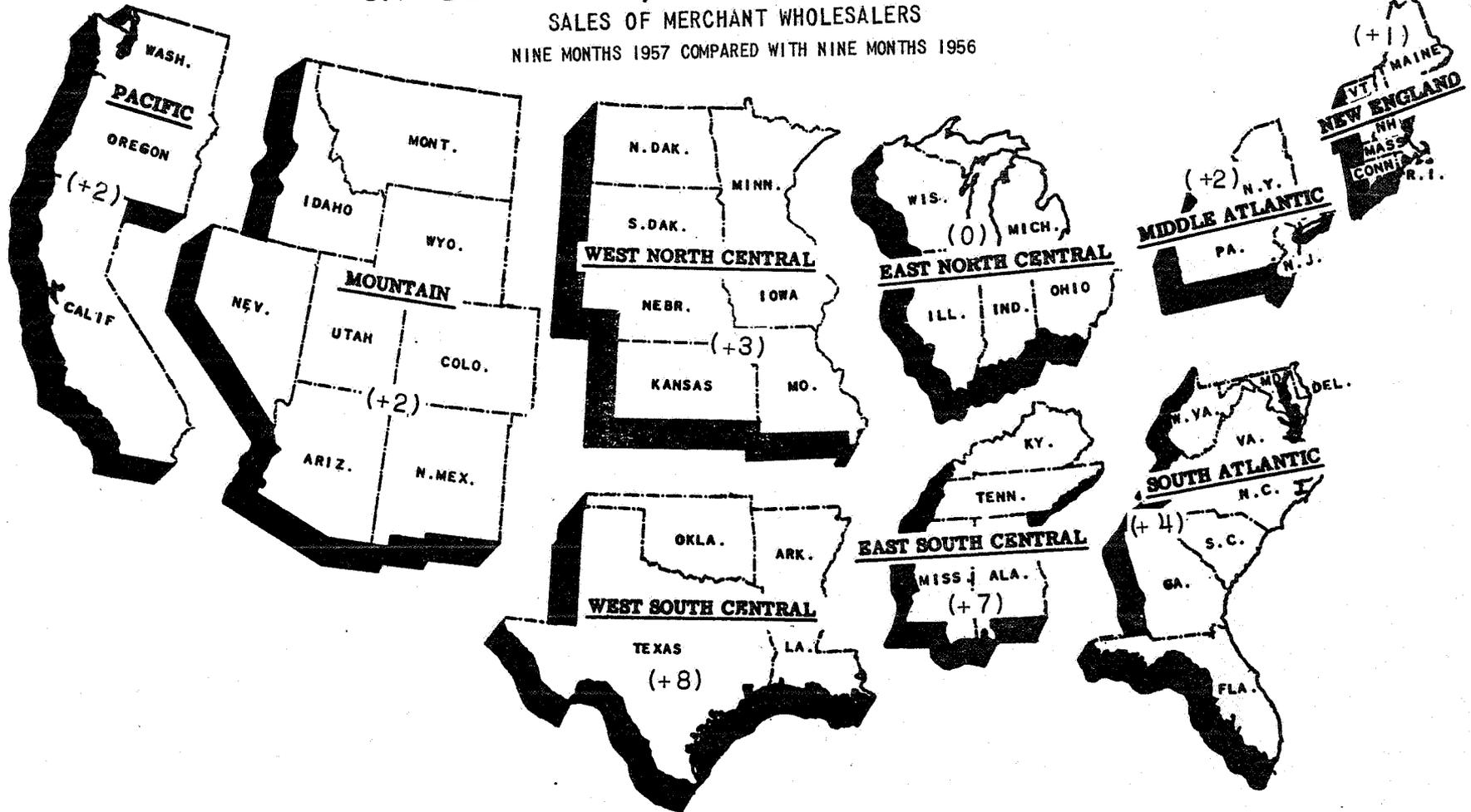


Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

SEPTEMBER 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	Sept. 1957 from--		9 mo. 1957 from 9 mo. 1956	Percent change, Sept. 1957 from--		Sept. 1957	Sept. 1956	Aug. 1957
	Sept. 1956	Aug. 1957		Sept. 1956	Aug. 1957			
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	+1	-4	+2	+7	+2	184	159	165
East North Central.....	-4	-5	+1	-4	+2	145	128	133
West North Central.....	(X)	-14	(X)	-5	-2	136	192	146
South Atlantic.....	-8	-18	+8	+24	+2	149	137	128
West South Central.....	+1	-6	+4	+18	+1	184	156	170
Pacific.....	-14	-5	-5	+14	+2	187	154	187
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+10	+1	+7	+3	+2	94	100	91
New England.....	+9	-4	+6	-4	+4	101	110	98
Middle Atlantic.....	+12	-3	+4	+3	-1	93	99	94
East North Central.....	+11	+2	+7	+2	+3	87	95	85
West North Central.....	+10	-1	+4	+5	+4	87	92	82
South Atlantic.....	+6	-4	+5	+2	+4	100	108	95
East South Central.....	+15	-5	+7	+7	+3	107	114	99
West South Central.....	+5	+3	+8	+4	-1	118	122	118
Mountain.....	-8	-14	+6	-2	+2	121	117	101
Pacific.....	+22	+2	+15	+10	-2	72	82	76
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+8	+1	+2	-4	0	68	69	65
Middle Atlantic.....	-13	-3	-1	-6	-1	67	62	67
East North Central.....	+2	-10	+6	+7	+2	71	74	58
West North Central.....	+18	-6	0	+10	-2	49	52	50
South Atlantic.....	+2	-4	+4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-3	-10	-2	-15	-3	68	78	68
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	+5	-13	-4	-10	+6	21	23	18
New England.....	0	-27	+2	-1	+3	13	14	9
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	-20	-2	-10	+4	11	12	9
East North Central.....	+7	-12	-1	+12	+7	22	23	19
West North Central.....	(X)	-8	(X)	-1	+7	32	46	31
South Atlantic.....	+22	-3	+1	-5	+22	17	21	14
East South Central.....	+5	-9	0	+1	+9	21	21	16
West South Central.....	+9	-17	-15	(X)	+8	22	29	18
Mountain.....	+8	-9	-2	-11	+3	25	30	24
Pacific.....								
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+17	+9	+9	+10	+4	150	153	145
New England.....	+9	+11	+7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+12	+16	+7	+1	+5	152	160	156
East North Central.....	+13	+6	+8	+9	+2	155	156	158
West North Central.....	+18	+10	+8	+17	+11	163	161	156
South Atlantic.....	+13	+2	+8	+18	+6	187	184	181
East South Central.....	+9	-1	+9	0	+7	206	237	189
West South Central.....	+17	0	+9	+21	+1	187	181	180
Mountain.....	-1	+6	+5	+15	+7	203	140	201
Pacific.....	+12	+1	+9	+13	+5	161	158	153
Tobacco distributors.....	+5	-10	+5	+4	+4	63	66	54
New England.....	+10	-15	+7	+12	-2	57	56	53
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	-13	+6	+6	+6	75	74	60
East North Central.....	+11	-9	+7	+9	+5	56	59	49
West North Central.....	+4	-6	+3	-2	+2	63	68	54
South Atlantic.....	+10	-5	+8	+3	+3	58	61	52
East South Central.....	+6	-10	+5	+9	+5	72	75	61
West South Central.....	+5	-12	+5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Mountain.....	+12	-5	+8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....								
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+5	-3	+1	-2	-2	173	184	176
New England.....	+3	-9	+1	-12	-2	146	156	132
Middle Atlantic.....	+7	-2	+3	-2	-3	177	176	180
East North Central.....	(X)	+9	(X)	+7	-6	147	189	162
West North Central.....	(X)	+9	(X)	-6	0	179	207	183
South Atlantic.....	0	-2	-4	0	-15	200	224	222
East South Central.....	+12	-17	-2	(X)	+1	171	213	134
West South Central.....	+17	-8	+7	-12	+3	142	173	153
Mountain.....								
Pacific.....								

X Withheld due to extreme variation of reported data.

<sup>1</sup> See text, page 2<sup>2</sup> Percent changes shown in Table 2, August 1957 report, for farm products (raw materials)merchants should be changed from +17 to +1 in column "August 1957 from August 1956;" from +16 to +1 in column "August 1957 from July 1957;" and from +22 to +19 in column 8 months 1957 from 8 months 1956. The August 1957 stock-sales ratio should be changed from 97 to 118.

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its sales by commodity lines as reported to the Bureau of the Census. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

#### DURABLE GOODS

##### Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

##### Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electronic parts and equipment; and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

##### Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

##### Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

##### Lumber, construction materials distributors

**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

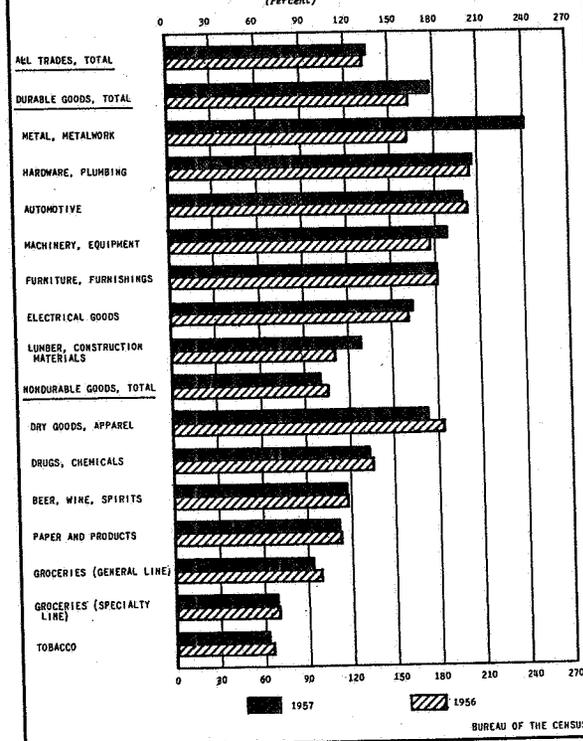
**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, chine, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

STOCKS--SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: SEPTEMBER 1957 COMPARED WITH SEPTEMBER 1956 (Percent)



##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and other fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other machinery, equipment supplies distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table)--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, no-frequently constitute secondary lines. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linens and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

OCTOBER 1957

FOR RELEASE  
DECEMBER 11, 1957

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

October 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were estimated at \$10.7 billion, an increase of 9 percent over September 1957, but 4 percent below October sales a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first 10 months of 1957, totaling \$99.0 billion were 1 percent higher than in the comparable period of 1956.

Durable goods trades, with sales of \$4.5 billion in October 1957, showed a 7 percent increase over the previous month but an 8 percent decline from a year ago. The nondurable goods trades, with October sales of \$6.2 billion, were up 11 percent over September but down 2 percent from last October. For the year to date, sales in the nondurable goods trades were up 4 percent over the first 10 months of 1956 while sales in the durable goods trades were off 3 percent during the same period.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers, up seasonally 22 percent, indicated the largest gain over September sales. Other large increases were reported by wholesalers of home furnishings, floor coverings (20%), farm products (raw materials) (19%), and poultry and poultry products (18%). Substantial declines from year-ago sales were reported by iron, steel scrap dealers (37%), waste materials dealers (26%), iron, steel products distributors (26%), and farm products (raw materials) merchants (23%). The principal increase over October 1957 sales was registered by poultry products distributors (28%).

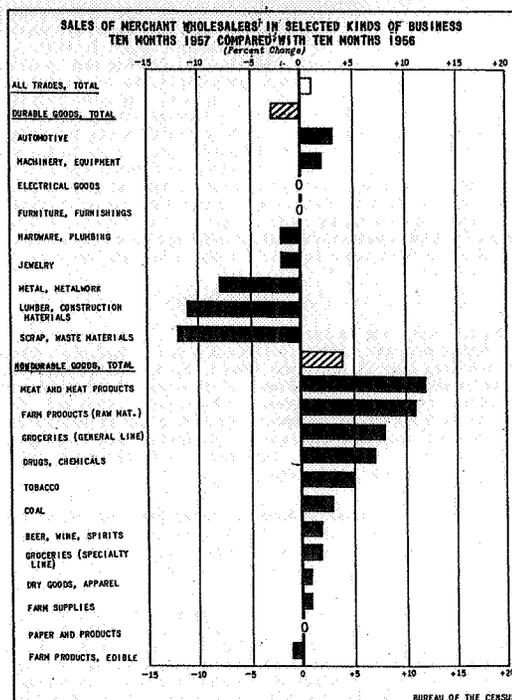
All geographic divisions registered increases over previous month sales but reported declines from year-ago sales. The principal gain over September sales (13%) was noted by the East South Central Division, while the sharpest drop from last October (7%) was shared by the East and West South Central Divisions.

### Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of October rose slightly (1%) over September and were up 1 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined slightly (1%) during the month but were 4 percent higher than stocks a year ago. Nondurable goods stocks, however, increased 2 percent from their September 30 level but declined 2 percent from year-ago inventories.

The October 1957 stock-sales ratio of 125 percent for all merchant wholesalers was 11 points below the September ratio but 6 points above the ratio for October 1956. The October stock-sales ratio for durable goods was 165 compared to the nondurable goods ratio of 94.

Most trades reported little or no change from previous month inventories. Notable changes were the increases reported by farm supplies wholesalers (10%) and wine, distilled spirits wholesalers (11%). Compared with last October, substantially higher inven-



tories were reported by iron, steel products distributors (22%), book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers (18%), industrial machinery, equipment distributors (17%), and amusement, sporting goods distributors (11%). The largest decline was indicated by farm products (raw materials) merchants (21%).

By geographic divisions, changes from September 1957 inventories were relatively slight (2% or less). Compared with a year ago, stocks were 10 percent higher in the Pacific Division. However, all other divisions indicated smaller changes ranging from a 5 percent increase in the East North Central Division to a 4 percent decline in the East South Central Division.

### General

This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales of merchant wholesalers by kind of business from January 1956 through October 1957. These data are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 2 and 6. Also included in this report are sales and inventory trends and stock-sales ratios by kind of business, for the United States as a whole and by geographic division.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURE, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

1. Scope of Survey

This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers, which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade, and excludes other types of wholesale trade such as manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; agents and brokers and assemblers of farm products. All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are defined in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial and distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials." Firms which, in addition to merchant wholesale establishments, operate other types of establishments, e.g., retail, manufacturing, etc., report in this survey only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind-of-business classification shown in this report is included on pages 11 and 12.

2. Sample Design

Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954. The sample is supplemented twice a year for new firms on the BOASI lists.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales size, and (c) whether geographic division trends are to be shown for the trade. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

3. Published Data

Sales.--This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 1) and sales trends (percent changes) derived from these estimates (Table 2). Sales trends are shown in Table 2 for some detailed kind of businesses for which estimates are not shown separately in Table 1. For these kinds of business (identified by \* in Table 2) the trends are based only on the weighted sales of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (Table 3). In Table 3 the trends for geographic division are based on weighted sales of identical firms; however, sales trends at the United States level are derived from the dollar volume estimates shown in Table 1.

Sales include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included.

Inventories.--This report presents inventory trends by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). These inventory trends are based on the weighted inventories of identical firms (i.e., firm reporting data for each of the months compared).

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing weighted stocks, at cost, by weighted sales for only those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales in all three periods compared. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade. Stock-sales ratios for previous months shown in the current report may differ from those published in previous reports since the reporting panel varies.

4. Estimating Procedure

Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection in the sample. Large firms are selected with certainty, this 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.

For most firms reporting, data are available for each of three months (current, previous, and year ago). New firms reporting provide data for at least two months (current and previous). Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight (the reciprocal of its probability of selection) and the results summarized to obtain the dollar volume estimates, percentage changes and stock-sales ratios shown in this report.

Volume estimates.--The summation of the weighted reports of sales for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the preceding month. However, the published estimate is a "composite" of two estimates (a) the unbiased estimate for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate obtained by multiplying the "composite" estimate for the previous month by the ratio of the current month unbiased to previous month unbiased estimates obtained from the summation of the current reports. The unbiased estimate (a) receives a weight of .3 while the ratio estimate (b) receives a weight of .7. The resulting weighted average provides a "composite" estimate of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than either of the two estimates taken alone. The estimates shown for January-June 1956 were not obtained in this manner. Since unbiased estimates were not available for this period from the new sample which was introduced in July 1956, monthly estimates prior to that date were calculated by dividing the "composite" estimates for January-June 1957 by the year-to-year ratio for each of these months obtained from weighted reports of identical firms.

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report, viz., (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates (2) percent changes based on the weighted data from identical firms (i.e., those reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). The percentage changes based on identicals however, should not be regarded as an unbiased measure of percentage change. Since only those establishments reporting in both periods compared are included, the net change due to births and deaths is not reflected in the ratios shown.

5. Reliability of the Data

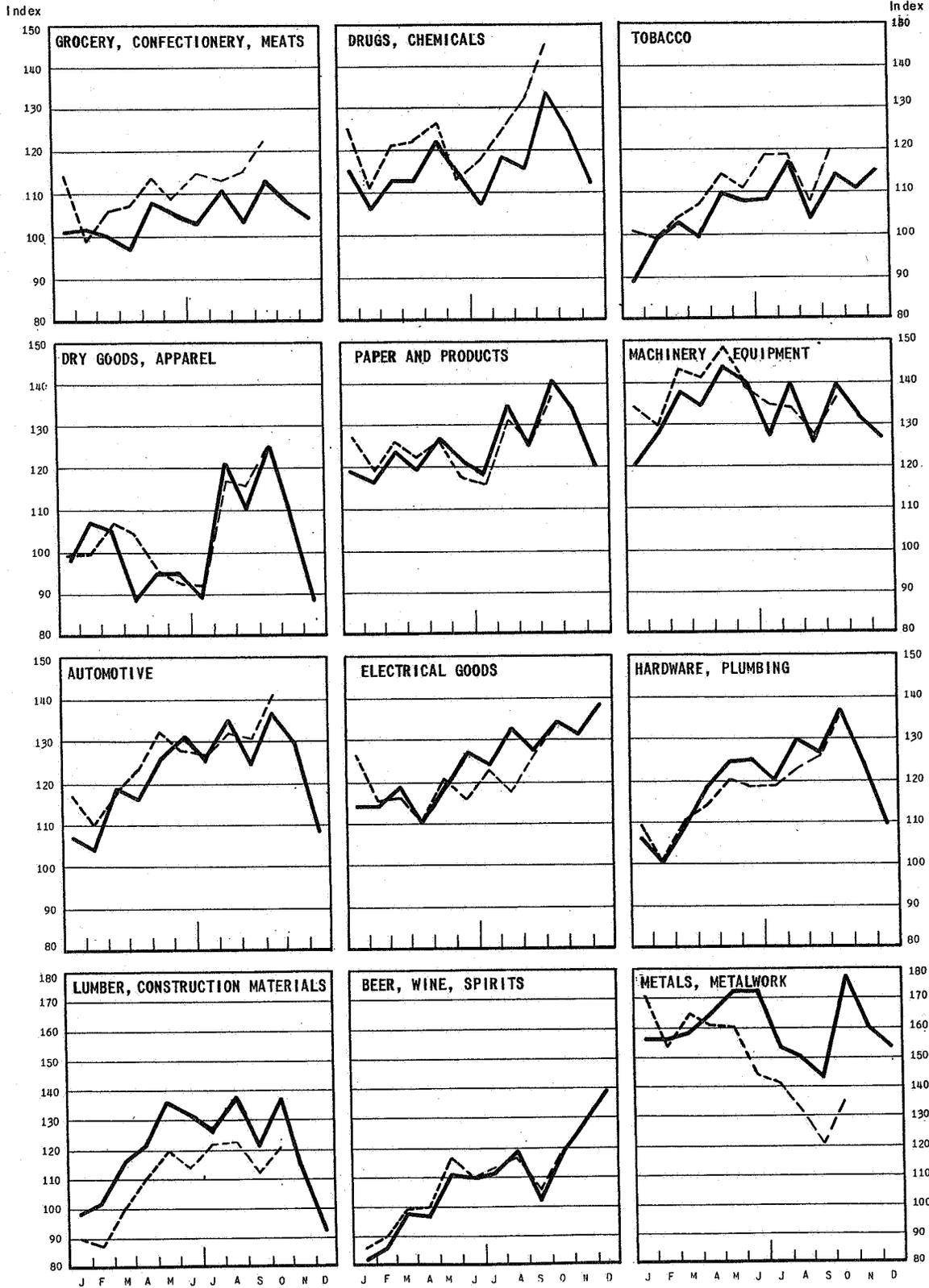
Estimates based on a sample are subject to sampling variability and thus are not expected to be in exact agreement with a complete census taken with the same enumeration procedures. For all trades combined, the sampling variability of the "composite" sales estimates for any individual month, is less than one percent at the one sigma level. That is to say, the chances are about two out of three that the estimated sales shown would differ by less than one percent from the results of a complete enumeration. The variability of estimates for kind-of-business groups and individual kinds of business is generally higher than for total merchant wholesale trade but for most trades the sampling variability is less than 5 percent at the one sigma level. Table IA presents these sampling variabilities of the estimates for February, March, April and May 1957. Since these measures are also subject to sampling variability they should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. The sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals has not been evaluated. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

These measures do not include biases that may arise from other nonsampling errors, such as failure of respondent to submit correct figures or to submit a report in time for tabulation. In preparing the dollar volume estimates, an estimate is included for those firms that fail to respond. To the extent that the estimates for these firms may differ from the actual figures, nonresponse affects the reliability of the dollar volume estimate. As a result, dollar volume estimates are not published separately in a few trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 11 percent of the total sales in May 1957 were imputed for nonresponse.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—KINDS OF BUSINESS  
1956 AND 1957

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

1956 = ———  
1957 = - - - -



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

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1956 - OCTOBER 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1956												Total 1956
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,032	9,172	9,571	9,296	10,144	9,894	9,408	10,498	9,790	11,211	10,435	9,944	118,395
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	3,994	4,085	4,372	4,346	4,680	4,589	4,219	4,638	4,331	4,895	4,501	4,192	52,842
Automotive wholesalers.....	353	344	396	384	417	434	411	436	410	453	428	358	4,824
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers....	280	276	318	306	333	351	344	365	344	386	366	296	3,965
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors..	603	602	627	580	616	668	641	690	661	700	692	727	7,807
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors....	272	285	297	295	319	350	326	336	317	338	328	344	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	331	317	330	285	297	318	315	354	344	362	364	383	4,000
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	184	193	212	194	199	197	181	223	216	250	234	210	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers..	125	133	147	133	134	131	118	145	144	170	162	139	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	387	366	404	432	455	458	441	477	463	501	453	398	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	175	176	184	198	206	209	189	205	196	212	198	179	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	212	190	220	234	249	249	252	273	266	289	255	219	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	540	560	636	669	743	725	705	769	675	759	624	511	7,916
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	337	338	361	373	410	398	392	433	363	402	327	279	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	203	222	275	296	333	327	313	336	312	357	297	232	3,503
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,004	1,073	1,158	1,120	1,210	1,170	1,063	1,173	1,048	1,170	1,104	1,054	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	506	541	574	523	569	522	493	546	483	566	564	548	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors..	70	74	78	74	79	79	83	92	85	92	90	84	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	105	103	102	108	116	111	97	112	111	116	104	98	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors....	438	437	442	460	483	483	438	428	405	501	447	428	5,390
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	276	282	303	312	325	325	306	287	274	346	306	269	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	162	155	139	148	158	158	132	141	131	155	141	159	1,779
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	425	439	419	434	470	385	280	361	366	457	420	408	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	267	275	261	267	304	248	167	231	238	306	291	283	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	158	164	158	167	166	137	113	130	128	151	129	125	1,726
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,038	5,087	5,199	4,950	5,464	5,305	5,189	5,860	5,459	6,316	5,934	5,752	65,553
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,459	1,479	1,442	1,405	1,560	1,517	1,498	1,606	1,489	1,630	1,556	1,505	18,146
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	613	624	631	602	667	648	620	669	639	690	657	630	7,690
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	561	583	537	528	587	588	585	620	553	606	578	571	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	46	48	50	45	48	46	45	50	47	52	54	51	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	239	224	224	230	258	235	248	267	250	282	267	253	2,977
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	354	361	384	393	451	469	465	416	345	376	397	409	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	132	116	122	120	131	131	124	133	120	127	148	149	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	222	245	262	273	320	338	341	283	225	249	249	260	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	385	406	459	454	532	520	532	565	482	572	606	657	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	151	152	166	177	220	229	265	270	197	199	182	198	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	234	254	293	277	312	291	267	295	285	373	424	459	3,764
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers....	322	299	316	316	342	319	301	334	326	375	348	315	3,913
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)..	204	191	196	189	202	192	185	208	206	231	223	202	2,429
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers...	95	87	96	100	111	97	89	98	93	116	100	92	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	24	27	29	30	27	28	27	28	25	21	310
Tobacco distributors.....	238	264	275	264	295	289	288	314	275	304	298	308	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	464	505	496	448	450	450	420	576	524	594	520	419	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers....	149	172	176	144	154	137	159	238	206	228	201	146	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	183	192	184	182	183	197	170	221	203	223	197	162	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	293	286	306	294	313	299	291	332	309	347	331	296	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	253	247	265	253	273	255	252	287	265	294	280	248	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	70	75	93	96	92	99	98	117	116	133	127	116	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	110	103	87	87	87	99	91	120	118	130	125	117	1,274

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS<sup>1</sup>—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS—Continued

JANUARY 1956 - OCTOBER 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1957										10 months	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	1957	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,945	9,097	9,744	9,834	10,168	9,610	9,916	10,197	9,814	10,713	99,028	98,016
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	4,278	3,981	4,292	4,314	4,450	4,243	4,267	4,329	4,222	4,511	42,867	44,149
Automotive wholesalers.....	389	366	392	408	428	424	421	439	434	467	4,168	4,038
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers...	321	298	319	334	352	359	363	377	373	406	3,502	3,303
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.	665	609	613	588	623	614	650	624	673	709	6,368	6,388
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors...	301	291	293	297	308	315	325	307	332	341	3,110	3,135
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	364	318	320	291	315	299	325	317	341	368	3,258	3,253
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	189	189	205	212	200	193	185	210	216	245	2,044	2,049
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.	127	128	140	144	135	131	120	135	142	167	1,369	1,380
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	398	365	405	420	443	435	436	452	463	499	4,316	4,384
Hardware wholesalers.....	184	173	191	196	205	196	192	197	201	215	1,950	1,950
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	214	192	214	224	238	239	244	255	262	284	2,366	2,434
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	496	476	551	609	659	628	667	675	613	666	6,039	6,781
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	295	259	307	330	343	329	343	342	307	331	3,186	3,807
Construction materials distributors.....	201	217	244	279	316	299	324	333	305	335	2,853	2,974
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,121	1,081	1,194	1,182	1,234	1,166	1,131	1,121	1,071	1,141	11,442	11,189
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	590	547	593	540	560	512	509	512	490	548	5,401	5,323
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.	78	77	83	85	85	84	89	96	99	99	875	806
Service establishment supply houses.....	113	110	113	112	122	116	106	115	113	120	1,140	1,081
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors...	478	430	459	452	448	404	396	368	339	378	4,151	4,515
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	317	287	312	317	311	275	272	252	230	257	2,830	3,036
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	161	143	147	135	137	129	124	116	108	121	1,321	1,479
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	476	393	393	369	328	308	320	361	319	303	3,570	4,036
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	325	266	263	236	199	193	208	232	212	192	2,327	2,564
Waste materials dealers.....	150	127	130	133	129	115	112	129	107	111	1,243	1,472
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,667	5,116	5,454	5,520	5,718	5,367	5,649	5,868	5,591	6,202	56,161	53,867
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,642	1,433	1,530	1,544	1,630	1,579	1,660	1,630	1,633	1,768	16,050	15,085
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	707	627	655	676	698	676	703	692	701	758	6,893	6,403
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	611	521	566	557	591	591	610	593	600	647	5,887	5,748
Confectionery wholesalers.....	52	49	53	50	52	49	50	51	55	61	522	477
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	272	236	256	261	289	264	297	294	278	302	2,748	2,457
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	357	341	352	394	429	418	442	413	375	419	3,940	4,014
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	121	106	109	124	127	116	129	142	138	163	1,275	1,256
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	236	235	243	270	302	302	313	271	237	256	2,665	2,758
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	408	425	468	472	551	520	543	556	501	561	5,006	4,907
Beer, ale distributors.....	158	158	172	193	227	234	269	254	205	198	2,068	2,026
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	250	267	296	279	324	286	274	302	297	363	2,938	2,881
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers...	350	312	340	344	354	317	331	350	373	406	3,476	3,250
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	224	199	213	208	214	196	211	222	241	271	2,199	2,004
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers..	103	92	102	108	110	93	90	99	103	107	1,007	982
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	25	28	30	28	30	29	28	28	270	264
Tobacco distributors.....	271	266	280	285	307	297	319	319	288	320	2,952	2,806
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	468	472	507	491	457	440	434	567	549	593	4,978	4,927
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers...	145	160	184	182	156	136	151	236	212	221	1,783	1,763
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	192	183	194	190	187	193	186	220	223	240	2,008	1,938
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	313	294	310	302	312	291	287	323	310	339	3,081	3,070
Paper wholesalers.....	268	252	265	258	271	250	250	279	267	290	2,650	2,644
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	74	83	96	99	101	104	111	119	125	129	1,041	989
Coal wholesalers.....	120	102	106	105	103	109	99	106	102	108	1,060	1,032

r Revised.

<sup>1</sup> Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

Table 1A.—SAMPLING VARIABILITY—MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months	Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months
	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957		Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957
	(percent)				(percent)		(percent)				(percent)
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	Grocery, confectionery, meat.....	2	2	1	2	2
Automotive.....	3	3	3	3	2	General-line grocery.....	2	2	2	2	2
Automotive equipment, tire-tube...	3	3	4	3	2	Specialty-line grocery.....	4	4	4	4	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances..	2	2	2	2	1	Confectionery.....	4	3	3	3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies....	2	2	2	3	2	Meat, meat products.....	4	5	4	4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts.....	2	4	4	3	2	Farm products (edible).....	3	3	3	3	2
Furniture, home furnishings.....	3	3	4	4	2	Poultry, poultry products.....	5	3	4	5	2
Home furnishings, floor coverings..	4	4	4	4	2	Fresh fruit, vegetables.....	5	4	4	3	2
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, wine, distilled spirits.....	2	2	2	2	2
Hardware.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, ale.....	4	3	4	3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies.....	3	4	4	4	2	Wine, distilled spirits.....	3	3	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials.....	3	3	3	2	2	Drugs, chemicals, allied products...	2	2	2	2	1
Lumber, millwork.....	5	6	6	5	3	Drugs (general and specialty lines)	2	2	2	2	2
Construction materials.....	3	3	3	4	2	Industrial chemicals, explosives..	5	4	5	4	2
Machinery, equipment, supplies.....	2	3	2	2	2	Paint, varnish.....	4	4	3	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies.....	3	5	4	4	3	Tobacco.....	2	3	2	2	1
Professional equipment, supplies...	3	3	4	3	2	Dry goods, apparel.....	3	3	3	3	2
Service establishment supply houses	5	3	4	4	3	Clothing, furnishings, footwear...	5	5	5	5	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)....	2	3	3	3	3	Dry goods (general and specialty-lines).....	6	6	6	5	3
Iron, steel and products.....	3	5	4	4	4	Paper, allied products.....	3	2	2	2	1
Nonferrous metals.....	3	3	2	4	1	Paper.....	3	2	2	2	1
Scrap, waste materials.....	2	2	3	3	2	Amusement, sporting goods.....	6	4	4	4	4
Iron, steel scrap.....	3	3	4	4	3	Coal wholesalers.....	5	6	6	6	2
Waste materials.....	4	4	6	6	3						

Note: The above table provides approximate measures of the sampling variability of the dollar volume estimates of sales and of the ratio between sales for the two consecutive months specified. The ratio between sales for two consecutive months generally has a smaller sampling error than the level estimates in those months. These sampling errors are themselves subject to sampling variability and thus should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. Differences from month to month may be due to this error in the estimates of sampling error. Differences may also result from seasonal or cyclical fluctuation in the sales of individual firms (see page 2, for statement on nonsampling errors).

The sampling errors shown above can be converted to a range by the following computation: Multiply the sampling error by the estimate (whether it is a dollar volume estimate or a ratio). Add and subtract the resulting product from the published estimate. The resulting range is expected to include the "expected value" (that is, the value which could be obtained from a complete enumeration) about two out of three times. Doubling the sampling error and repeating the above process will give a range which will include the "expected value" about 19 out of 20 times.

To illustrate the computation of these ranges for monthly dollar volume estimates, consider the estimate made for all durable goods in March 1957. The published estimate is \$4,292 million while the sampling error shown for this month is 1.4 percent (or .014). Multiplying \$4,292 million by .014, we obtain \$60 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between \$4,232 and \$4,352 million. Doubling the given sampling error gives us the limits, \$4,172 to \$4,412 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from February 1957 to March 1957 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing \$4,292 million by \$3,981 million, is 1.08 (it can also be expressed as an 8% increase). The sampling error of this statistic is 0.7 percent (.007). Multiplying 1.08 by .007, we obtain .008 as the standard error of the ratio. There is a probability of two out of three that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.07 to 1.09 while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.06 to 1.10.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

OCTOBER 1957

Kind of business	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Oct. 1957 from--		October 1957	October 1956	September 1957
	October 1957 from--		10 mo. 1957 from 10 mo. 1956	October 1956	September 1957			
	October 1956	September 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-4	+9	+1	+1	+1	125	119	136
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-8	+7	-3	+4	-1	165	147	177
Automotive wholesalers.....	+3	+8	+3	0	0	170	180	188
Motor-vehicle distributors*.....	-2	-2	-6	0	-5	130	124	135
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+5	+9	+6	0	0	176	190	198
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	+1	+5	0	0	+1	169	166	179
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	+1	+3	-1	+3	0	150	146	159
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	+2	+8	0	-2	+2	191	188	205
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-2	+14	0	+3	0	181	167	192
Furniture wholesalers*.....	-3	+6	+1	+8	+2	164	140	161
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	-2	+20	-1	+1	-1	186	176	203
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	0	+8	-2	-2	-2	172	172	186
Hardware wholesalers.....	+1	+7	0	-1	-2	194	187	207
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-2	+8	-3	-3	-2	153	159	167
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-12	+9	-11	-4	-3	95	94	103
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-18	+8	-16	-5	-5	124	129	139
Construction materials distributors.....	-6	+10	-4	-3	-2	75	72	80
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-3	+7	+2	+8	0	184	158	195
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*.....	+1	+3	0	0	0	176	177	170
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*.....	-4	0	+4	-3	-4	132	132	141
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-3	+12	+1	+17	+1	176	134	191
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+8	0	+9	+4	0	175	158	184
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*.....	+5	-3	+8	0	+1	149	161	159
Service establishment supply houses.....	+3	+6	+5	+5	+1	143	142	146
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-25	+12	-8	+21	0	215	144	242
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-26	+12	-7	+22	0	260	172	292
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-22	+12	-11	+8	-1	91	67	103
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-34	-5	-12	-7	+2	54	42	53
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-37	-9	-9	-1	+2	49	34	46
Waste materials dealers.....	-26	+4	-16	-13	+3	63	57	64
Jewelry wholesalers*.....	-13	+10	-2	-2	-4	223	195	263
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-2	+11	+4	-2	+2	94	96	103
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+8	+8	+6	+1	+3	70	73	74
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+10	+8	+8	+2	+3	92	96	96
Voluntary groups*.....	+6	+8	+7	0	+5	89	94	91
Retailer-cooperative*.....	+15	+6	+12	0	+3	71	81	70
Nonaffiliated*.....	+3	+5	+5	+4	+1	113	106	118
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+6	+7	+2	-3	+3	68	67	79
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+17	+11	+9	+12	+5	79	76	84
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+7	+9	+12	+13	+2	17	17	18
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	+11	+12	-1	0	+6	24	26	26
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	+28	+18	+3	-11	+4	18	26	21
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	+3	+8	-3	+5	+7	28	27	28
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	-2	+12	+2	0	+8	113	112	115
Beer, ale distributors.....	-1	+3	+3	+8	-2	63	60	62
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	-3	+22	+2	-2	+11	144	143	158
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+8	+9	+7	+6	+1	140	141	154
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+17	+12	+10	+9	+2	153	156	169
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	-8	+4	+3	-6	-3	97	102	109
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	0	0	+2	+6	-2	156	144	165
Tobacco distributors.....	+5	+11	+5	+5	+2	53	55	56
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	0	+8	+1	-1	-2	170	161	185
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	-3	+4	+1	+4	-5	175	160	206
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+8	0	+4	-2	-1	148	147	149
Piece goods converters.....	-8	+16	-4	-10	+1	214	199	227
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	-2	+9	0	+2	+1	110	110	119
Paper wholesalers.....	-1	+9	0	+2	0	106	108	115
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*.....	-8	+14	+1	+5	+2	140	126	154
Farm products (raw materials) merchants *.....	-23	+19	+11	-21	+4	114	120	166
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	+1	+3	+7	+6	0	99	95	100
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.....	-3	+3	+5	+11	-2	170	161	170
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*.....	+12	-1	+15	+18	+2	118	112	116
Coal wholesalers.....	-17	+6	+3	+2	+3	115	104	123
Farm supplies wholesalers*.....	-11	-5	+5	-4	+10	152	141	120

\* See text, page 2.

r Revised since Advance Release dated December 3, 1957

Table 3.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

OCTOBER 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Oct. 1957 from--		Oct. 1957	Oct. 1956	Sept. 1957
	October 1957 from--		10 mo. 1957 from 10 mo. 1956	Oct. 1956	Sept. 1957			
	Oct. 1956	Sept. 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-4	+9	+1	+1	+1	125	119	136
New England.....	-4	+5	+1	+3	-2	111	102	121
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	+9	+1	+1	0	111	109	122
East North Central.....	-5	+9	0	+5	+1	121	109	130
West North Central.....	-1	+5	+3	-3	+1	126	126	140
South Atlantic.....	-1	+7	+4	-2	+2	137	142	146
East South Central.....	-7	+13	+5	-4	-1	145	137	168
West South Central.....	-7	+8	+6	-3	0	148	142	159
Mountain.....	-3	+5	+2	+2	0	143	137	147
Pacific.....	-4	+10	+1	+10	+2	136	114	139
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+5	+9	+6	0	0	176	190	198
New England.....	+11	+23	+9	+18	+2	187	186	223
Middle Atlantic.....	+10	+13	+7	+1	+3	151	170	175
East North Central.....	+13	+15	+9	+6	0	167	178	194
West North Central.....	+10	0	+11	+4	0	245	243	250
South Atlantic.....	+7	+14	+4	-1	+6	180	189	203
East South Central.....	0	+7	+7	+3	-7	187	203	200
West South Central.....	+4	+7	+6	-4	-1	196	230	215
Pacific.....	-2	+2	+4	0	0	208	197	205
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	+1	+3	-1	+3	0	150	146	159
New England.....	-4	+1	-10	+2	-1	136	121	144
Middle Atlantic.....	+2	+11	-1	+11	0	134	125	160
East North Central.....	-8	+6	-7	+8	+3	145	124	151
West North Central.....	+6	+8	+2	+6	+1	194	198	199
South Atlantic.....	0	+3	-2	+2	-3	159	147	161
East South Central.....	(X)	+2	(X)	(X)	-7	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	+6	-10	+2	-4	-2	180	198	165
Pacific.....	+7	+10	+2	-6	0	127	150	141
Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.....	+2	+8	0	-2	+2	191	188	205
New England.....	-8	-3	+4	+14	-2	152	117	149
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+17	+1	+1	0	181	184	209
East North Central.....	+1	+12	0	-7	+2	190	201	218
West North Central.....	-5	+9	-9	+1	+2	199	204	215
South Atlantic.....	-2	+2	+5	-4	0	201	198	210
East South Central.....	-13	+5	-5	+3	+2	210	171	216
West South Central.....	(X)	+4	(X)	(X)	-1	217	221	227
Pacific.....	+10	+13	+7	+7	+13	187	176	173
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-2	+14	0	+3	0	181	167	192
New England.....	+9	+9	0	+3	0	129	136	139
Middle Atlantic.....	-3	+13	+1	+1	-2	191	168	210
East North Central.....	-8	+13	+2	+6	0	157	141	168
West North Central.....	-5	+11	+5	+4	+1	184	164	194
South Atlantic.....	(X)	+9	0	+9	+16	160	158	179
East South Central.....	+13	(X)	-3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	-6	+16	-1	-7	+1	209	210	221
Mountain.....	(X)	+35	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-6	+7	-2	(X)	+5	218	177	194
Hardware wholesalers.....	+1	+7	0	-1	-2	194	187	207
Middle Atlantic.....	-10	+15	-5	-1	-2	120	104	135
East North Central.....	-7	+1	-2	-6	-2	194	191	204
West North Central.....	-1	+1	0	-3	-3	198	203	205
South Atlantic.....	-2	+6	0	+4	+1	250	238	260
East South Central.....	+1	+5	-2	-3	0	198	206	206
West South Central.....	-2	+2	-1	+10	0	198	188	221
Mountain.....	(X)	+2	-7	-5	-5	302	253	304
Pacific.....	+3	+2	-1	0	-4	224	225	242
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-2	+8	-3	-3	-2	153	159	167
New England.....	-11	+4	-9	+4	+1	147	111	159
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+11	-4	-3	-3	195	205	218
East North Central.....	+2	+7	-4	-7	-1	111	122	121
West North Central.....	+2	+4	-3	-1	-2	152	148	162
South Atlantic.....	+1	+9	0	+3	-4	136	145	155
East South Central.....	-14	-3	-9	(X)	0	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	+4	-1	+3	-12	-2	177	196	169
Mountain.....	0	+5	-4	(X)	+3	98	128	108
Pacific.....	+4	+5	-3	+2	0	199	199	233
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-12	+9	-11	-4	-3	95	94	103
New England.....	(X)	+9	(X)	(X)	-11	104	96	110
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	+13	-10	-7	-6	72	71	80
East North Central.....	-10	+6	-12	+4	-2	94	87	101
West North Central.....	-7	-4	-9	(X)	-2	90	107	85
South Atlantic.....	-9	+7	-4	-6	-7	105	121	124
West South Central.....	+10	+14	-1	+2	+5	123	142	136
Pacific.....	-9	+2	-17	+11	-4	95	84	107

See Page 10 for footnotes.

# UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS  
TEN MONTHS 1957 COMPARED WITH TEN MONTHS 1956

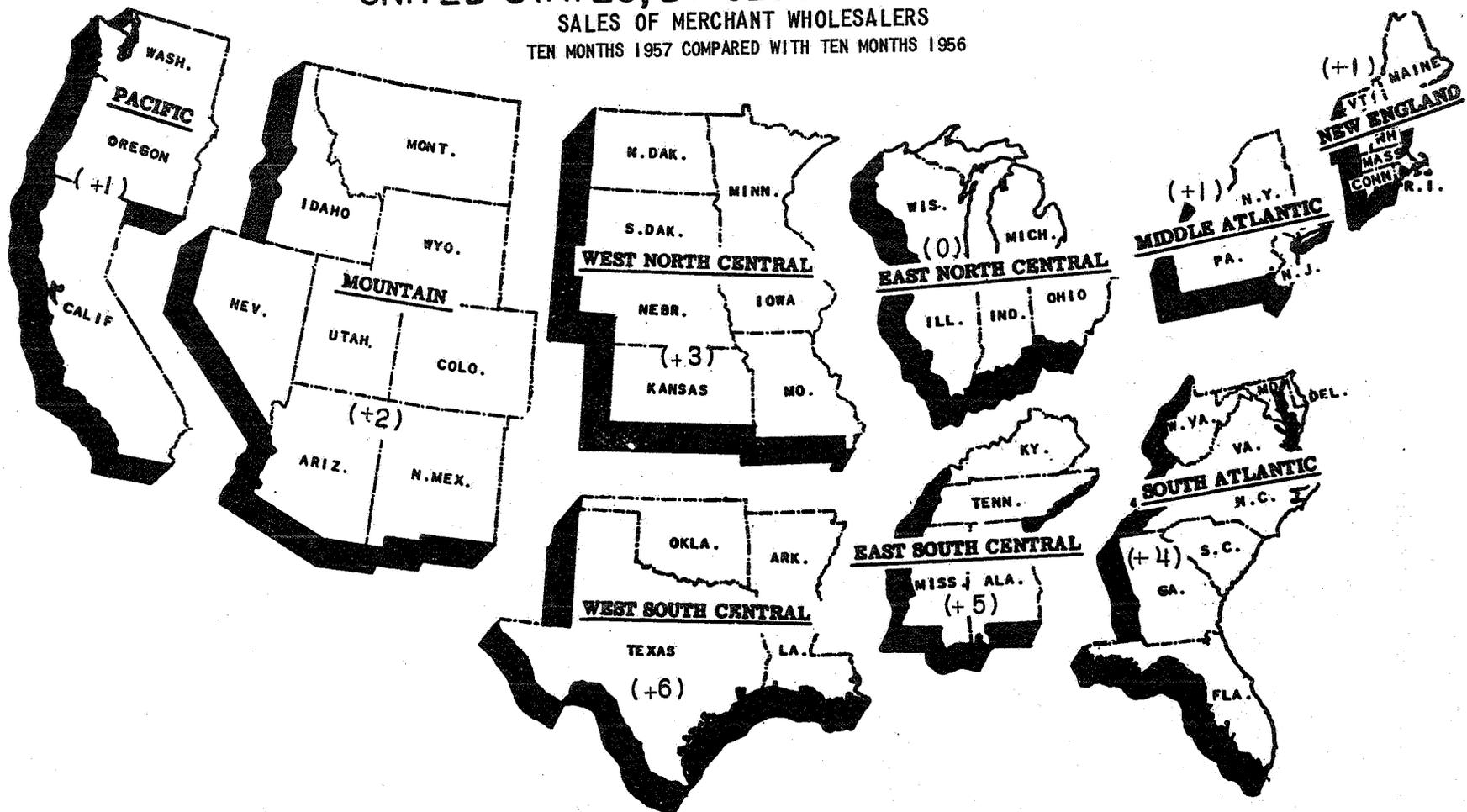


Table 3.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS—Continued

OCTOBER 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Oct. 1957 from--		Oct. 1957	Oct. 1956	Sept. 1957
	Oct. 1957 from--		10 mo. 1957 from 10 mo. 1956	Oct. 1956	Sept. 1957			
	Oct. 1956	Sept. 1957						
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	-3	+12	+1	+17	+1	176	134	191
New England.....	(X)	+9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	+15	-4	+32	-1	249	182	300
East North Central.....	-6	+7	0	+13	0	136	111	144
West North Central.....	-6	+7	-3	(X)	0	143	130	141
South Atlantic.....	-24	+8	+6	+1	0	164	110	167
East South Central.....	(X)	+5	(X)	-7	-2	180	144	197
West South Central.....	-12	-2	+3	+17	-1	173	132	170
Mountain.....	+7	+14	+4	+19	(X)	171	151	162
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+10	+8	+8	+2	+3	92	96	96
New England.....	+6	+1	+6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	+7	+4	-2	+3	101	100	100
East North Central.....	+10	+7	+7	+9	+7	83	83	80
West North Central.....	+9	+5	+5	+2	+8	103	111	100
South Atlantic.....	+4	+9	+5	+2	+4	83	84	87
East South Central.....	+14	+9	+8	-2	+1	111	129	123
West South Central.....	+6	+16	+8	-1	-3	78	92	94
Mountain.....	+1	+7	+6	-9	-2	102	90	111
Pacific.....	+2	+17	+14	+13	-1	81	68	96
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+6	+7	+2	-3	+3	68	67	72
New England.....	-2	+9	+5	(X)	(X)	54	70	65
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	+16	-1	-5	+5	54	62	72
East North Central.....	+4	+11	+6	-3	-1	63	67	72
South Atlantic.....	+12	+7	+5	+7	+1	100	108	101
West South Central.....	-15	+3	+10	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-3	+14	-2	-8	+7	71	54	74
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	+3	+8	-3	+5	+7	28	27	28
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	+10	-3	+22	-5	9	8	11
East North Central.....	+4	+11	-1	+11	+26	18	23	17
West North Central.....	+3	-6	-5	+11	+13	57	50	49
South Atlantic.....	+8	+9	+1	+5	+3	43	47	47
West South Central.....	-5	0	-1	(X)	+3	34	38	30
Pacific.....	0	+8	-2	-7	+3	22	24	24
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty-lines).....	+17	+12	+10	+9	+2	153	156	169
New England.....	+12	+5	+8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+6	+21	+7	+4	+2	137	143	163
East North Central.....	+13	+14	+9	+14	+4	144	146	156
West North Central.....	+8	+5	+8	+6	-1	175	179	184
South Atlantic.....	+17	+20	+9	+14	+1	152	151	172
East South Central.....	+14	+9	+10	+11	0	162	169	181
West South Central.....	+19	+9	+10	+12	+2	189	202	204
Mountain.....	+12	+13	+6	+11	+6	177	181	185
Pacific.....	+9	+13	+9	+11	+5	153	150	166
Tobacco distributors.....	+5	<sup>r</sup> +11	+5	+5	+2	53	55	56
New England.....	+13	+7	+7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	+6	+5	-4	+3	43	44	43
East North Central.....	+7	+5	+7	+6	+2	56	55	60
West North Central.....	+3	+1	+3	+10	+5	69	67	66
South Atlantic.....	+17	+16	+9	+4	-1	54	62	66
East South Central.....	+18	+14	+4	+10	+1	57	65	66
West South Central.....	+14	+15	+6	+4	+3	43	47	47
Pacific.....	+9	+12	+8	+11	+2	43	43	50
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	0	+8	+1	-1	-2	170	161	185
New England.....	-6	(X)	0	-2	0	147	148	143
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	+9	+1	-2	-6	167	158	195
East North Central.....	-2	+14	+7	-12	0	145	130	160
West North Central.....	+11	-10	+5	-2	-11	243	267	214
South Atlantic.....	+5	+7	-3	+17	-4	192	171	223
Pacific.....	0	-10	+7	(X)	0	107	100	96

X Withheld due to extreme variation of reported data.

<sup>1</sup> See text, page 2.<sup>r</sup> Revised since Advance Release dated December 3, 1957.

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its sales by commodity lines as reported to the Bureau of the Census. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

#### DURABLE GOODS

##### Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, buses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

##### Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

##### Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

##### Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores; and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, outlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

##### Lumber, construction materials distributors

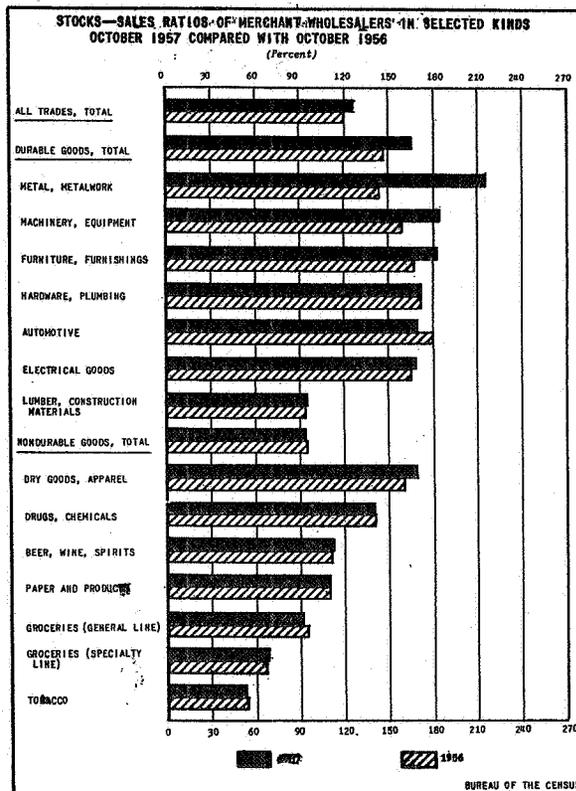
**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.



##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other machinery, equipment supplies distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frozen and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with wines and distilled spirits wholesalers.

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

NOVEMBER 1957

FOR RELEASE  
JANUARY 10, 1958

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Sales

November 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were estimated at \$9.6 billion, a decrease of 10 percent from October 1957, and an 8 percent decline from November sales a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first 11 months of 1957 totaled \$108.6 billion, about the same as reported for the comparable period of 1956.

Durable goods trades reflected sharper declines than the nondurable goods trades. Durable goods trades, with sales of \$3.9 billion in November 1957, showed a 13 percent decrease from previous month as well as year-ago sales. The nondurable goods trades, with November sales of \$5.7 billion, were down 8 percent from October and 4 percent from last November. For the year to date, sales in the nondurable goods trades were up 3 percent over the first 11 months of 1956 while sales in the durable goods trades were off 4 percent during the same period.

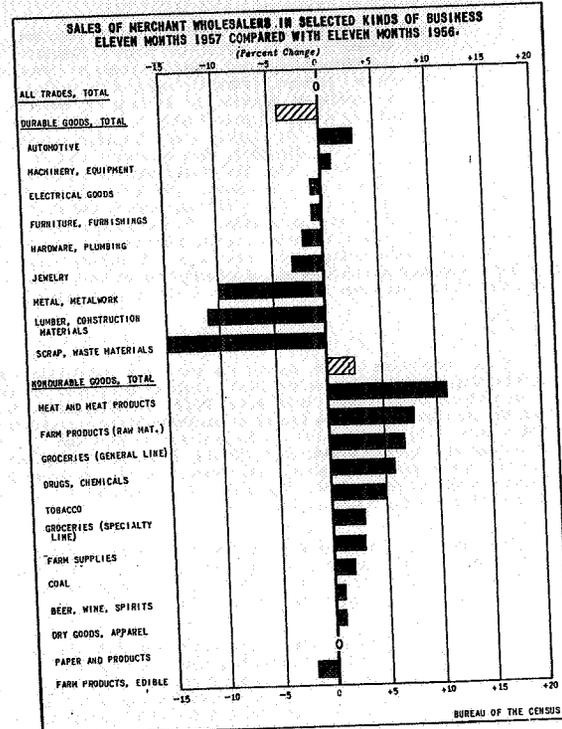
All but four trades reported seasonal declines from October sales. Iron and steel scrap dealers indicated the largest decline (31%). Dry goods wholesalers (21%), industrial machinery and equipment distributors (20%), and construction materials distributors (20%) also showed large decreases. Small increases over October were reported by wholesalers of wine, distilled spirits (10%), air conditioning and refrigeration equipment (7%), poultry (2%) and jewelry (1%). For the second successive month, iron, steel scrap dealers indicated the most substantial decline from year-ago sales (55%). The largest increase (12%) was shared by poultry distributors and book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.

All geographic divisions experienced sales declines from both the previous month as well as a year ago. The East South Central Division and the East North Central Division showed the sharpest drop from October (13%). The East North Central Division also noted the principal decline in sales from a year ago (12%).

### Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of November were at the same level as a month earlier but were up 1 percent above stocks on hand a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined slightly (1%) during the month but were 4 percent higher than stocks a year ago. Nondurable goods stocks, however, increased 2 percent from their October 31 level but declined 2 percent from year-ago inventories.

The November 1957 stock-sales ratio of 135 percent for all merchant wholesalers was 14 points above the October ratio and 13 points above the ratio for November 1956. The November stock-sales ratio for durable goods was 186 compared to the nondurable goods ratio of 98.



Changes from previous month inventories were small in most trades. Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers, up 9 percent, and beer, ale distributors down 8 percent, indicated the sharpest inventory changes. Many trades noted substantial changes from their year-ago inventory levels. Large increases were reported by iron and steel products distributors (29%), nonferrous metals distributors, meat wholesalers, and drug wholesalers (each up 12 percent). The most significant declines were shown by farm products (raw materials) merchants (21%), poultry distributors (20%), iron, steel scrap dealers (19%) and piece goods converters (12%).

### General

This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales of merchant wholesalers by kind of business from January 1956 through November 1957. These data are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 2 and 6. Also included in this report are sales and inventory trends and stock-sales ratios by kind of business, for the United States as a whole and by geographic division.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURE, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

1. Scope of Survey

This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers, which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade, and excludes other types of wholesale trade such as manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; agents and brokers and assemblers of farm products. All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are defined in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial and distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials." Firms which, in addition to merchant wholesale establishments, operate other types of establishments, e.g., retail, manufacturing, etc., report in this survey only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind-of-business classification shown in this report is included on pages 11 and 12.

2. Sample Design

Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954. The sample is supplemented twice a year for new firms on the BOASI lists.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales size, and (c) whether geographic division trends are to be shown for the trade. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

3. Published Data

**Sales.**--This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 1) and sales trends (percent changes) derived from these estimates (Table 2). Sales trends are shown in Table 2 for some detailed kind of businesses for which estimates are not shown separately in Table 1. For these kinds of business (identified by \* in Table 2) the trends are based only on the weighted sales of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (Table 3). In Table 3 the trends for geographic division are based on weighted sales of identical firms; however, sales trends at the United States level are derived from the dollar volume estimates shown in Table 1.

Sales include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included.

**Inventories.**--This report presents inventory trends by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). These inventory trends are based on the weighted inventories of identical firms (i.e., firm reporting data for each of the months compared).

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month.

**Stock-sales ratios.**--These are presented by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing weighted stocks, at cost, by weighted sales for only those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales in all three periods compared. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade. Stock-sales ratios for previous months shown in the current report may differ from those published in previous reports since the reporting panel varies.

4. Estimating Procedure

Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection in the sample. Large firms are selected with certainty, this 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.

For most firms reporting, data are available for each of three months (current, previous, and year ago). New firms reporting provide data for at least two months (current and previous). Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight (the reciprocal of its probability of selection) and the results summarized to obtain the dollar volume estimates, percentage changes and stock-sales ratios shown in this report.

**Volume estimates.**--The summation of the weighted reports of sales for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the preceding month. However, the published estimate is a "composite" of two estimates (a) the unbiased estimate for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate obtained by multiplying the "composite" estimate for the previous month by the ratio of the current month unbiased to previous month unbiased estimates obtained from the summation of the current reports. The unbiased estimate (a) receives a weight of .3 while the ratio estimate (b) receives a weight of .7. The resulting weighted average provides a "composite" estimate of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than either of the two estimates taken alone. The estimates shown for January-June 1956 were not obtained in this manner. Since unbiased estimates were not available for this period from the new sample which was introduced in July 1956, monthly estimates prior to that date were calculated by dividing the "composite" estimates for January-June 1957 by the year-to-year ratio for each of these months obtained from weighted reports of identical firms.

**Percentage changes.**--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report, viz., (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates (2) percent changes based on the weighted data from identical firms (i.e., those reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). The percentage changes based on identicals however, should not be regarded as an unbiased measure of percentage change. Since only those establishments reporting in both periods compared are included, the net change due to births and deaths is not reflected in the ratios shown.

5. Reliability of the Data

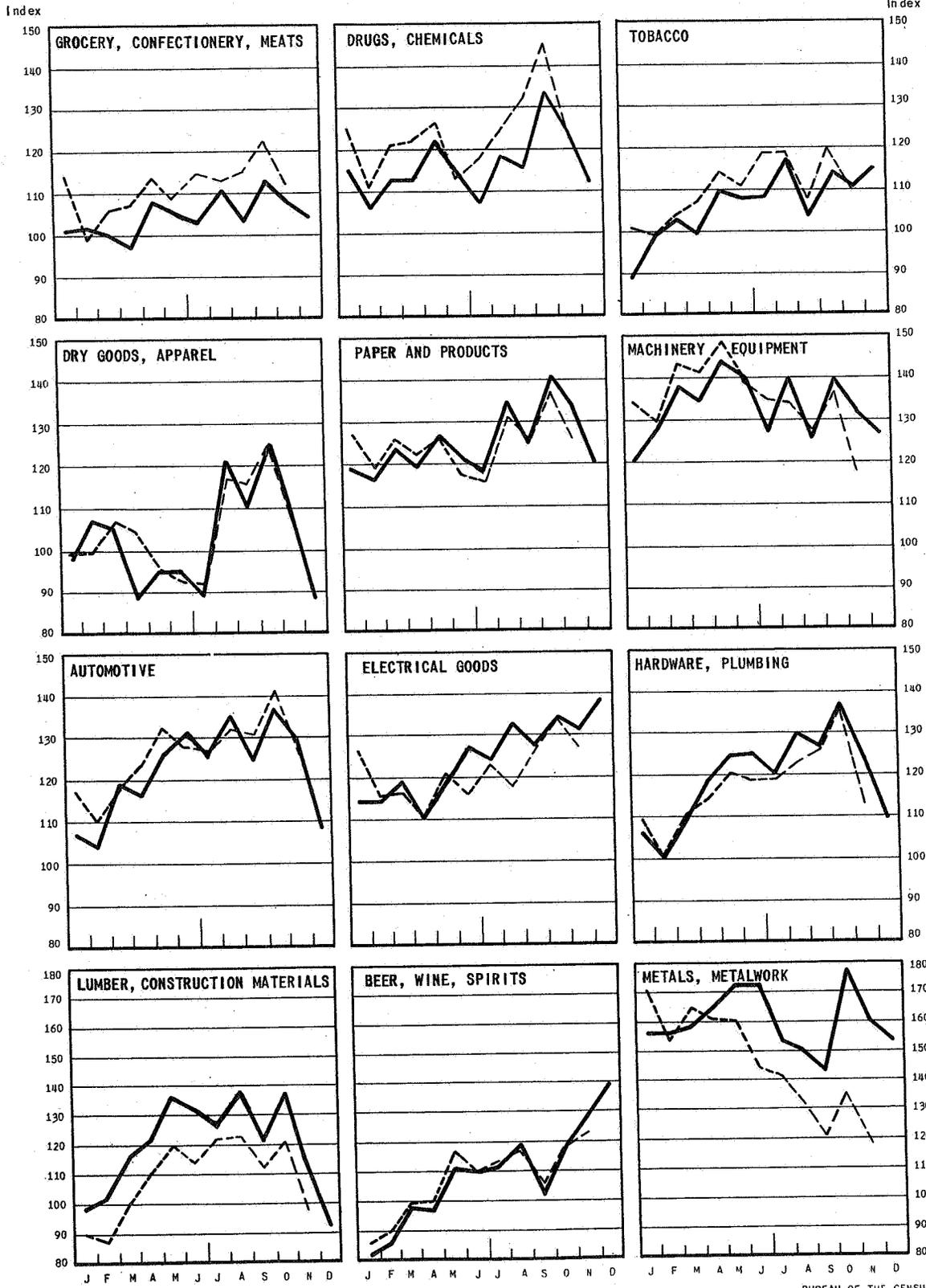
Estimates based on a sample are subject to sampling variability and thus are not expected to be in exact agreement with a complete census taken with the same enumeration procedures. For all trades combined, the sampling variability of the "composite" sales estimates for any individual month, is less than one percent at the one sigma level. That is to say, the chances are about two out of three that the estimated sales shown would differ by less than one percent from the results of a complete enumeration. The variability of estimates for kind-of-business groups and individual kinds of business is generally higher than for total merchant wholesale trade but for most trades the sampling variability is less than 5 percent at the one sigma level. Table IA presents these sampling variabilities of the estimates for February, March, April and May 1957. Since these measures are also subject to sampling variability they should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. The sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals has not been evaluated. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

These measures do not include biases that may arise from other nonsampling errors, such as failure of respondent to submit correct figures or to submit a report in time for tabulation. In preparing the dollar volume estimates, an estimate is included for those firms that fail to respond. To the extent that the estimates for these firms may differ from the actual figures, nonresponse affects the reliability of the dollar volume estimate. As a result, dollar volume estimates are not published separately in a few trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 11 percent of the total sales in May 1957 were imputed for nonresponse.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—KINDS OF BUSINESS  
1956 AND 1957

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

1956 = —  
1957 = - - -



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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

Table 1.--ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1956 - NOVEMBER 1957  
(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1956												Total 1956
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,032	9,172	9,571	9,296	10,144	9,894	9,408	10,498	9,790	11,211	10,435	9,944	118,395
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	3,994	4,085	4,372	4,346	4,680	4,589	4,219	4,638	4,331	4,895	4,501	4,192	52,842
Automotive wholesalers.....	353	344	396	384	417	434	411	436	410	453	428	358	4,824
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers....	280	276	318	306	333	351	344	365	344	386	366	296	3,965
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors..	603	602	627	580	616	668	641	690	661	700	692	727	7,807
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors....	272	285	297	295	319	350	326	336	317	338	328	344	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	331	317	330	285	297	318	315	354	344	362	364	383	4,000
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	184	193	212	194	199	197	181	223	216	250	234	210	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers..	125	133	147	133	134	131	118	145	144	170	162	139	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	387	366	404	432	455	458	441	477	463	501	453	398	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	175	176	184	198	206	209	189	205	196	212	198	179	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	212	190	220	234	249	249	252	273	266	289	255	219	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	540	560	636	669	743	725	705	769	675	759	624	511	7,916
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	337	338	361	373	410	398	392	433	363	402	327	279	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	203	222	275	296	333	327	313	336	312	357	297	232	3,503
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,004	1,073	1,158	1,120	1,210	1,170	1,063	1,173	1,048	1,170	1,104	1,054	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	506	541	574	523	569	522	493	546	483	566	564	548	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors..	70	74	78	74	79	79	83	92	85	92	90	84	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	105	103	102	108	116	111	97	112	111	116	104	98	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors....	438	437	442	460	483	483	438	428	405	501	447	428	5,390
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	276	282	303	312	325	325	306	287	274	346	306	269	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	162	155	139	148	158	158	132	141	131	155	141	159	1,779
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	425	439	419	434	470	385	280	361	366	457	420	408	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	267	275	261	267	304	248	167	231	238	306	291	283	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	158	164	158	167	166	137	113	130	128	151	129	125	1,726
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,038	5,087	5,199	4,950	5,464	5,305	5,189	5,860	5,459	6,316	5,934	5,752	65,553
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,459	1,479	1,442	1,405	1,560	1,517	1,498	1,606	1,489	1,630	1,556	1,505	18,146
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	613	624	631	602	667	648	620	669	639	690	657	630	7,690
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	561	583	537	528	587	588	583	620	553	606	578	571	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	46	48	50	45	48	46	45	50	47	52	54	51	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	239	224	224	230	258	235	248	267	250	282	267	253	2,977
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	354	361	384	393	451	469	465	416	345	376	397	409	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	132	116	122	120	131	131	124	133	120	127	148	149	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	222	245	262	273	320	338	341	283	225	249	249	260	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	385	406	459	454	532	520	532	565	482	572	606	657	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	151	152	166	177	220	229	265	270	197	199	182	198	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	234	254	293	277	312	291	267	295	285	373	424	459	3,764
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers....	322	299	316	316	342	319	301	334	326	375	348	315	3,913
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).	204	191	196	189	202	192	185	208	206	231	223	202	2,429
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers...	95	87	96	100	111	97	89	98	93	116	100	92	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	24	27	29	30	27	28	27	28	25	21	310
Tobacco distributors.....	238	264	275	264	295	289	288	314	275	304	298	308	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	464	505	496	448	450	450	420	576	524	594	520	419	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers....	149	172	176	144	154	137	159	238	206	228	201	146	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	183	192	184	182	183	197	170	221	203	223	197	162	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	293	286	306	294	313	299	291	332	309	347	331	296	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	253	247	265	253	273	255	252	287	265	294	280	248	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	70	75	93	96	92	99	98	117	116	133	127	116	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	110	103	87	87	87	99	91	120	118	130	129	120	1,281

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS<sup>1</sup>—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS—Continued  
 JANUARY 1956 - NOVEMBER 1957

Kind of business	1957											11 Months	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	1957	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,945	9,097	9,744	9,834	10,168	9,610	9,916	10,197	9,814	10,713	9,590	108,639	108,464
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	4,278	3,981	4,292	4,314	4,450	4,243	4,267	4,329	4,222	4,511	3,907	46,774	48,650
Automotive wholesalers.....	389	366	392	408	428	424	421	439	434	467	418	4,586	4,466
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	321	298	319	334	352	359	363	377	373	406	359	3,861	3,669
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	665	609	613	588	623	614	650	624	673	709	667	7,035	7,080
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	301	291	293	297	308	315	325	307	332	341	311	3,421	3,463
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	364	318	320	291	315	299	325	317	341	368	356	3,614	3,617
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	189	189	205	212	200	193	185	210	216	245	223	2,267	2,283
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	127	128	140	144	135	131	120	135	142	167	152	1,521	1,542
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	398	365	405	420	443	435	436	452	463	499	415	4,731	4,837
Hardware wholesalers.....	184	173	191	196	205	196	192	197	201	215	177	2,127	2,141
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	214	192	214	224	238	239	244	255	262	284	238	2,604	2,689
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	496	476	551	609	659	628	667	675	613	666	538	6,577	7,405
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	295	259	307	330	343	329	343	342	307	331	269	3,455	4,134
Construction materials distributors.....	201	217	244	279	316	299	324	333	305	335	269	3,122	3,271
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,121	1,081	1,194	1,182	1,234	1,166	1,131	1,121	1,071	1,141	985	12,427	12,293
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	509	547	593	540	560	512	509	512	490	548	455	5,856	5,887
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	78	77	83	85	85	84	89	96	99	99	91	966	896
Service establishment supply houses.....	113	110	113	112	122	116	106	115	113	120	106	1,246	1,185
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	478	430	459	452	448	404	396	368	339	378	331	4,482	4,962
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	317	287	312	317	311	275	272	252	230	257	217	3,047	3,342
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	161	143	147	135	137	129	124	116	108	121	114	1,435	1,620
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	476	393	393	369	328	308	320	361	319	303	229	3,799	4,456
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	325	266	263	236	199	193	208	232	212	192	132	2,459	2,855
Waste materials dealers.....	150	127	130	133	129	115	112	129	107	111	97	1,340	1,601
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,667	5,116	5,454	5,520	5,718	5,367	5,649	5,868	5,591	6,202	5,683	61,865	59,814
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,642	1,433	1,530	1,544	1,630	1,579	1,660	1,630	1,633	1,768	1,627	17,677	16,641
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	707	627	655	676	698	676	703	692	701	758	679	7,572	7,060
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	611	521	566	557	591	591	610	593	600	647	612	6,499	6,326
Confectionery wholesalers.....	52	49	53	50	52	49	50	51	55	61	58	580	531
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	272	236	256	261	289	264	297	294	278	302	278	3,026	3,724
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	357	341	352	394	429	418	442	413	375	419	402	4,342	4,411
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	121	106	109	124	127	116	129	142	138	163	166	1,441	1,404
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	236	235	243	270	302	302	313	271	297	256	236	2,901	3,007
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	408	425	468	472	551	520	543	556	501	561	583	5,589	5,513
Beer, ale distributors.....	158	158	172	193	227	234	269	254	205	198	185	2,253	2,208
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	250	267	296	279	324	286	274	302	297	363	398	3,336	3,305
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	350	312	340	344	354	317	331	350	373	406	350	3,826	3,598
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	224	199	213	208	214	196	211	222	241	271	234	2,433	2,227
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	103	92	102	108	110	93	90	99	103	107	92	1,099	1,082
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	25	28	30	28	30	29	28	28	24	294	289
Tobacco distributors.....	271	266	280	285	307	297	319	319	288	320	295	3,347	3,104
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	468	472	507	491	457	440	434	567	549	593	506	5,484	5,457
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	145	160	184	182	156	136	151	236	212	221	208	1,991	1,964
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	192	183	194	190	187	193	186	220	223	240	190	2,198	2,135
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	313	294	310	302	312	291	287	323	310	339	312	3,393	3,401
Paper wholesalers.....	268	252	265	258	271	250	250	279	267	290	265	2,915	2,924
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	r 74	r 83	r 96	r 108	r 101	r 104	r 111	r 108	r 103	r 108	r 99	1,167	1,116
Coal wholesalers.....	124	105	109	108	105	110	110	101	103	108	108	1,180	1,161

<sup>1</sup> Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.  
 r Revised

Table 1A.--SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months March 1957 from February 1957 (percent)	Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months March 1957 from February 1957 (percent)
	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957			Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	
	(percent)						(percent)				
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	Grocery, confectionery, meat.....	2	2	1	2	2
Automotive.....	3	3	3	3	2	General-line grocery.....	2	2	2	2	2
Automotive equipment, tire-tube...	3	3	4	3	2	Specialty-line grocery.....	4	4	4	4	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances..	2	2	2	2	1	Confectionery.....	4	3	3	3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies.....	2	2	2	3	2	Meat, meat products.....	4	5	4	4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts.....	2	4	4	3	2	Farm products (edible).....	3	3	3	3	2
Furniture, home furnishings.....	3	3	4	4	2	Poultry, poultry products.....	5	3	4	5	2
Home furnishings, floor coverings..	4	4	4	4	2	Fresh fruit, vegetables.....	5	4	4	3	2
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, wine, distilled spirits.....	2	2	2	2	2
Hardware.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, ale.....	4	3	4	3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies.....	3	4	4	4	2	Wine, distilled spirits.....	3	3	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials.....	3	3	3	2	2	Drugs, chemicals, allied products...	2	2	2	2	1
Lumber, millwork.....	5	6	6	5	3	Drugs (general and specialty lines)	2	2	2	2	2
Construction materials.....	3	3	3	4	2	Industrial chemicals, explosives..	5	4	5	4	2
Machinery, equipment, supplies.....	2	3	2	2	2	Paint.....	4	4	3	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies.....	3	5	4	4	3	Tobacco.....	2	3	2	2	1
Professional equipment, supplies...	3	3	4	3	2	Dry goods, apparel.....	3	3	3	3	2
Service establishment supply houses	5	3	4	4	3	Clothing, furnishings, footwear...	5	5	5	5	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)....	2	3	3	3	3	Dry goods (general and specialty lines).....	6	6	6	5	3
Iron, steel and products.....	3	5	4	4	4	Paper, allied products.....	3	2	2	2	1
Nonferrous metals.....	3	3	2	4	1	Paper.....	3	2	2	2	1
Scrap, waste materials.....	2	2	3	3	2	Amusement, sporting goods.....	6	4	4	4	4
Iron, steel scrap.....	3	3	4	4	3	Coal wholesalers.....	5	6	6	6	2
Waste materials.....	4	4	6	6	3						

Note: The above table provides approximate measures of the sampling variability of the dollar volume estimates of sales and of the ratio between sales for the two consecutive months specified. The ratio between sales for two consecutive months generally has a smaller sampling error than the level estimates in those months. These sampling errors are themselves subject to sampling variability and thus should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. Differences from month to month may be due to this error in the estimates of sampling error. Differences may also result from seasonal or cyclical fluctuation in the sales of individual firms (see page 2, for statement on nonsampling errors).

The sampling errors shown above can be converted to a range by the following computation: Multiply the sampling error by the estimate (whether it is a dollar volume estimate or a ratio). Add and subtract the resulting product from the published estimate. The resulting range is expected to include the "expected value" (that is, the value which could be obtained from a complete enumeration) about two out of three times. Doubling the sampling error and repeating the above process will give a range which will include the "expected value" about 19 out of 20 times.

To illustrate the computation of these ranges for monthly dollar volume estimates, consider the estimate made for all durable goods in March 1957. The published estimate is \$4,292 million while the sampling error shown for this month is 1.4 percent (or .014). Multiplying \$4,292 million by .014, we obtain \$60 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between \$4,232 and \$4,352 million. Doubling the given sampling error gives us the limits, \$4,172 to \$4,412 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from February 1957 to March 1957 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing \$4,292 million by \$3,981 million, is 1.08 (it can also be expressed as an 8% increase). The sampling error of this statistic is 0.7 percent (.007). Multiplying 1.08 by .007, we obtain .008 as the standard error of the ratio. There is a probability of two out of three that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.07 to 1.09 while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.06 to 1.10.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

NOVEMBER 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Nov. 1957 from--		November 1957	November 1956	October 1957
	November 1957 from--		11 mo. 1957 from 11 mo. 1956	November 1956	October 1957			
	November 1956	October 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-8	-10	<sup>r</sup> 0	+1	0	135	122	121
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-13	-13	-4	+4	-1	186	153	160
Automotive wholesalers.....	-2	-10	+3	+3	+1	198	187	178
Motor-vehicle distributors*.....	-3	-5	-5	-3	+2	118	123	124
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	-2	-12	+5	+3	+1	213	198	187
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	-4	-6	-1	+3	-1	169	160	164
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-5	-9	-1	+6	+1	168	149	153
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-2	-3	0	+1	-3	171	170	175
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-5	-9	-1	0	-1	163	144	148
Furniture wholesalers*.....	-5	-7	+2	-3	+1	171	161	161
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	-6	-9	-1	+2	-2	158	135	141
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-8	-17	-2	-4	-3	229	209	194
Hardware wholesalers.....	-11	-18	-1	-3	-4	261	233	222
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-7	-16	-3	-4	-2	196	184	164
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-14	-19	-11	-5	-2	123	116	96
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-18	-19	-16	-9	-1	179	176	139
Construction materials distributors.....	-9	-20	-5	+1	-2	86	76	68
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-11	-14	+1	+6	-1	200	164	172
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*.....	+5	+7	+1	+4	-1	240	245	218
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*.....	-4	-8	+3	+4	+3	177	166	161
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-19	-20	-1	+10	0	184	127	152
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+1	-8	+8	+5	0	201	184	170
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*.....	+8	-3	+8	+1	0	149	143	132
Service establishment supply houses.....	+2	-12	+5	+1	-1	132	127	116
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-26	-12	-10	+27	+1	264	155	218
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-30	-16	-9	+29	0	336	180	268
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-19	-6	-12	+12	+2	105	82	91
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-46	-25	-15	-13	+3	72	42	53
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-55	-31	-14	-19	-1	78	38	52
Waste materials dealers.....	-25	-13	-16	-4	+2	65	52	55
Jewelry wholesalers*.....	<sup>r</sup> -8	+1	-3	+3	-4	208	176	237
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-4	-8	<sup>r</sup> +3	-2	+2	98	96	89
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	<sup>r</sup> +5	-8	+6	+3	+2	74	74	66
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	-10	+7	+1	+1	96	98	89
Voluntary groups*.....	+2	-7	+6	+2	+2	88	87	82
Retailer-cooperative*.....	+7	-12	+12	+8	-1	65	67	62
Nonaffiliated*.....	0	-9	+4	0	+1	116	119	106
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+6	-5	+3	+5	+4	74	71	64
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+7	-5	+9	+5	+2	91	88	90
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+4	-8	+11	+12	+1	21	20	19
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	+1	-4	-2	-19	0	22	26	22
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	+12	+2	+3	-20	-3	20	25	22
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-5	-8	-4	-9	+1	24	26	22
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	-4	+4	+1	-1	+6	121	118	114
Beer, ale distributors.....	+2	-7	+2	-5	-8	60	61	59
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	-6	+10	+1	-1	+9	154	149	151
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	+1	-14	+6	+9	-2	143	133	128
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+5	-14	+9	+12	-3	158	147	143
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	-8	-14	+2	0	0	103	101	91
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	-4	-14	+2	+9	0	163	143	136
Tobacco distributors.....	-1	-8	+5	+3	+3	58	55	52
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-1	-15	+1	+3	0	212	183	187
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	+3	-6	+1	+7	-4	170	145	160
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	-4	-21	+3	+5	+2	258	208	213
Piece goods converters*.....	-10	-17	-3	-12	+4	207	198	185
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	-6	-8	0	-1	+2	113	107	100
Paper wholesalers.....	-5	-7	0	-2	+3	110	106	96
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*.....	-12	-3	+2	+7	-2	134	113	136
Farm products (raw materials) merchants*.....	-16	-11	+8	-21	+1	116	133	101
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	-5	-7	+6	+6	+2	102	87	93
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.....	-1	-2	+5	+7	-4	147	143	151
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*.....	+12	-9	+15	+5	-5	113	125	106
Coal wholesalers.....	-23	-8	+2	-1	-3	114	94	107
Farm supplies wholesalers*.....	-13	-9	+3	-9	+6	144	133	131

\* See text, page 2.

<sup>r</sup> Revised since Advance Release dated January 3, 1958.

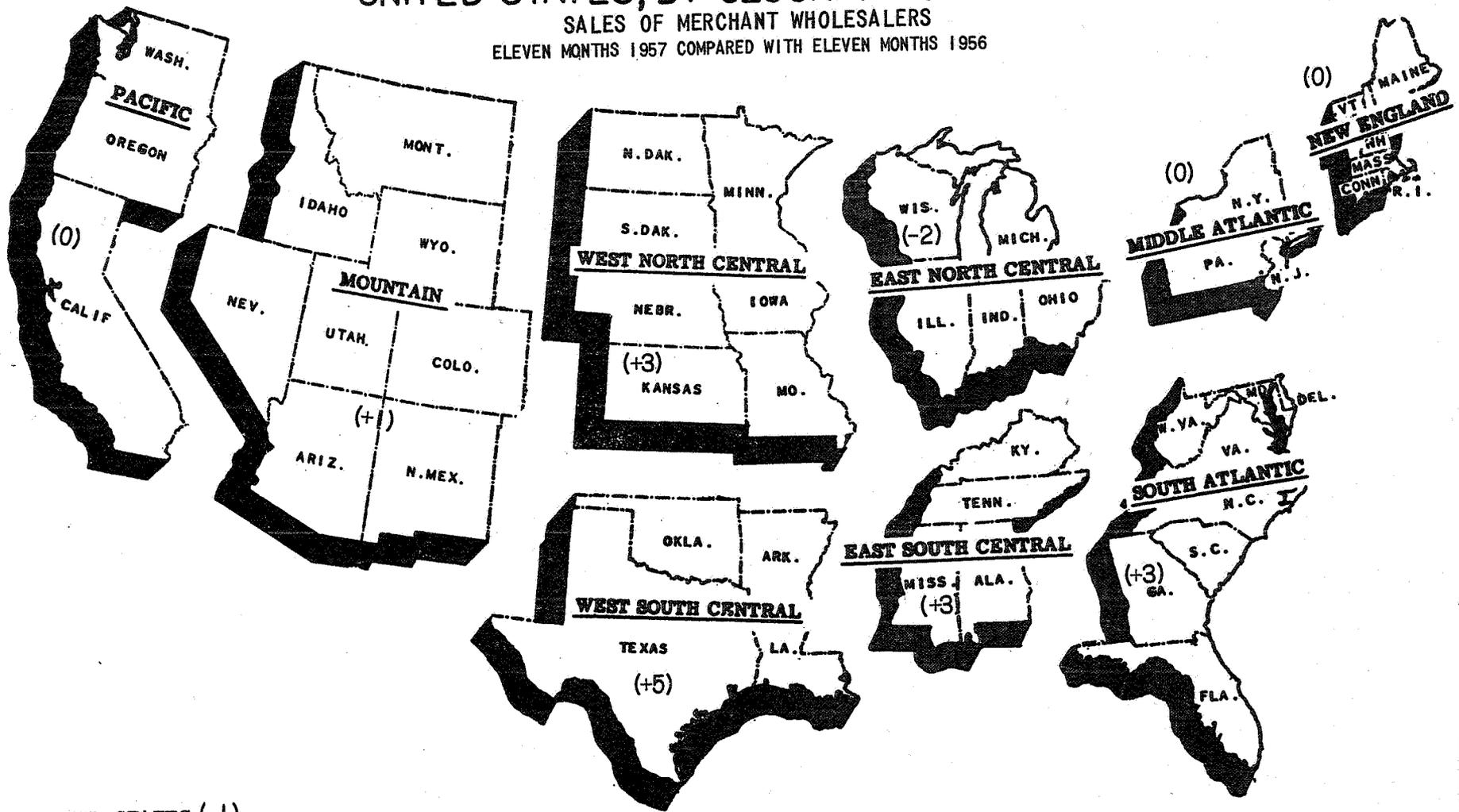
Table 3.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Nov. 1957 from--		Nov. 1957	Nov. 1956	Oct. 1957
	November 1957 from--		11 mo. 1957 from 11 mo. 1956	Nov. 1957 from--				
	Nov. 1956	Oct. 1957		Nov. 1956	Oct. 1957			
<b>MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....</b>	-8	-10	0	+1	0	135	122	121
New England.....	-8	-10	0	+2	0	127	107	115
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	-9	0	0	+2	119	108	104
East North Central.....	-12	-13	-2	+4	-1	135	112	119
West North Central.....	-1	-12	+3	-1	0	140	141	124
South Atlantic.....	-5	-4	+3	+1	0	153	142	143
East South Central.....	-11	-13	+3	-3	0	154	141	137
West South Central.....	-4	-10	+5	-3	+1	147	148	128
Mountain.....	-9	-9	+1	+4	+1	184	155	169
Pacific.....	-7	-12	0	+6	-1	133	115	120
<b>Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....</b>	-2	-12	+5	+3	+1	213	198	187
Middle Atlantic.....	-10	-5	+5	-7	0	135	134	126
East North Central.....	-3	-13	+8	+16	+2	240	189	196
West North Central.....	+5	-13	+10	+8	+3	250	235	211
South Atlantic.....	0	-7	+4	+2	+1	209	188	191
East South Central.....	-4	-9	+6	+11	+1	257	222	222
West South Central.....	-7	-19	+4	+2	+1	238	214	191
Mountain.....	-6	(X)	+4	(X)	-4	273	185	257
Pacific.....	+2	-13	+3	0	-3	201	200	196
<b>Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....</b>	-5	-9	-1	+6	+1	168	149	153
New England.....	-6	-15	-10	+6	+5	205	161	154
Middle Atlantic.....	-4	-13	-1	+13	+5	145	124	121
East North Central.....	-14	-10	-8	+8	-3	162	127	154
West North Central.....	-10	-9	+1	+4	-2	187	171	174
South Atlantic.....	+6	+15	-1	+4	0	139	148	163
East South Central.....	(X)	-19	(X)	-7	+5	165	187	147
West South Central.....	+8	+16	+2	+10	+13	202	204	192
Mountain.....	(X)	+1	(X)	+12	+6	152	139	147
Pacific.....	-15	-25	0	+1	-3	184	142	143
<b>Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.....</b>	-2	-3	0	+1	-3	171	170	175
New England.....	-9	-6	+2	-1	+1	189	173	175
Middle Atlantic.....	+11	+2	+2	-13	-2	145	188	164
East North Central.....	-8	-11	-1	+8	-2	168	144	156
West North Central.....	-10	-1	-9	+7	-6	192	169	199
South Atlantic.....	-1	+2	+4	-10	-6	162	193	190
East South Central.....	(X)	+1	(X)	(X)	-5	270	228	259
West South Central.....	+4	-7	-6	(X)	-4	224	206	208
Pacific.....	-8	-2	+5	-12	-2	161	162	171
<b>Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....</b>	-5	-9	-1	0	-1	163	144	148
New England.....	0	-18	0	(X)	-8	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	-7	0	+3	+2	131	117	121
East North Central.....	-14	-16	+1	-6	-3	161	140	143
West North Central.....	+2	-1	+5	(X)	-5	188	192	194
South Atlantic.....	-4	-13	0	(X)	0	151	138	137
West South Central.....	-10	(X)	-2	-5	-7	175	155	154
Pacific.....	-14	(X)	-3	-1	0	243	190	207
<b>Hardware wholesalers.....</b>	-11	-18	-1	-3	-4	261	233	222
New England.....	-7	-11	+2	+10	-4	300	261	275
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	-23	-5	-3	0	262	253	198
East North Central.....	-22	-20	-3	-3	-3	257	207	212
West North Central.....	-12	-20	-1	-6	-4	258	242	217
South Atlantic.....	-13	-14	-1	+1	-2	294	253	255
East South Central.....	-13	-13	-3	-4	-3	201	203	206
West South Central.....	-9	-14	-2	-2	-2	282	262	244
Mountain.....	-11	-23	-8	+6	0	332	278	248
Pacific.....	-7	-12	-1	+4	-3	250	216	221
<b>Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....</b>	-7	-16	-3	-4	-2	196	184	164
New England.....	-10	-20	-9	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	-17	-4	-6	-3	193	192	160
East North Central.....	-8	-20	-4	+1	-2	191	174	156
West North Central.....	-20	-21	-4	-1	-2	262	213	186
South Atlantic.....	-8	-12	-1	-11	0	176	172	155
East South Central.....	-15	-13	-9	(X)	0	314	237	262
West South Central.....	-4	-17	+2	(X)	-1	180	156	157
Mountain.....	-5	+1	-2	(X)	-4	192	192	220
Pacific.....	-1	-13	-4	-4	-3	179	183	152
<b>Lumber, construction materials distributors.....</b>	-14	-19	-11	-5	-2	123	116	96
New England.....	+2	-5	-5	(X)	-7	110	112	110
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	-21	-10	0	-6	110	102	92
East North Central.....	-16	-22	-12	-14	+2	147	139	106
West North Central.....	-4	-17	-9	(X)	-2	107	101	81
South Atlantic.....	(X)	-11	(X)	(X)	-5	61	59	48
East South Central.....	-15	-29	-2	+5	-1	186	158	137
West South Central.....	-14	-28	-3	-12	0	125	118	88
Mountain.....	-6	-16	-7	-3	-4	149	144	129
Pacific.....	-8	-17	-16	+10	0	97	80	81

See footnotes at end of table.

# UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS  
ELEVEN MONTHS 1957 COMPARED WITH ELEVEN MONTHS 1956



UNITED STATES (-1)

Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

NOVEMBER 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	Nov. 1957 from--		11 mo. 1957 from 11 mo. 1956	Percent change, Nov. 1957 from--		Nov. 1957	Nov. 1956	Oct. 1957
	Nov. 1956	Oct. 1957		Nov. 1956	Oct. 1957			
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	-19	-20	-1	+10	0	184	127	152
New England.....	(X)	-18	(X)	-10	0	154	122	108
Middle Atlantic.....	(X)	-25	(X)	+11	+1	181	129	131
East North Central.....	-29	-13	-3	-1	-3	190	126	168
South Atlantic.....	-6	-16	+4	(X)	-6	171	117	146
East South Central.....	-22	(X)	-3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	-17	-14	+1	+18	+3	190	135	156
Mountain.....	+3	(X)	+4	+12	+3	150	137	130
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	-10	+7	+1	+1	96	98	89
New England.....	-1	-4	+5	+5	+2	93	89	82
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	-8	+4	+4	+4	95	96	91
East North Central.....	+5	-5	+7	-2	-2	82	88	81
West North Central.....	0	-6	+4	0	0	88	88	83
South Atlantic.....	+2	-10	+5	+3	-6	114	119	109
East South Central.....	-1	-9	+7	-1	+1	117	116	105
West South Central.....	+4	-8	+8	+4	+3	111	112	101
Mountain.....	+2	-4	+4	+1	0	110	111	108
Pacific.....	+6	-15	+14	+17	+5	83	73	68
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+6	-5	+3	+5	+4	74	71	64
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	-7	0	+3	+7	74	75	68
East North Central.....	-1	-7	+5	+1	+1	72	68	63
West North Central.....	+18	-1	0	(X)	+2	109	130	107
South Atlantic.....	-9	-12	+4	+2	+3	89	82	76
West South Central.....	-2	-10	+9	-11	+7	54	55	44
Pacific.....	+2	-8	-1	+7	-3	53	41	44
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-5	-8	-4	-9	+1	24	26	22
New England.....	-8	-7	0	0	-10	28	24	35
Middle Atlantic.....	-10	-10	-3	(X)	+1	12	13	11
East North Central.....	-13	-8	-2	(X)	+2	18	22	16
South Atlantic.....	-2	+5	+1	-17	+8	(X)	(X)	(X)
East South Central.....	-9	-2	-5	(X)	+14	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	-7	-11	-1	(X)	+13	31	39	25
Pacific.....	-12	-12	-3	-7	-2	27	25	23
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+5	-14	+9	+12	-3	158	147	143
New England.....	+7	-10	+8	+6	+3	143	141	129
Middle Atlantic.....	+4	-18	+7	+4	-1	122	124	99
East North Central.....	+1	-16	+8	+8	-3	151	141	133
West North Central.....	+11	-7	+9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic.....	+8	-4	+9	+20	+1	167	152	161
East South Central.....	+6	-10	+10	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	+3	-9	+9	+13	-5	226	188	216
Mountain.....	-3	-15	+5	(X)	-10	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	+2	-12	+8	+12	-3	162	147	145
Tobacco distributors.....	-1	-8	+5	+3	+3	58	55	52
New England.....	-1	-5	+7	(X)	+8	68	65	58
Middle Atlantic.....	-1	-8	+5	+3	+10	39	39	34
East North Central.....	0	-6	+6	+6	+2	61	57	57
West North Central.....	-4	-9	+3	(X)	+1	61	58	53
South Atlantic.....	-1	-9	+8	+10	-3	59	51	53
East South Central.....	-4	-7	+3	-7	+1	51	48	46
West South Central.....	+2	-11	+6	+2	+1	55	56	49
Pacific.....	+6	-3	+8	+24	+6	73	73	66
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	-1	-15	+1	+3	0	212	183	187
New England.....	-20	-12	-2	-10	+2	174	163	148
Middle Atlantic.....	-10	-16	0	+2	+2	223	189	190
East North Central.....	-1	-4	+6	+5	-6	187	151	197
West North Central.....	-13	-28	+3	0	+12	246	214	178
South Atlantic.....	-10	-12	-4	+10	-7	203	176	175
Pacific.....	-8	+2	+6	(X)	-11	143	154	160

X Withheld due to extreme variation of reported data.

<sup>1</sup> See text, page 2.

r Revised since Advance Release dated January 3, 1958.

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its sales by commodity lines as reported to the Bureau of the Census. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

### DURABLE GOODS

#### Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, busses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

#### Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

#### Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

#### Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

#### Lumber, construction materials distributors

**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

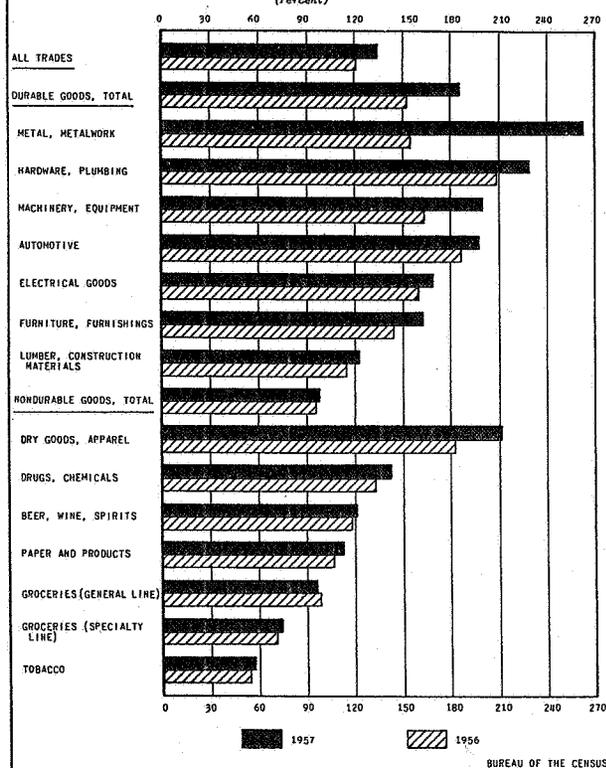
**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

#### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.

STOCKS--SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: NOVEMBER 1957 COMPARED WITH NOVEMBER 1956 (Percent)



#### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, handling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other machinery, equipment supplies distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general- or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

NONDURABLE GOODSGrocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, typewriter and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.

# MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

DECEMBER 1957

FOR RELEASE  
FEBRUARY 11, 1958

## SALES AND INVENTORIES

### Annual Sales

Annual 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers were estimated at \$117.9 billion, only slightly under 1956 sales of \$118.4 billion. Durable goods trades, with 1957 sales totaling \$50.5 billion, indicated a 5 percent decline from their 1956 sales of \$52.8 billion. In contrast, nondurable goods trades, with sales of \$67.4 billion in 1957, noted an increase of 3 percent over 1956 sales of \$65.6 billion.

Substantial declines from 1956 sales were reported by iron, steel products distributors (11%), nonferrous metals distributors (12%), lumber, millwork wholesalers (16%), waste materials dealers (17%) and iron, steel scrap dealers (18%). The largest gains were shown by wholesalers of confectionery (9%), drugs (9%), meat (11%) and books, magazines and newspapers (14%).

1957 sales were moderately ahead of 1956 sales in 5 geographic divisions, and at about the same level as 1956 in one geographic division, the Pacific. However, annual sales were 1 to 2 percent below 1956 in the 3 remaining divisions.

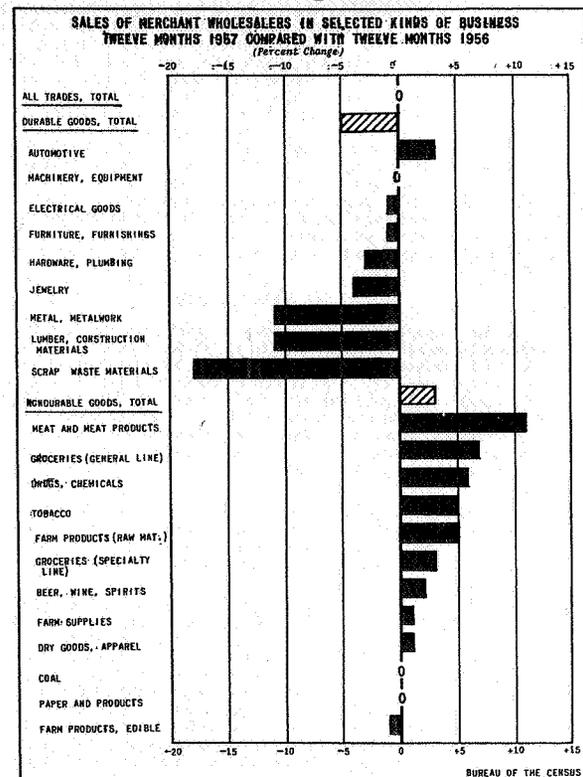
### December Sales

December 1957 sales of merchant wholesalers totaled \$9.3 billion, a decrease of 3 percent from November 1957 and 7 percent below December sales a year ago. The durable goods trades reflected sharper declines than the nondurable goods trades. December 1957 sales in the durable goods trades were down 6 percent from their November level and off 13 percent from sales a year ago. Sales in the nondurable goods trades were only slightly (1%) below November sales and 3 percent below December 1956. Notable seasonal gains were shown by beer, ale distributors (13%), tobacco distributors (13%) and wine, distilled spirits wholesalers (19%). For the third month in succession iron, steel scrap dealers reported the most substantial decline (57%) from year-ago sales. The largest increase was registered by confectionery wholesalers (12%).

All but one geographic division reported sales declines from November, varying from 2 to 4 percent. New England showed no change from last month. Compared with last year, the South Atlantic and Mountain Divisions showed a 2 percent increase. However, all other divisions experienced moderate declines ranging up to 8 percent in the East North Central Division.

### Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of December declined 4 percent during the month and were 2 percent lower than stocks on hand last year. Durable goods stocks showed a 3 percent decline from November but remained unchanged from a year ago. Inventories in the nondurable goods trades were down 5 percent from a month earlier and were off 4 percent from December 1956.



The December 1957 stock-sales ratio of 137 percent for all merchant wholesalers was 1 point below the November ratio but 4 points above the ratio for December 1956. The December stock-sales ratio for durable goods was 193 compared to the nondurable goods ratio of 100.

All geographic divisions showed small declines from November. Changes in inventory levels from last December were mixed, ranging from a decline of 6 percent in the East South Central Division to an increase of 6 percent in the South Atlantic Division.

### General

This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales of merchant wholesalers by kind of business from January 1956 through December 1957. These data are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of this sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 2 and 6. Also included in this report are sales and inventory trends and stock-sales ratios by kind of business, for the United States as a whole and by geographic division.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURE, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

1. Scope of Survey

This survey is limited to merchant wholesalers, which constitute the major portion of the broad field of wholesale trade, and excludes other types of wholesale trade such as manufacturers sales branches and sales offices; petroleum bulk stations; agents and brokers and assemblers of farm products. All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey.

Merchant wholesalers are defined in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual issued by the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, as "Establishments usually known as wholesalers, merchant wholesalers or jobbers, primarily engaged in buying, taking title to, and where customary, physically storing and handling goods and selling the goods at wholesale principally to retailers and industrial and commercial users. This group also includes industrial and distributors, exporters, and importers, cash-and-carry wholesalers; drop shippers, wagon distributors, etc. The establishments included in this group may perform operations on the goods incidental to the wholesale trading and delivery, such as installing equipment, and fixtures; and collecting and baling waste materials." Firms which, in addition to merchant wholesale establishments, operate other types of establishments, e.g., retail, manufacturing, etc., report in this survey only for their merchant wholesale establishments. A description of each kind-of-business classification shown in this report is included on pages 11 and 12.

2. Sample Design

Firms reporting in the survey are part of a probability sample representing merchant wholesalers in all kinds of business. The sample, which includes over 17,000 firms (about 26,000 establishments) is drawn from two sources: (1) 1954 Census of Business Lists representing all wholesalers (with paid employees) in business in 1954 and (2) Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (BOASI) Lists of wholesalers (with paid employees) entering business (or requesting new Employer Identification Numbers) since 1954. The sample is supplemented twice a year for new firms on the BOASI lists.

The reporting panel includes a fixed panel of about 1,400 very large firms reporting monthly and four rotating panels each containing about 3,900 smaller firms which report every fourth month. In any given month, the total reporting panel includes about 5,300 firms.

The number of firms selected in the sample for each kind of business varies from 150 to 650 firms, depending upon (a) the total number of firms in the trade, (b) the distribution of firms within the trade by sales size, and (c) whether geographic division trends are to be shown for the trade. In those kinds of business for which percentage changes are shown by geographic division, the sample chosen for the national estimates was increased by about 50 percent to provide wider representation by geographic division. In some of these trades, however, data are not shown separately for some geographic divisions because even this increase in the sample size will not provide reliable results in all geographic divisions.

3. Published Data

Sales.--This report includes monthly dollar volume estimates of sales by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 1) and sales trends (percent changes) derived from these estimates (Table 2). Sales trends are shown in Table 2 for some detailed kind of businesses for which estimates are not shown separately in Table 1. For these kinds of business (identified by \* in Table 2) the trends are based only on the weighted sales of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (Table 3). In Table 3 the trends for geographic division are based on weighted sales of identical firms; however, sales trends at the United States level are derived from the dollar volume estimates shown in Table 1.

Sales include sales of merchandise and receipts from repairs or other services to customers after deducting returns and allowances, and discounts. Sales of merchandise for others on a commission basis are also included. Local and State sales taxes, and Federal excise taxes are included.

Inventories.--This report presents inventory trends by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). These inventory trends are based on the weighted inventories of identical firms (i.e., firm reporting data for each of the months compared).

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented by kind of business for the United States as a whole (Table 2) and by geographic division (Table 3). The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing weighted stocks, at cost, by weighted sales for only those firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales in all three periods compared. Excluded from these ratios were all firms which report "zero" inventories (e.g., drop shippers). No adjustment is made in these calculations for the markup of sales, which varies from trade to trade. Stock-sales ratios for previous months shown in the current report may differ from those published in previous reports since the reporting panel varies.

4. Estimating Procedure

Each firm selected in the sample has an assigned weight which reflects its probability of selection in the sample. Large firms are selected with certainty, this 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.

For most firms reporting, data are available for each of three months (current, previous, and year ago). New firms reporting provide data for at least two months (current and previous). Sales and inventory figures reported for each firm are multiplied by its weight (the reciprocal of its probability of selection) and the results summarized to obtain the dollar volume estimates, percentage changes and stock-sales ratios shown in this report.

Volume estimates.--The summation of the weighted reports of sales for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the preceding month. However, the published estimate is a "composite" of two estimates (a) the unbiased estimate for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate obtained by multiplying the "composite" estimate for the previous month by the ratio of the current month unbiased to previous month unbiased estimates obtained from the summation of the current reports. The unbiased estimate (a) receives a weight of .3 while the ratio estimate (b) receives a weight of .7. The resulting weighted average provides a "composite" estimate of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than either of the two estimates taken alone. The estimates shown for January-June 1956 were not obtained in this manner. Since unbiased estimates were not available for this period from the new sample which was introduced in July 1956, monthly estimates prior to that date were calculated by dividing the "composite" estimates for January-June 1957 by the year-to-year ratio for each of these months obtained from weighted reports of identical firms.

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report, viz., (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates (2) percent changes based on the weighted data from identical firms (i.e., those reporting data for each of the months for which comparisons are made). The percentage changes based on identicals however, should not be regarded as an unbiased measure of percentage change. Since only those establishments reporting in both periods compared are included, the net change due to births and deaths is not reflected in the ratios shown.

5. Reliability of the Data

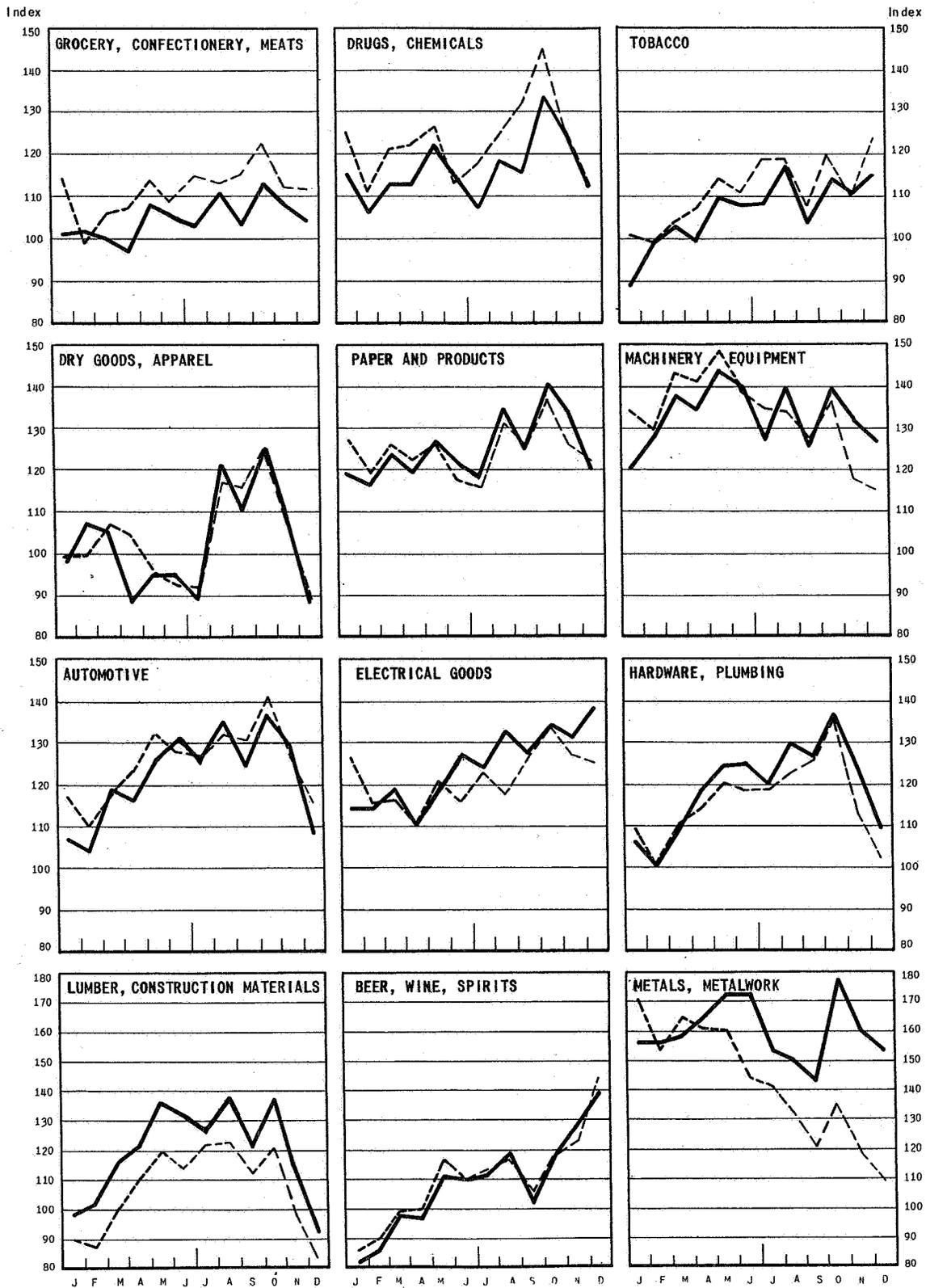
Estimates based on a sample are subject to sampling variability and thus are not expected to be in exact agreement with a complete census taken with the same enumeration procedures. For all trades combined, the sampling variability of the "composite" sales estimates for any individual month, is less than one percent at the one sigma level. That is to say, the chances are about two out of three that the estimated sales shown would differ by less than one percent from the results of a complete enumeration. The variability of estimates for kind-of-business groups and individual kinds of business is generally higher than for total merchant wholesale trade but for most trades the sampling variability is less than 5 percent at the one sigma level. Table IA presents these sampling variabilities of the estimates for February, March, April and May 1957. Since these measures are also subject to sampling variability they should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. The sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals has not been evaluated. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

These measures do not include biases that may arise from other nonsampling errors, such as failure of respondent to submit correct figures or to submit a report in time for tabulation. In preparing the dollar volume estimates, an estimate is included for those firms that fail to respond. To the extent that the estimates for these firms may differ from the actual figures, nonresponse affects the reliability of the dollar volume estimate. As a result, dollar volume estimates are not published separately in a few trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 11 percent of the total sales in May 1957 were imputed for nonresponse.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—KINDS OF BUSINESS  
1956 AND 1957

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

1956 = ———  
1957 = - - - -



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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

Table 1.—ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS—UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1956 - DECEMBER 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1956												Total 1956
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,032	9,172	9,571	9,296	10,144	9,894	9,408	10,498	9,790	11,211	10,435	9,944	118,395
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	3,994	4,085	4,372	4,346	4,680	4,589	4,219	4,638	4,331	4,895	4,501	4,192	52,842
Automotive wholesalers.....	353	344	396	384	417	434	411	436	410	453	428	358	4,824
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers....	280	276	318	306	333	351	344	365	344	386	366	296	3,965
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors..	603	602	627	580	616	668	641	690	661	700	692	727	7,807
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors....	272	285	297	295	319	350	326	336	317	338	328	344	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	331	317	330	285	297	318	315	354	344	362	364	383	4,000
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	184	193	212	194	199	197	181	223	216	250	234	210	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers..	125	133	147	133	134	131	118	145	144	170	162	139	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	387	366	404	432	455	458	441	477	463	501	453	398	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	175	176	184	198	206	209	189	205	196	212	198	179	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	212	190	220	234	249	249	252	273	266	289	255	219	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	540	560	636	669	743	725	705	769	675	759	624	511	7,916
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	337	338	361	373	410	398	392	433	363	402	327	279	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	203	222	275	296	333	327	313	336	312	357	297	232	3,503
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,004	1,073	1,158	1,120	1,210	1,170	1,063	1,173	1,048	1,170	1,104	1,054	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	506	541	574	523	569	522	493	546	483	566	564	548	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors..	70	74	78	74	79	79	83	92	85	92	90	84	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	105	103	102	108	116	111	97	112	111	116	104	98	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors....	438	437	442	460	483	483	438	428	405	501	447	428	5,390
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	276	282	303	312	325	325	306	287	274	346	306	269	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	162	155	139	148	158	158	132	141	131	155	141	159	1,779
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	425	439	419	434	470	385	280	361	366	457	420	408	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	267	275	261	267	304	248	167	231	238	306	291	283	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	158	164	158	167	166	137	113	130	128	151	129	125	1,726
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,038	5,087	5,199	4,950	5,464	5,305	5,189	5,860	5,459	6,316	5,934	5,752	65,553
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,459	1,479	1,442	1,405	1,560	1,517	1,498	1,606	1,489	1,630	1,556	1,505	18,146
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	613	624	631	602	667	648	620	669	639	690	657	630	7,690
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	561	583	537	528	587	588	585	620	553	606	578	571	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	46	48	50	45	48	46	45	50	47	52	54	51	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	239	224	224	230	258	235	248	267	250	282	267	253	2,977
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	354	361	384	393	451	469	465	416	345	376	397	409	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	132	116	122	120	131	131	124	133	120	127	148	149	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	222	245	262	273	320	338	341	283	225	249	249	260	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	385	406	459	454	532	520	532	565	482	572	606	657	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	151	152	166	177	220	229	265	270	197	199	182	198	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	234	254	293	277	312	291	267	295	285	373	424	459	3,764
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers....	322	299	316	316	342	319	301	334	326	375	348	315	3,913
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)..	204	191	196	189	202	192	185	208	206	231	223	202	2,429
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers...	95	87	96	100	111	97	89	98	93	116	100	92	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	24	27	29	30	27	28	27	28	25	21	310
Tobacco distributors.....	238	264	275	264	295	289	288	314	275	304	298	308	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	464	505	496	448	450	450	420	576	524	594	520	419	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers....	149	172	176	144	154	137	159	238	206	228	201	146	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	183	192	184	182	183	197	170	221	203	223	197	162	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	293	286	306	294	313	299	291	332	309	347	331	296	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	253	247	265	253	273	255	252	287	265	294	280	248	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	70	75	93	96	92	99	98	117	116	133	127	116	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	110	103	87	87	87	87	91	120	118	130	129	120	1,281

Table 1.--ESTIMATED MONTHLY SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS<sup>1</sup>--UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS--Continued

JANUARY 1956 - DECEMBER 1957

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1957												12 months	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1957	1956
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	9,945	9,097	9,744	9,834	10,168	9,610	9,916	10,197	9,814	10,713	9,590	9,261	117,890	118,395
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	4,278	3,981	4,292	4,314	4,450	4,243	4,267	4,329	4,222	4,511	3,907	3,656	50,450	52,842
Automotive wholesalers.....	389	366	392	408	428	424	421	439	434	467	418	386	4,972	4,824
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers...	321	298	319	334	352	359	363	377	373	406	359	329	4,190	3,965
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.	665	609	613	588	623	614	650	624	673	709	667	660	7,695	7,807
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors...	301	291	293	297	308	315	325	307	332	341	311	312	3,733	3,807
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	364	318	320	291	315	299	325	317	341	368	356	349	3,963	4,000
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	189	189	205	212	200	193	185	210	216	245	223	208	2,475	2,493
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.	127	128	140	144	135	131	120	135	142	167	152	139	1,660	1,681
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers....	398	365	405	420	443	435	436	452	463	499	415	372	5,103	5,235
Hardware wholesalers.....	184	173	191	196	205	196	192	197	201	215	177	164	2,291	2,327
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distrib- utors.....	214	192	214	224	238	239	244	255	262	284	238	208	2,812	2,908
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	496	476	551	609	659	628	667	675	613	666	538	448	7,025	7,916
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	295	259	307	330	343	329	343	342	307	331	269	232	3,687	4,413
Construction materials distributors.....	201	217	244	279	316	299	324	333	305	335	269	216	3,338	3,503
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	1,121	1,081	1,194	1,182	1,234	1,166	1,131	1,121	1,071	1,141	985	963	13,390	13,347
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	590	547	593	540	560	512	509	512	490	548	455	457	6,313	6,435
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.	78	77	83	85	85	84	89	96	99	99	91	92	1,058	980
Service establishment supply houses.....	113	110	113	112	122	116	106	115	113	120	106	106	1,352	1,283
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors...	478	430	459	452	448	404	396	368	339	378	331	305	4,788	5,390
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	317	287	312	317	311	275	272	252	230	257	217	184	3,231	3,611
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	161	143	147	135	137	129	124	116	108	121	114	122	1,557	1,779
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	476	393	393	369	328	308	320	361	319	303	229	2212	4,011	4,864
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	325	266	263	236	199	193	208	232	212	192	132	122	2,581	3,138
Waste materials dealers.....	150	127	130	133	129	115	112	129	107	111	97	90	1,430	1,726
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	5,667	5,116	5,454	5,520	5,718	5,367	5,649	5,868	5,591	6,202	5,683	5,605	67,440	65,553
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	1,642	1,433	1,530	1,544	1,630	1,579	1,660	1,630	1,633	1,768	1,627	1,602	19,278	18,146
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	707	627	655	676	698	676	703	692	701	758	679	650	8,222	7,690
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	611	521	566	557	591	591	610	593	600	647	612	616	7,115	6,897
Confectionery wholesalers.....	52	49	53	50	52	49	50	51	55	61	58	57	637	582
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	272	236	256	261	289	264	297	294	278	302	278	279	3,306	2,977
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	357	341	352	394	429	418	442	413	375	419	402	415	4,757	4,820
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	121	106	109	124	127	116	129	142	138	163	166	165	1,606	1,553
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	236	235	243	270	302	302	313	271	237	256	236	251	3,152	3,267
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	408	425	468	472	551	520	543	556	501	561	583	683	6,271	6,170
Beer, ale distributors.....	158	158	172	193	227	234	269	254	205	198	185	209	2,462	2,406
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	250	267	296	279	324	286	274	302	297	363	398	474	3,810	3,764
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers...	350	312	340	344	354	317	331	350	373	406	350	315	4,142	3,913
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	224	199	213	208	214	196	211	222	241	271	234	209	2,642	2,429
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers..	103	92	102	108	110	93	90	99	103	107	92	85	1,184	1,174
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	23	21	25	28	30	28	30	29	28	28	24	20	314	310
Tobacco distributors.....	271	266	280	285	307	297	319	319	288	320	295	332	3,579	3,412
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	468	472	507	491	457	440	434	567	549	593	506	424	5,908	5,866
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers...	145	160	184	182	156	136	151	236	212	221	208	149	2,140	2,110
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	192	183	194	190	187	193	186	220	223	240	190	172	2,370	2,297
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	313	294	310	302	312	291	287	323	310	339	312	301	3,694	3,697
Paper wholesalers.....	268	252	265	258	271	250	250	279	267	290	265	258	3,173	3,172
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers.....	74	83	96	99	101	104	111	119	125	129	126	124	1,291	1,233
Coal wholesalers.....	124	105	109	108	105	110	101	108	103	108	99	100	1,280	1,281

<sup>1</sup> Merchant Wholesalers total and Group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

Table 1A.--SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months	Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales				Sampling error of the ratio of sales in two consecutive months
	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957		Feb. 1957	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1957	May 1957	March 1957 from February 1957
	(percent)				(percent)		(percent)				(percent)
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5	NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	Grocery, confectionery, meat.....	2	2	1	2	2
Automotive.....	3	3	3	3	2	General-line grocery.....	2	2	2	2	2
Automotive equipment, tire-tube...	3	3	4	3	2	Specialty-line grocery.....	4	4	4	4	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances..	2	2	2	2	1	Confectionery.....	4	3	3	3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies.....	2	2	2	3	2	Meat, meat products.....	4	5	4	4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts.....	2	4	4	3	2	Farm products (edible).....	3	3	3	3	2
Furniture, home furnishings.....	3	3	4	4	2	Poultry, poultry products.....	5	3	4	5	2
Home furnishings, floor coverings..	4	4	4	4	2	Fresh fruit, vegetables.....	5	4	4	3	2
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, wine, distilled spirits.....	2	2	2	2	2
Hardware.....	2	3	3	3	2	Beer, ale.....	4	3	4	3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies.....	3	4	4	4	2	Wine, distilled spirits.....	3	3	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials.....	3	3	3	2	2	Drugs, chemicals, allied products...	2	2	2	2	1
Lumber, millwork.....	5	6	6	5	3	Drugs (general and specialty lines)	2	2	2	2	2
Construction materials.....	3	3	3	4	2	Industrial chemicals, explosives..	5	4	5	4	2
Machinery, equipment, supplies.....	2	3	2	2	2	Paint, varnish.....	4	4	3	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies.....	3	5	4	4	3	Tobacco.....	2	3	2	2	1
Professional equipment, supplies...	3	3	4	3	2	Dry goods, apparel.....	3	3	3	3	2
Service establishment supply houses	5	3	4	4	3	Clothing, furnishings, footwear...	5	5	5	5	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)....	2	3	3	3	3	Dry goods (general and specialty lines).....	6	6	6	5	3
Iron, steel and products.....	3	5	4	4	4	Paper, allied products.....	3	2	2	2	1
Nonferrous metals.....	3	3	2	4	1	Paper.....	3	2	2	2	1
Scrap, waste materials.....	2	2	3	3	2	Amusement, sporting goods.....	6	4	4	4	4
Iron, steel scrap.....	3	3	4	4	3	Coal wholesalers.....	5	6	6	6	2
Waste materials.....	4	4	6	6	3						

Note: The above table provides approximate measures of the sampling variability of the dollar volume estimates of sales and of the ratio between sales for the two consecutive months specified. The ratio between sales for two consecutive months generally has a smaller sampling error than the level estimates in those months. These sampling errors are themselves subject to sampling variability and thus should be regarded as giving a general rather than exact idea of the variability due to sampling. Differences from month to month may be due to this error in the estimates of sampling error. Differences may also result from seasonal or cyclical fluctuation in the sales of individual firms (see page 2, for statement on nonsampling errors).

The sampling errors shown above can be converted to a range by the following computation: Multiply the sampling error by the estimate (whether it is a dollar volume estimate or a ratio). Add and subtract the resulting product from the published estimate. The resulting range is expected to include the "expected value" (that is, the value which could be obtained from a complete enumeration) about two out of three times. Doubling the sampling error and repeating the above process will give a range which will include the "expected value" about 19 out of 20 times.

To illustrate the computation of these ranges for monthly dollar volume estimates, consider the estimate made for all durable goods in March 1957. The published estimate is \$4,292 million while the sampling error shown for this month is 1.4 percent (or .014). Multiplying \$4,292 million by .014, we obtain \$60 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between \$4,232 and \$4,352 million. Doubling the given sampling error gives us the limits, \$4,172 to \$4,412 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from February 1957 to March 1957 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing \$4,292 million by \$3,981 million, is 1.08 (it can also be expressed as an 8% increase). The sampling error of this statistic is 0.7 percent (.007). Multiplying 1.08 by .007, we obtain .008 as the standard error of the ratio. There is a probability of two out of three that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.07 to 1.09 while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.06 to 1.10.

Table 2.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

DECEMBER 1957

Kind of business	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Dec. 1957 from--		December 1957	December 1956	November 1957
	December 1957 from--		12 mo. 1957 from 12 mo. 1956	December 1956	November 1957			
	December 1956	November 1957						
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-7	-3	0	-2	-4	137	133	138
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-13	-6	-5	0	-3	193	171	185
Automotive wholesalers.....	+8	-8	+3	+2	-2	201	204	188
Motor-vehicle distributors*.....	-10	-5	-5	-11	+7	137	139	127
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+11	-8	+6	+3	-3	214	218	200
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors.....	-9	-1	-1	0	-7	153	136	162
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-9	0	-2	+2	-8	142	125	155
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors.....	-9	-2	-1	-2	-7	168	151	171
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-1	-7	-1	-5	-6	178	181	183
Furniture wholesalers*.....	-5	0	+1	+4	-7	205	168	217
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.....	0	-9	-1	-7	-6	163	173	165
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers.....	-7	-10	-3	-3	-5	240	233	231
Hardware wholesalers.....	-8	-7	-2	-3	-5	251	244	244
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-5	-13	-3	-5	-5	227	221	216
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-12	-17	-11	-3	0	136	138	113
Lumber, millwork wholesalers.....	-17	-14	-16	-4	0	174	169	146
Construction materials distributors.....	-7	-20	-5	+3	0	112	105	92
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-9	-2	0	+3	-1	220	201	219
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*.....	-13	-21	+1	+4	-1	223	152	169
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*.....	-8	+6	+2	+2	0	184	184	215
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.....	-17	0	-2	+1	-1	190	161	194
Professional equipment, supplies distributors.....	+10	+1	+8	+5	+1	206	202	189
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*.....	+7	-2	+8	+11	+2	187	176	169
Service establishment supply houses.....	+8	0	+5	-1	0	127	144	125
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors.....	-29	-8	-11	+9	-1	284	198	263
Iron, steel and products distributors.....	-32	-15	-11	+10	-1	343	249	313
Nonferrous metals distributors.....	-23	+7	-12	+3	-4	109	69	107
Scrap, waste materials dealers.....	-48	-7	-18	-2	+5	104	60	91
Iron, steel scrap dealers.....	-57	-8	-18	-1	+8	102	49	89
Waste materials dealers.....	-28	-7	-17	+2	+3	105	81	93
Jewelry wholesalers*.....	-15	-8	-4	-19	-3	135	137	134
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL.....	-3	-1	+3	-4	-5	100	104	105
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers.....	+6	-2	+6	0	-3	76	81	78
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	-4	+7	+2	0	102	106	104
Voluntary groups*.....	+4	-4	+6	0	-7	92	94	95
Retailer-cooperative*.....	+6	-5	+11	+10	-5	83	82	84
Nonaffiliated*.....	+6	-4	+5	0	-6	119	129	121
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+8	+1	+3	-4	+3	76	83	75
Confectionery wholesalers.....	+12	+2	+9	+9	-4	58	58	65
Meat, meat products wholesalers.....	+10	0	+11	+3	+1	18	20	19
Farm products (edible) distributors.....	+1	+3	-1	-9	-9	20	22	23
Poultry, poultry products distributors.....	+11	-1	+3	-15	-5	18	20	20
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-3	+6	-4	-6	-12	22	23	25
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+4	+17	+2	-4	-17	81	88	113
Beer, ale distributors.....	+6	+13	+2	-5	-16	45	51	63
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.....	+3	+19	+1	-3	-17	101	106	142
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers.....	0	-10	+6	+5	-5	158	153	151
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+3	-11	+9	+9	-6	168	162	165
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.....	-8	-8	+1	-1	-2	124	117	114
Paint, varnish wholesalers.....	-5	-17	+1	-9	-2	239	259	201
Tobacco distributors.....	+8	+13	+5	+8	-10	55	51	69
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+1	-16	+1	+1	-4	195	188	180
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.....	+2	-28	+1	+7	-3	175	163	154
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+6	-9	+3	-3	-5	220	222	212
Piece goods converters*.....	-4	-5	-3	+2	-2	184	168	176
Paper, allied products wholesalers.....	+2	-4	0	-2	-4	123	133	124
Paper wholesalers.....	+4	-3	0	-3	-4	122	134	124
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*.....	-6	-9	+1	+2	-2	130	127	134
Farm products (raw materials) merchants*.....	-19	-14	+5	-22	+1	165	168	138
Other nondurable goods wholesalers.....	-5	+1	+5	+5	-5	121	109	130
Amusement, sporting goods distributors.....	+7	-2	+5	+14	-15	125	118	148
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*.....	+8	-3	+14	+24	-1	104	102	94
Coal wholesalers.....	-17	-1	0	0	-3	133	121	146
Farm supplies wholesalers*.....	-14	+1	+1	-12	+7	218	223	214

\* See text, page 2.

r Revised since Advance Release dated February 3, 1958.

Table 3.—TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios (percent)		
	Percent change			Percent change, Dec. 1957 from--		Dec. 1957	Dec. 1956	Nov. 1957
	December 1957 from--		12 mo. 1957 from	Dec. 1956	Nov. 1957			
	Dec. 1956	Nov. 1957	12 mo. 1956					
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL.....	-7	-3	0	-2	-4	137	133	138
New England.....	-6	0	-1	0	-6	116	107	128
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	-4	-1	-4	-2	116	111	116
East North Central.....	-8	-2	-2	+2	-4	143	131	144
West North Central.....	-3	-4	+2	-3	-4	141	140	148
South Atlantic.....	+2	-3	+3	+6	-6	145	137	149
East South Central.....	-3	-4	+3	-6	-1	186	202	168
West South Central.....	-6	-2	+4	-2	-4	147	143	151
Mountain.....	+2	-3	+1	+1	-5	131	137	135
Pacific.....	-6	-3	0	-3	-5	146	143	150
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.....	+11	-8	+6	+3	-3	214	218	200
New England.....	-18	-11	+7	+3	+2	121	100	112
Middle Atlantic.....	+25	-1	+6	-5	-4	168	243	161
East North Central.....	+3	-6	+8	+8	-1	206	208	182
West North Central.....	+10	-15	+10	+7	-4	227	249	224
South Atlantic.....	+12	+7	+4	+5	-4	208	243	220
East South Central.....	+6	-9	+6	+7	-3	309	313	291
West South Central.....	-3	-6	+3	+3	-7	251	232	262
Mountain.....	-13	11	+2	+4	-5	286	252	261
Pacific.....	-4	-14	+3	+6	-1	211	185	182
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors.....	-9	0	-2	+2	-8	142	125	155
New England.....	-15	+13	-10	0	-8	107	93	136
Middle Atlantic.....	-11	-12	-2	+5	-6	130	114	127
East North Central.....	-7	+13	-8	+5	-10	135	120	173
West North Central.....	-11	-1	0	+1	-7	159	143	169
South Atlantic.....	-18	-10	-3	+2	-7	157	120	150
East South Central.....	-18	-12	+1	-13	-14	163	152	165
West South Central.....	+3	0	+6	+19	-1	149	129	138
Mountain.....	+3	0	0	+2	-7	135	126	158
Pacific.....	-3	+3	0	+2	-7	135	126	158
Elect. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.....	-9	-2	-1	-2	-7	168	151	171
New England.....	(X)	-10	(X)	(X)	-2	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-16	-10	0	-18	-9	158	156	149
East North Central.....	-10	-3	-2	+7	+1	184	143	174
West North Central.....	-12	+6	-9	+9	-9	215	177	231
South Atlantic.....	(X)	-7	(X)	-2	-9	180	167	185
East South Central.....	-9	+6	-6	(X)	-19	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	-13	203	218	211
Mountain.....	-7	+2	+4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-8	+5	+4	-8	-14	128	129	150
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers.....	-1	-7	-1	-5	-6	178	181	183
New England.....	+1	+11	0	(X)	-12	202	204	211
Middle Atlantic.....	+1	-14	0	-5	-7	166	178	162
East North Central.....	-19	-8	-1	-10	-7	172	160	175
West North Central.....	+4	0	+5	+2	-9	205	212	221
South Atlantic.....	+16	+5	+2	+6	-20	145	152	177
East South Central.....	-3	+5	-2	+1	-10	177	168	207
West South Central.....	-13	(X)	-2	(X)	+1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Mountain.....	-3	-4	-3	+4	-1	162	164	169
Pacific.....	-3	-4	-3	+4	-1	162	164	169
Hardware wholesalers.....	-8	-7	-2	-3	-5	251	244	244
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	-7	-4	-1	-4	237	225	234
East North Central.....	-6	-10	-4	-4	-4	259	255	244
West North Central.....	-11	-20	-2	-9	-6	281	276	225
South Atlantic.....	-6	-12	-1	-1	-7	247	236	258
East South Central.....	-6	-4	-3	-8	-2	220	227	216
West South Central.....	-13	-7	-3	+8	-8	285	240	301
Mountain.....	-1	+8	-7	-1	-10	282	280	341
Pacific.....	-6	-6	-2	-3	-5	247	242	249
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.....	-5	-13	-3	-5	-5	227	221	216
New England.....	-11	-5	-9	+2	-6	243	204	250
Middle Atlantic.....	-5	-12	-4	-7	-4	199	215	187
East North Central.....	-12	-12	-5	+1	-5	284	250	256
West North Central.....	-8	-17	-4	-7	-5	252	238	217
South Atlantic.....	-9	-11	-1	-5	-4	217	203	209
East South Central.....	(X)	-8	(X)	(X)	-6	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	-6	+5	+2	-17	-9	195	247	234
Mountain.....	-24	-14	-5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	-5	-11	-4	-2	-4	206	203	195
Lumber, construction materials distributors.....	-12	-17	-11	-3	0	136	138	113
New England.....	-13	-15	-5	(X)	-16	67	68	72
Middle Atlantic.....	-21	-27	-11	+3	+1	120	103	86
East North Central.....	-18	-22	-12	-8	0	172	163	138
West North Central.....	-6	-15	-8	-1	-7	132	118	137
South Atlantic.....	(X)	-4	(X)	+4	+1	103	124	91
East South Central.....	(X)	-15	(X)	(X)	+7	137	(X)	149
West South Central.....	0	-7	-4	+10	+4	187	179	153
Pacific.....	-14	-9	-16	+9	+1	174	163	145

See footnotes at end of table.

# UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS  
TWELVE MONTHS 1957 COMPARED WITH TWELVE MONTHS 1956

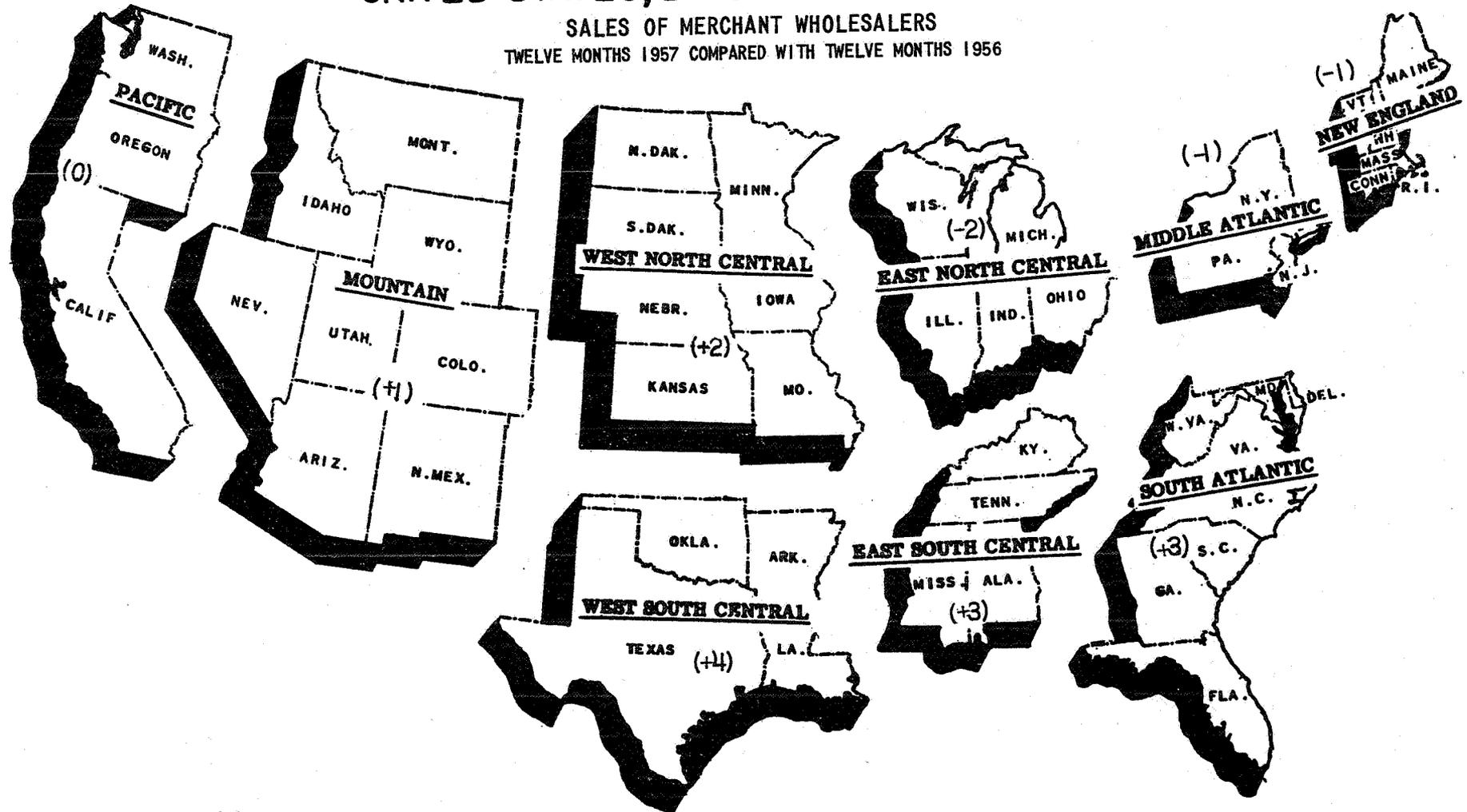


Table 3.--TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

DECEMBER 1957

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales <sup>1</sup>			Inventory, end-of-month		Stock-sales ratios		
	Percent change			(at cost)		(percent)		
	Dec. 1957 from--		12 mo. 1957 from 12 mo. 1956	Percent change, Dec. 1957 from--		Dec. 1957	Dec. 1956	Nov. 1957
	Dec. 1956	Nov. 1957		Dec. 1956	Nov. 1957			
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors.....	-17	0	-2	+1	-1	190	161	194
New England.....	-36	(X)	-3	0	0	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-10	-4	-5	-5	-2	195	163	180
East North Central.....	-4	-2	-3	+2	+1	162	159	158
West North Central.....	-20	(X)	-6	+3	0	210	178	146
South Atlantic.....	(X)	-3	(X)	(X)	-3	163	119	145
East South Central.....	+3	-17	-3	+6	+1	234	249	203
West South Central.....	-16	+8	0	+5	-3	184	139	209
Mountain.....	-7	+10	(X)	+10	0	202	182	250
Pacific.....	-15	+7	-5	+13	-4	227	199	279
General-line grocery wholesalers.....	+3	-4	+7	+2	0	102	106	104
New England.....	+5	-4	+5	0	0	66	75	63
Middle Atlantic.....	+3	0	+4	+7	-2	137	128	134
East North Central.....	+8	-2	+7	+6	-8	96	96	101
West North Central.....	+8	+2	+5	+5	-1	94	96	99
South Atlantic.....	+2	-9	+4	+1	-10	117	119	117
East South Central.....	+2	-1	+7	0	-3	105	109	111
West South Central.....	+11	-2	+8	-7	-7	101	123	106
Mountain.....	+3	-18	+5	0	-12	109	128	99
Pacific.....	+5	-4	+13	+11	-1	80	82	83
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.....	+8	+1	+3	-4	+3	76	83	75
New England.....	(X)	0	(X)	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	+13	+4	+1	-2	+8	67	80	63
East North Central.....	+8	-3	+5	-16	+1	57	66	55
West North Central.....	(X)	+10	(X)	-11	+1	112	97	130
West South Central.....	-2	+5	+8	-1	+6	72	65	68
Pacific.....	+2	+8	-1	+5	(X)	79	78	77
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.....	-3	+6	-4	-6	-12	22	23	25
New England.....	+16	-12	+1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic.....	-8	+5	-4	(X)	-15	16	15	19
East North Central.....	+1	+7	-2	(X)	-9	17	24	18
West North Central.....	+8	+15	-3	0	-3	34	40	36
South Atlantic.....	+4	+10	+1	(X)	0	33	24	38
West South Central.....	-10	0	-1	(X)	-18	(X)	(X)	(X)
Mountain.....	(X)	+3	(X)	(X)	(X)	23	31	23
Pacific.....	-10	-1	-3	(X)	-12	21	26	29
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines).....	+3	-11	+9	+9	-6	168	162	165
New England.....	-3	+1	+7	+2	-7	132	122	147
Middle Atlantic.....	-7	-16	+6	+4	-5	145	139	133
East North Central.....	+6	-4	+8	+5	-5	164	164	164
West North Central.....	+9	-14	+9	+10	-4	184	154	164
South Atlantic.....	+2	-11	+8	+11	-5	190	175	174
East South Central.....	(X)	-11	(X)	(X)	-8	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central.....	+10	-1	+10	+9	-10	192	195	214
Mountain.....	+21	-5	+7	(X)	-7	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	+1	-2	+8	+8	-5	141	145	151
Tobacco distributors.....	+8	+13	r+5	+8	-10	55	51	69
New England.....	+15	+21	+8	+18	(X)	48	48	74
Middle Atlantic.....	+8	+12	+5	-2	-7	50	54	63
East North Central.....	+5	+15	+6	+5	-3	39	44	52
West North Central.....	+11	+10	+3	(X)	-6	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic.....	+9	+11	+8	+17	-8	66	50	77
East South Central.....	+10	+11	+4	-2	-7	46	54	56
West South Central.....	+6	+6	+6	+10	-12	32	37	39
Mountain.....	+13	-2	+6	(X)	(X)	47	55	64
Pacific.....	+8	+7	+8	+10	-25	(X)	(X)	(X)
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers.....	+1	-16	+1	+1	-4	195	188	180
New England.....	0	+15	-2	-6	-19	151	176	213
Middle Atlantic.....	-9	-18	-1	+4	+1	187	165	159
East North Central.....	-11	-25	+5	+18	-4	222	139	175
West North Central.....	+13	(X)	+4	-5	-4	280	380	249
South Atlantic.....	-4	-24	-4	-9	-18	202	213	201
East South Central.....	+3	-5	0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific.....	+6	-20	+6	(X)	-16	212	205	188

X Withheld due to extreme variation of reported data.

<sup>1</sup> See text, page 2.

r Revised since Advance Release dated February 3, 1958.

All kinds of business in which merchant wholesalers operate are represented in this survey. The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications used in the 1954 Census of Business covering wholesale trade. Each establishment in this survey has been assigned a kind-of-business classification based upon its trade designation and an analysis of its sales by commodity lines as reported to the Bureau of the Census. A description of each kind-of-business classification in this report is given below.

#### DURABLE GOODS

##### Automotive wholesalers

**Motor-vehicle distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling new and used passenger automobiles and similar motor vehicles, road-type trucks, truck-tractors, buses, trailers, and semitrailers to dealers or to fleet operators, industrial accounts, and to commercial users. Dealers in road-type trucks, truck-tractors, and truck-trailers are included here on the basis of kind-of-goods sold.

**Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments--frequently referred to as jobbers in this trade--primarily engaged in selling automotive equipment, accessories, parts, tires, tubes and garage equipment and tools.

##### Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors

**Electrical apparatus, supplies wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of electrical goods such as electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials; lighting fixtures and lamps; radio and television sets and accessories; electric refrigerators and other electrical appliances and specialties; and electronic parts and equipment; and those primarily engaged in selling such electrical equipment and apparatus; wiring supplies and construction materials, and lighting fixtures and lamps, as conduits and fittings, interior wires and cables, wiring devices, safety switches, poles, crossarms, pole-line hardware, outside wires and cables, residential, commercial, and industrial lighting fixtures, and incandescent and fluorescent lamps. Establishments specializing in the sale of electrical prime movers and other electrical power equipment for the generation, transmission, or utilization of electric energy are also included.

**Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such electrical appliances and specialties as radio and television sets, dish washers, electric refrigerators, electric ranges, washing machines, ironers, radio and television parts and accessories, home freezers, sewing machines, hot water heaters, electric irons, percolators, clocks, hotplates, vacuum cleaners, etc., and electronic tubes, electronic replacement parts and accessories, and transmission and sound equipment.

##### Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers

**Furniture wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling home or office furniture--wooden, metal or other.

**Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling household china, glassware, and earthenware; floor coverings (carpets, rugs, linoleums, etc.); antique home furnishings; and miscellaneous home furnishings such as brooms, brushes, curtains, draperies, pictures and picture frames, window shades, kitchen utensils, phonograph records, and musical instruments.

##### Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers

**Hardware wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments selling a general line of merchandise sufficiently broad to service retail hardware stores and the hardware departments of other outlets--general-line hardware wholesalers; and establishments primarily engaged in selling builders hardware, heavy hardware, shelf or light hardware, and hardware specialties such as tools, cutlery, bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, padlocks, keys, and the like--specialty-line hardware wholesalers.

**Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling plumbing and heating equipment and supplies such as plumbing fixtures, including sanitary ware; steam and hot water heating boilers, radiators, parts, and fittings; stoves, ranges, furnaces, and other types of heating apparatus (except electric); oil burners; gas appliances and supplies; plumbing pipe, valves, and fittings; and plumbers brass goods.

##### Lumber, construction materials distributors

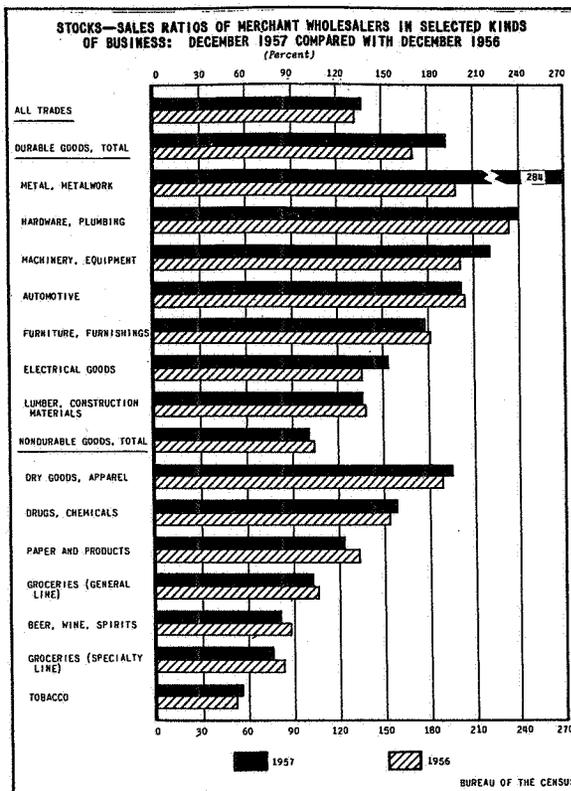
**Lumber, millwork wholesalers.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and millwork such as rough, dressed, and finished lumber; sheathing, siding, flooring, shingles, plywood, veneers, doors, sashes, frames, interior woodwork and trim.

**Construction materials distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such construction materials as brick, tile, and terra cotta; cement, lime, and plaster; building glass; sand, gravel, and crushed stone, ready-mixed concrete; roofing, siding and insulation; and stone, slate, concrete products, and building board.

##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors

**Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial refrigeration equipment (including electric) such as refrigerators, display cases, freezers, dispensers, water coolers, food locker equipment; and those selling air conditioning and ventilating equipment and supplies, including fans, blowers, and accessories. Establishments specializing in the sale of commercial refrigeration components and accessories are also included in this classification.

**Commercial machines, equipment distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling office machines and equipment (except furniture) such as adding machines, typewriters, addressing, duplicating, sealing, computing, stapling, accounting, and statistical machines; restaurant and hotel equipment such as coffee urns, steam tables, china, glassware, silverware, linens, and related items; store machines and fixtures such as display fixtures, show racks, pricing equipment, cash registers, scales, meat slicers and grinders, coffee grinders, etc.; and such related equipment as florists' supplies, theater supplies and equipment, and parking meters. Establishments primarily engaged in selling to users are included, as well as those selling to dealers.



##### Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors--continued

**Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling machinery, equipment, and supplies to manufacturing and mining concerns. Included here are establishments selling industrial machinery; industrial belting, hose, and packing; machine tools, mine and mill supplies; oil well and oil refining supplies; printing machinery and supplies; industrial rope, cordage, and twine; industrial materials, hauling equipment; power transmission equipment; and machinery and equipment for such industries as food products, woodworking, shoe manufacturing, tanning, textile, and paper and pulp.

**Professional equipment, supplies distributors.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling dental supplies (chairs, sterilizers, cabinets, instruments, dental gold and alloys, waxes, teeth, and the like); religious supplies (church goods and religious articles such as statuary, vestments, fonts, candles, religious pictures, calendars, literature, etc.); school equipment and supplies (desks, blackboards, chalk, rulers, wall and globe maps, etc.); optical goods; surgical, medical, hospital supplies, and equipment; artists supplies; engineering instruments and supplies; and supplies for other professions.

**Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling surgical and medical instruments; doctors apparatus and equipment; orthopedic appliances; artificial limbs; operating room and other hospital equipment; X-ray machines and accessories and other scientific instruments used by physicians and in hospitals.

**Service establishment, supply houses.**--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling barber and beauty supplies; laundry, dry cleaning equipment, supplies (washing, drying, ironing, and pressing machines; laundry soaps and chemicals; dry cleaning fluids, marking equipment, etc.); shoe service supplies and equipment; undertakers supplies (caskets, burial vaults, burial garments, embalming chemicals and preparations, and other morticians and funeral equipment); upholsterers supplies (fabrics, leather and fillings, and other types of supplies used in the upholstery trade); and miscellaneous service equipment, such as janitors' supplies, furriers' supplies, bootblack's supplies, and hat cleaners' supplies.

**Other machinery, equipment supplies distributors** (not shown separately in accompanying table).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling (a) transportation equipment such as aircraft and aeronautical equipment, supplies; railroad equipment, supplies; marine equipment, supplies; and other transportation equipment and supplies; (b) construction machinery, equipment such as road building machinery, excavating and dredging machinery, derricks, cranes, hoists, and winches; and related construction equipment as pneumatic hammers, concrete construction clamps and forms, scaffolding, chutes, and wheelbarrows--but not construction materials, and (c) farm-garden machinery, equipment (including tractors) used in the preparation and maintenance of the soil, the planting and harvesting of crops, and other operations and processes pertaining to agriculture; dairy machinery and equipment, such as milking machines and cream separators; poultry equipment, such as incubators, brooders, and feeders and irrigation equipment.

Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors

Iron, steel, and products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments usually referred to as steel warehouses--primarily engaged in selling iron and steel products such as semifinished forms and shapes, plates, sheets, strips, bars, structural shapes, piling, nails, tubular products, wire products, forgings and castings. Steel warehouses of firms operating steelworks and rolling mills are also included here.

Nonferrous metals distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling nonferrous metals and metalwork such as aluminum, copper, tin, brass, lead, and zinc.

Scrap, waste materials dealers

Iron, steel scrap dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, breaking up, sorting, and selling all forms of iron and steel scrap.

Waste materials dealers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in assembling, sorting, and selling such waste materials as nonferrous scrap metals, waste paper, rags, wiping cloths, textile wastes, scrap rubber, and other waste and salvage materials. Scrap iron and steel may be handled as secondary lines.

Jewelry wholesalers

Jewelry wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling a general-or specialty-line of jewelry such as clocks and watches; precious stones and metals; watch materials, jewelers supplies; costume jewelry; and miscellaneous items such as silverware, plated ware, medals, trophies, semi-precious stones, and insignia.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers

General-line grocery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments handling a general line of dry groceries and processed foods usually sold in retail grocery stores, such as canned foods, flour, sugar, coffee, tea and spices, as well as such nonfood items as household chemicals, soaps and detergents, paper products, brooms, brushes, etc. Voluntary group wholesalers, retailer-cooperative warehouses, and cash-and-carry depots are included, as well as nonaffiliated general-line grocery wholesalers.

Specialty-line grocery wholesalers.--This classification includes two general types of merchant wholesale establishments: Those handling a combination of grocery items, no one item predominating, but not a sufficiently broad line of commodities to be classified as "general line"; and those primarily engaged in selling specialized lines of groceries and related products, such as canned foods; coffee, tea, and spices; dairy products; dried fruits and nuts; frosted and frozen foods; fish and seafood; bakery products; packaged breakfast cereals; flour; cooking oils and shortening; and soft drinks.

Confectionery wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling candy, chewing gum, popcorn, potato chips, salted nuts, fountain fruits and syrups, and related items. Cigars, cigarettes, and other products are also frequently handled as secondary lines.

Meat, meat products wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh, frozen, cured or processed (but not canned) meats, lard, and other edible meat products. Secondary lines such as butter, cheese, eggs, dressed poultry, vegetable shortening, and canned meats are frequently handled.

Farm products (edible) distributors

Poultry, poultry products distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling live or dressed poultry, eggs, and related products. Establishments primarily engaged in dressing poultry are considered manufacturers.

Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, melons, and related items.

Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers

Beer, ale distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling beer, ale, porter, stout and other fermented malt liquors. Soft drinks, confectionery, tobacco, wines, and spirits are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wines, whiskey, gin, rum, brandy, and other spirits, including neutral spirits and ethyl alcohol used in blending. Merchants who bottle and sell wines and distilled spirits manufactured in bulk by others, liquor departments of drug wholesalers, and State-operated wholesale outlets are included. State depots primarily engaged in supplying State liquor stores, however, are not included in wholesale trade.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalersDrug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a full line of drugs, pharmaceuticals, proprietary medicines, druggists rubber goods, cosmetics, toiletries, drug sundries, and related merchandise. Cooperatives and voluntary group wholesalers handling a full line of drugs are also included in this classification. Liquor departments of drug wholesalers, however, are included with "wines and distilled spirits wholesalers."

Specialty-line drug wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling proprietary medicines, toilet preparations, and articles such as drugs, perfumes, cosmetics, powders, shaving preparations, toilet soap, dentifrices, combs, brushes, mirrors, medical glass, bandages, rubber goods, and antiseptics.

Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers--Continued

Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling such industrial and heavy chemicals as coal-tar chemicals, plastics, compressed and liquefied gases (except LP gas), acids, ammonia, soda, industrial alcohols, explosives, dyestuffs, naval stores, etc. Concerns primarily engaged in selling pyrotechnics and ammunition for small arms are included in "Amusement and sporting goods wholesalers."

Paint, varnish wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling paints, varnishes, lacquers, enamels, calcimines, shellac, and stains. Glass, wallpaper, painters supplies, oils, chemicals, and related products are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Tobacco distributors

Tobacco distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling manufactured tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco, and snuff. Confectionery, smokers articles, razor blades, playing cards, etc., are frequently handled as secondary lines.

Dry goods, apparel wholesalers

Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling men's, boys' clothing, and furnishings (including suits, coats, overcoats, work clothing, hats and caps, shirts, ties, and underwear); women's, children's clothing, furnishings, and accessories (including suits, dresses, and skirts); furs and fur clothing; millinery, millinery supplies; shoes and other footwear; work clothing; and related lines.

Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)

General-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments engaged in selling a diversified combination of lines usually sold in retail dry goods and general merchandise stores, including piece goods, home furnishings, work clothing, dresses, infants' wear, notions, and hosiery. Men's and women's clothing, furnishings, and millinery frequently constitute secondary lines.

Specialty-line dry goods wholesalers (not shown separately).--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling hosiery, underwear, piece goods, knit and lace goods, fancy linen and needlework and notions (thread, tapes, needles, pins, buttons, hair accessories, zippers, and shoe laces).

Piece goods converters.--Merchant wholesale establishments which purchase textiles in the gray or unfinished form, have them dyed and/or finished by others, usually on a contract basis, and sell to the cutting-up trade, garment makers, wholesalers, or retailers. Converters operating bleaching, dyeing, and finishing plants are not considered as merchant wholesalers.

Paper, allied products wholesalers

Paper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling wrapping paper and other coarse paper; fine paper (writing papers, reproduction paper stock, cover, text, thin, and other fine papers); newsprint and book paper; paperboard; and converted paper products such as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, and bottle caps.

Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling commercial and social stationery, including envelopes, type-writer and mimeograph paper in cut sizes, file cards and folders; and office supplies such as pens, pencils, writing inks, carbon paper, paper clips, typewriter ribbons, greeting cards, and erasers; and embossed and printed wallpaper for use in covering or decorating interior walls and ceilings.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants

Farm products (raw materials) merchants.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cotton, grain, hides, skins, raw furs, livestock, leaf tobacco, wool, mohair, horses and mules, and other inedible products such as broomcorn, moss, hair, feathers, bristles, and fibers. This classification includes merchants (including terminal elevators) primarily engaged in selling raw farm products in marketing centers. Dealers buying such products direct from farmers and assembling them at local production points are classified as "assemblers" and not included here.

Other nondurable goods wholesalers

Amusement, sporting goods distributors.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling cameras and photographic goods (cameras, parts, and accessories, projection apparatus, enlargers, developing and printing room apparatus and accessories, sensitized unexposed photographic supplies and equipment); sporting goods (toys, games, novelties, fireworks, bicycles, sporting goods, and athletic goods); and other recreation goods such as playground equipment, billiard and bowling equipment and supplies; and hobby goods.

Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and related items.

Coal wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and coke. This includes firms with coal yards as well as those selling goods shipped directly from mine to customer.

Farm supplies wholesalers.--Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling mixed and other feeds; fertilizers, fertilizer materials, and agricultural chemicals; seeds (farm, garden, and flower); and miscellaneous farm supplies such as hay, straw, and alfalfa.

Merchant wholesalers, n.e.c.--(Not shown separately in the accompanying table.) Merchant wholesale establishments primarily engaged in selling petroleum products, cut flowers and potted plants; forest products except lumber; inedible oils and fats; textiles and materials other than dry goods; industrial yarns; crude rubber; ores; sponges; artificial leather; wood pulp; artificial flowers; and products not elsewhere classified; and establishments handling a line of merchandise too broad to be included in any of the classifications outlined above.