MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

JANUARY 1960

BW-60-1

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
March 9, 1960[1]

Sales

January 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $9.8 billion, were down 14 percent from December sales, a drop somewhat greater than the usual December to January decline at the wholesale level. However, January sales were up 3 percent above January sales a year ago.

Sales in the durable goods trades, totaling $4.1 billion in January 1960, declined 12 percent from their December level but were 7 percent higher than January 1959 sales. The nondurable-goods trades, with sales of $5.7 billion, indicated a decline of 15 percent from previous month sales, but showed no change from a year ago.

Most trades indicated decreases from previous month sales, the sharpest drops being reported by wholesalers of jewelry (55%), wine, distilled spirits (48%), and amusement, sporting goods (31%). Among the few trades reporting increases, the more significant gains were experienced by farm supplies wholesalers (13%) and piece goods converters (9%). Iron, steel products distributors, with January sales unchanged from December, reported a 13 percent gain over year-ago sales. The sharpest increase over year ago sales (33%) was reported by both nonferrous metals distributors and iron, steel scrap dealers; the largest declines were noted by poultry products distributors (17%) and coal wholesalers (16%).

All geographic divisions reported January sales below last month. The declines ranged from 7 percent in the East South Central Division to 25 percent in the West North Central Division. Compared with a year ago, declines were reported in only two divisions--the West North Central (5%) and South Atlantic (2%). The East South Central Division, with sales up 7 percent over January 1959, indicated the principal increase over year-ago sales.

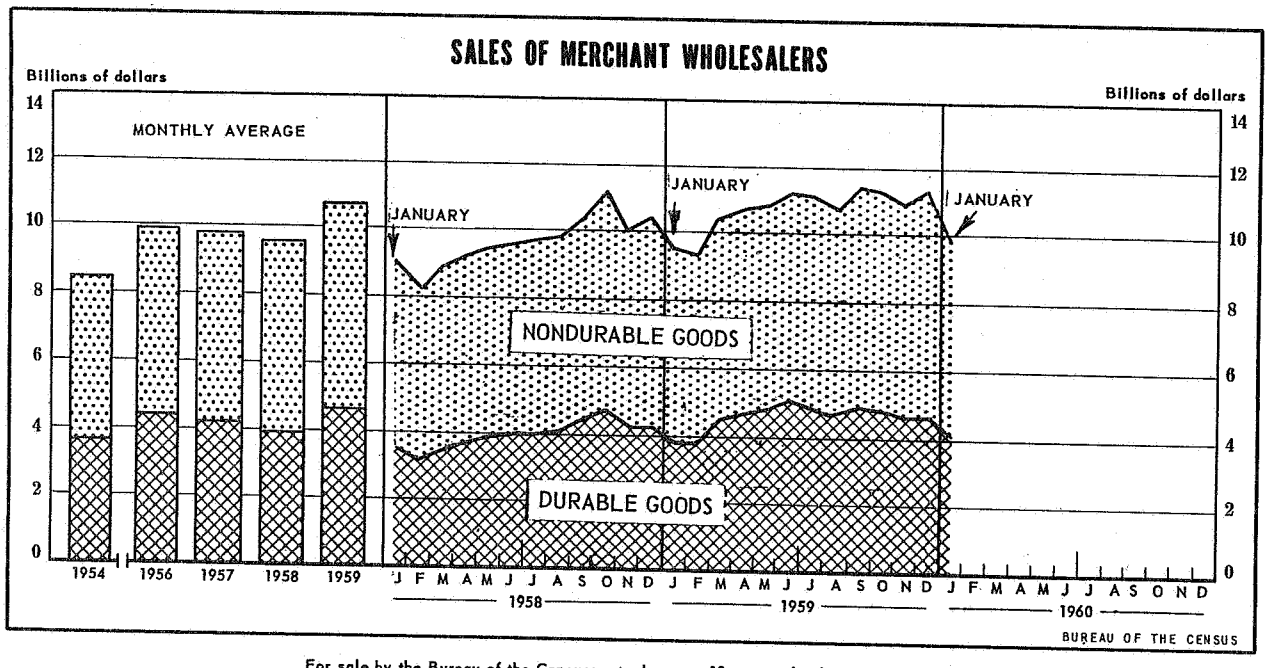
Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of January remained unchanged from their December level but were 8 percent higher than stocks on hand a year ago. Durable-goods trades, showing no change in inventories during the month, were 7 percent above their January 1959 level. Nondurable-goods inventories, off slightly (1%) from the previous month, were 12 percent higher than a year ago. Coal wholesalers, with stocks down 12 percent, indicated the principal change from previous month inventories. Iron, steel and products distributors, with stocks up 3 percent during the month, reflected a sharp drop of 12 percent from the year-ago inventory level, a decline second only to the 13 percent drop indicated by iron, steel scrap dealers.

The January 1960 stock-sales ratio for all merchant wholesalers reporting inventories in conjunction with their sales was 142 percent, up 20 points from December, and 8 points above the January 1959 ratio. The January 1960 stock-sales ratio for the durable-goods trades was 193 percent, compared to a ratio of 105 percent for the nondurable-goods trades.

General

The data in this report 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 8 and 9.



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

[1] An advance release of January 1960 data was issued on March 1, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960	1959											
	Jan.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[2]	9,773	9,534	9,262	10,410	10,709	10,757	11,203	11,095	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,080	3,829	3,837	4,471	4,697	4,794	5,118	4,917	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632
Automotive wholesalers	458	444	424	501	499	497	547	562	520	517	536	515	498
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	376	352	333	375	392	389	429	419	405	428	439	429	379
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	629	612	595	631	619	657	713	702	695	779	769	750	787
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	281	278	303	300	322	347	331	336	375	367	353	365
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	344	331	317	328	319	335	366	371	359	404	403	397	421
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	178	185	199	231	231	222	223	211	225	237	248	234	239
Furniture wholesalers	58	58	60	67	67	67	70	69	72	74	76	71	72
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	120	127	139	164	164	155	153	143	153	163	172	163	167
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers	378	365	371	422	461	459	484	482	475	511	517	460	424
Hardware wholesalers	168	168	169	196	212	208	210	202	201	219	216	195	190
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	210	197	202	226	250	251	274	279	274	292	301	265	234
Lumber, construction materials distributors	534	503	502	664	746	773	823	838	801	797	754	655	612
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	319	291	294	389	403	426	452	466	444	434	399	351	333
Construction materials distributors	215	212	209	275	343	347	371	373	357	363	355	304	279
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,098	1,013	1,004	1,153	1,244	1,297	1,386	1,287	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	511	477	468	528	553	572	608	535	517	533	520	501	545
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	107	93	89	103	101	100	117	115	127	129	118	113	114
Service establishment supply houses	132	120	124	138	143	150	149	143	127	144	153	132	140
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	428	361	368	448	476	490	539	464	419	474	430	426	455
Iron, steel and products distributors	303	267	271	334	357	364	403	350	312	340	305	292	302
Nonferrous metals distributors	125	94	96	114	119	126	136	114	107	134	125	134	152
Scrap waste materials dealers	323	259	281	323	322	292	301	272	260	271	289	309	r349
Iron, steel scrap dealers	197	148	169	192	187	159	163	144	129	139	159	179	r228
Waste materials dealers	126	111	112	131	135	134	139	129	131	132	130	129	121
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,693	5,705	5,425	5,939	6,012	5,963	6,084	6,178	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,763	1,715	1,619	1,725	1,775	1,734	1,729	1,822	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828
General-line grocery wholesalers	774	752	713	737	758	753	750	793	739	803	791	740	768
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	610	572	560	609	616	589	572	612	589	640	609	612	646
Confectionery wholesalers	58	57	56	57	56	56	57	59	55	59	63	64	71
Meat, meat products wholesalers	322	333	291	322	346	336	350	357	325	370	348	322	344
Farm products (edible) distributors	356	382	347	375	407	400	442	424	362	393	383	391	432
Poultry, poultry products distributors	121	145	121	125	132	128	133	129	121	143	136	155	160
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	234	237	226	250	274	272	309	295	241	249	247	235	272
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	434	453	454	521	551	578	614	603	559	569	584	595	743
Beer, ale distributors	166	163	165	189	213	240	272	282	261	236	210	188	223
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	268	290	289	332	337	338	342	321	298	333	373	407	520
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	373	375	348	398	402	393	391	383	380	419	410	374	376
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	238	234	218	249	243	235	238	238	235	265	263	243	239
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	108	118	106	121	126	124	118	111	111	120	114	105	113
Paint, varnish wholesalers	26	23	24	28	33	34	35	33	34	35	32	27	25
Tobacco distributors	291	287	277	301	317	318	349	358	332	343	351	326	380
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	497	524	530	583	538	511	526	528	597	627	624	568	509
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	168	180	197	214	197	192	174	190	240	240	231	211	167
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	196	206	196	224	213	196	226	235	242	254	256	233	222
Paper, allied products wholesalers	343	327	301	333	343	339	344	326	343	366	373	350	358
Paper wholesalers	300	288	261	292	301	299	303	288	300	323	322	299	305
Coal wholesalers	76	90	81	79	73	73	71	61	65	73	76	78	86
Farm supplies wholesalers	131	136	145	172	174	145	119	112	115	125	107	107	116

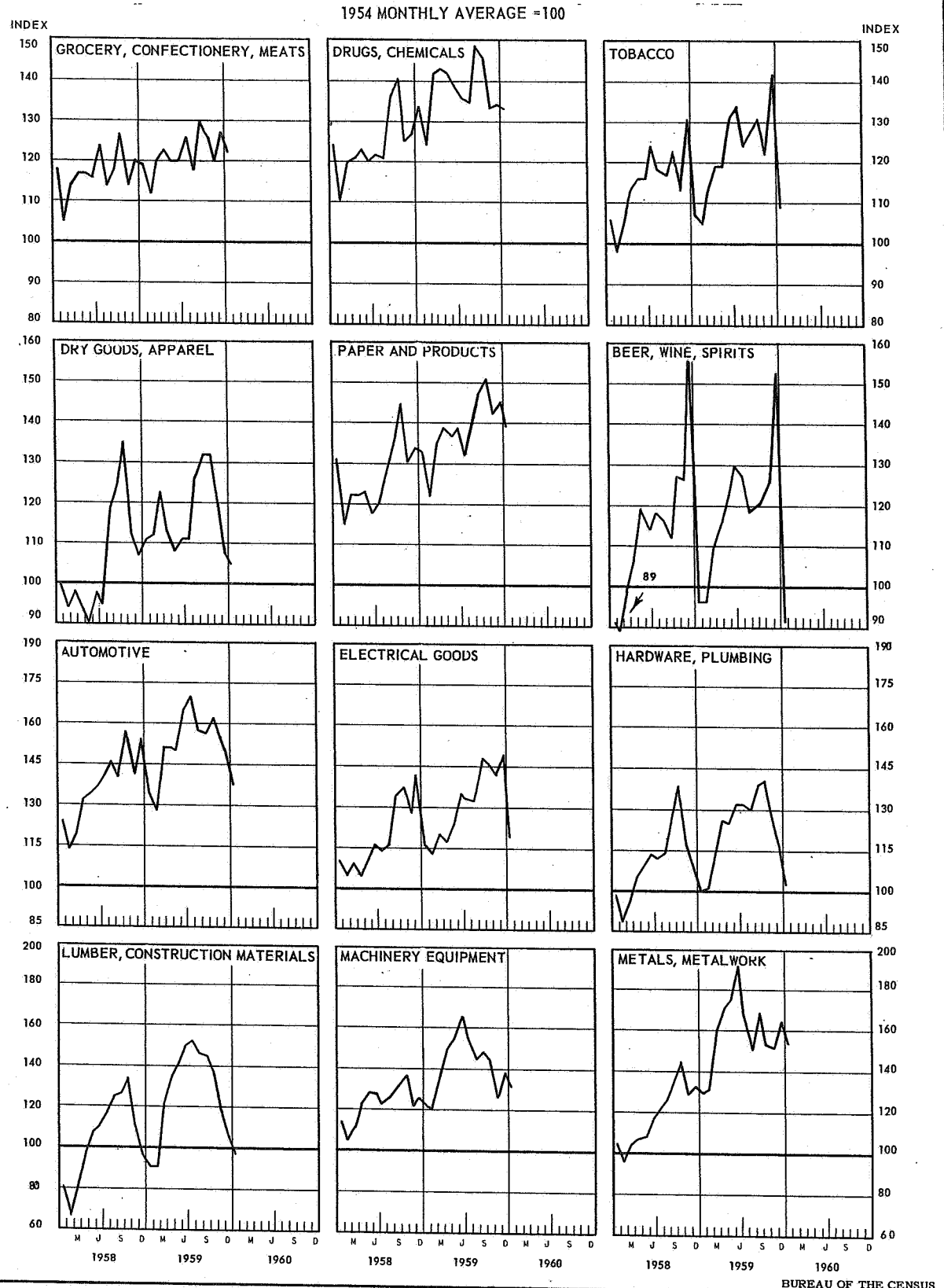
[1] Merchant wholesalers total and group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

[2] Excludes Hawaii and Alaska which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.3 percent and 0.04 percent respectively, of the United States total.

r Revised.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--KIND OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE =100



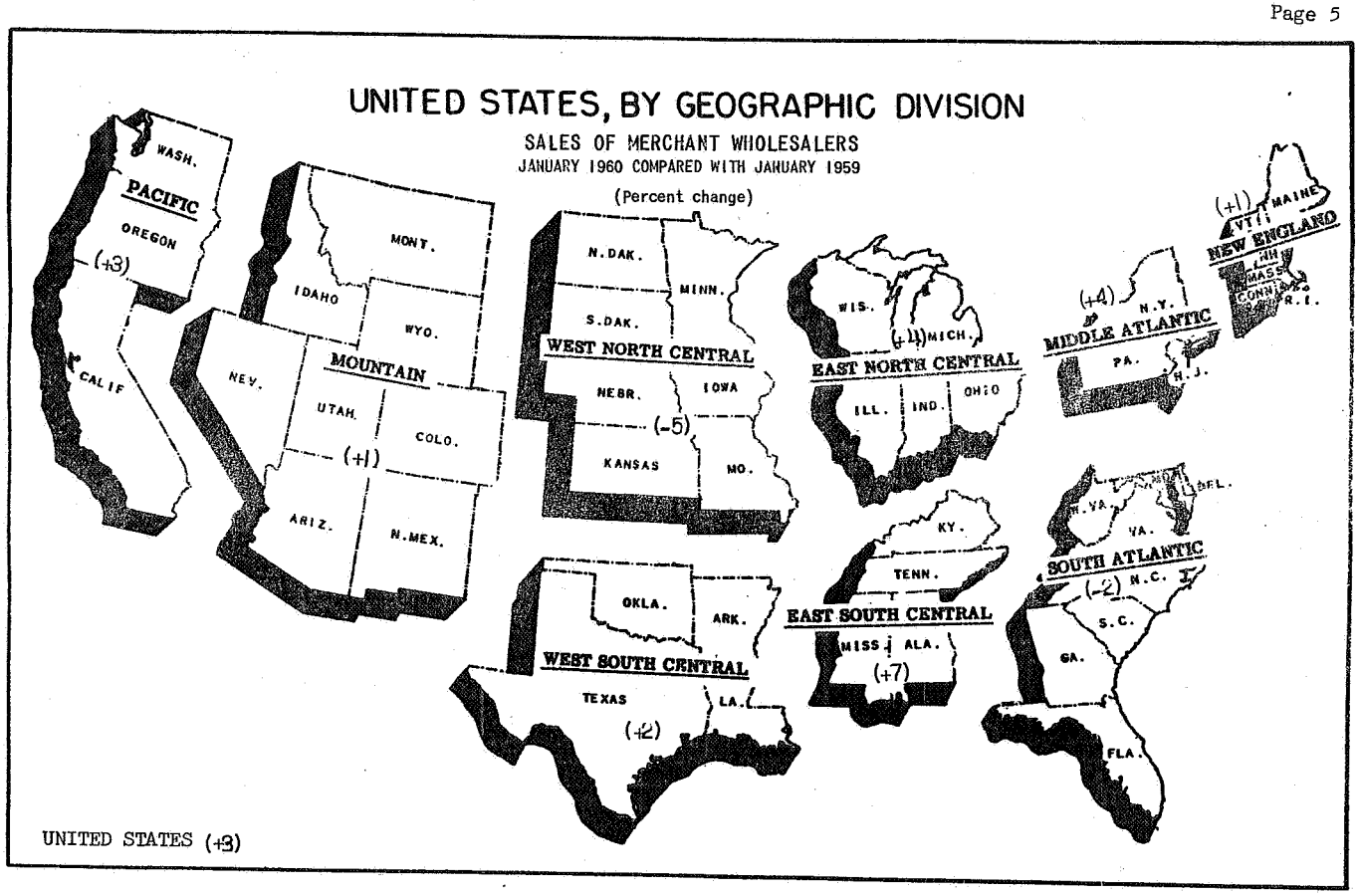
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DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS

Table 2. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS
JANUARY 1960

Kind of business	Sales*		Inventories, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	January 1960 from--		January 1960 from--		January 1960	January 1959	December 1959
	January 1959	December 1959	January 1959	December 1959			
	(percent change)		(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	+3	r-14	+8	0	142	134	122
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+7	-12	+7	0	193	188	168
Automotive wholesalers	+3	-8	+5	0	232	220	224
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+7	-1	+4	0	245	235	239
Electrical, electronic, appliance distributors	+3	-20	+11	+1	179	164	140
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+1	-22	+7	+2	176	174	130
Electrical appl., TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	+4	-18	+15	+1	182	155	152
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	r-4	r-26	+10	0	195	184	146
Furniture wholesalers	0	-19	+6	-1	182	183	146
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-6	-28	+11	0	202	185	147
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+4	-11	+8	+3	254	239	213
Hardware wholesalers	0	-12	+7	+5	264	245	219
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+7	-10	+9	+1	245	233	208
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+6	-13	+7	0	155	137	141
Lumber millwork wholesalers	+10	-4	+4	-1	145	143	144
Construction materials distributors	+1	-23	+10	+1	167	131	138
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+8	-6	+9	0	205	194	192
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*	-1	-10	+6	-5	227	212	219
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*	+7	-17	+9	-1	190	194	164
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+7	-6	+1	+1	175	172	167
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	+15	-6	+5	+2	192	199	187
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+13	-7	+2	-1	182	198	179
Service establishment supply houses	+10	-6	+9	+1	123	119	107
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+19	-6	-8	+2	172	222	161
Iron, steel and products distributors	+13	0	-12	+3	191	251	180
Nonferrous metals distributors	+33	-18	+9	0	117	134	110
Scrap, waste materials dealers	+25	-7	r-3	-7	78	102	77
Iron, steel scrap dealers	+33	-14	-13	-7	81	128	73
Waste materials dealers	+14	+4	+12	-6	75	77	83
Jewelry wholesalers*	-7	-55	+9	+4	274	250	122
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	0	-15	+12	-1	105	97	90
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+3	-4	+4	-1	70	67	67
General-line grocery wholesalers	+3	+1	+2	-1	84	86	84
Voluntary groups*	+8	-6	+6	-4	78	77	79
Retailer-cooperative*	+4	+1	+3	-1	66	69	70
Nonaffiliated*	+3	-2	-2	0	102	103	98
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+7	-6	+9	-2	73	68	69
Confectionery wholesalers	+2	-18	+3	0	73	72	60
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-3	-6	+16	+2	26	23	23
Farm products (edible) distributors	-7	-18	+12	+2	31	27	24
Poultry, poultry products distributors	-17	-24	+13	+7	33	25	23
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-1	-14	+12	0	30	28	25
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	-4	-42	+5	-4	140	135	83
Beer, ale distributors	+2	-26	+1	+6	68	70	48
Wine, distilled spirts wholesalers	-8	-48	+5	-6	184	174	97
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	-1	-1	+9	+2	150	139	145
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+2	0	+8	+1	165	154	158
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-8	-4	+16	+4	106	92	102
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+13	+4	+2	+4	208	217	210
Tobacco distributors	+1	-23	+4	-2	60	58	47
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-5	-2	+10	+4	169	164	163
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-7	+1	+15	+6	200	174	183
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-5	-12	+1	+2	142	152	141
Piece goods converters*	+10	+9	+15	+1	162	163	166
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+5	-4	+6	0	103	103	99
Paper wholesalers	+4	-2	+8	0	98	96	96
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*	+7	-21	-3	0	149	155	126
Farm products (raw materials) merchants*	-5	-21	+22	0	144	127	112
Other nondurable goods wholesalers*	-5	-16	+10	-3	138	124	120
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	+10	-31	+4	+1	216	246	142
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*	+3	-10	+10	-4	165	164	139
Coal wholesalers	-16	-12	+1	-12	67	62	70
Farm supplies wholesalers	-4	+13	+18	-3	162	133	191

* See text, page 8.
r Revised since Advance Release dated March 1, 1960.


UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
JANUARY 1960 COMPARED WITH JANUARY 1959
(Percent change)
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+3)
CALIF
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH
COLO.
(+1)
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(-5)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
(+1) MICH.
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+4) N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+1) MAINE
VT.
NEW ENGLAND
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
LA.
(+2)
KY.
TENN.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MISS.
ALA.
(+7)
W.VA.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
(-2) N.C.
S.C.
GA.
FLA.
UNITED STATES (+3)

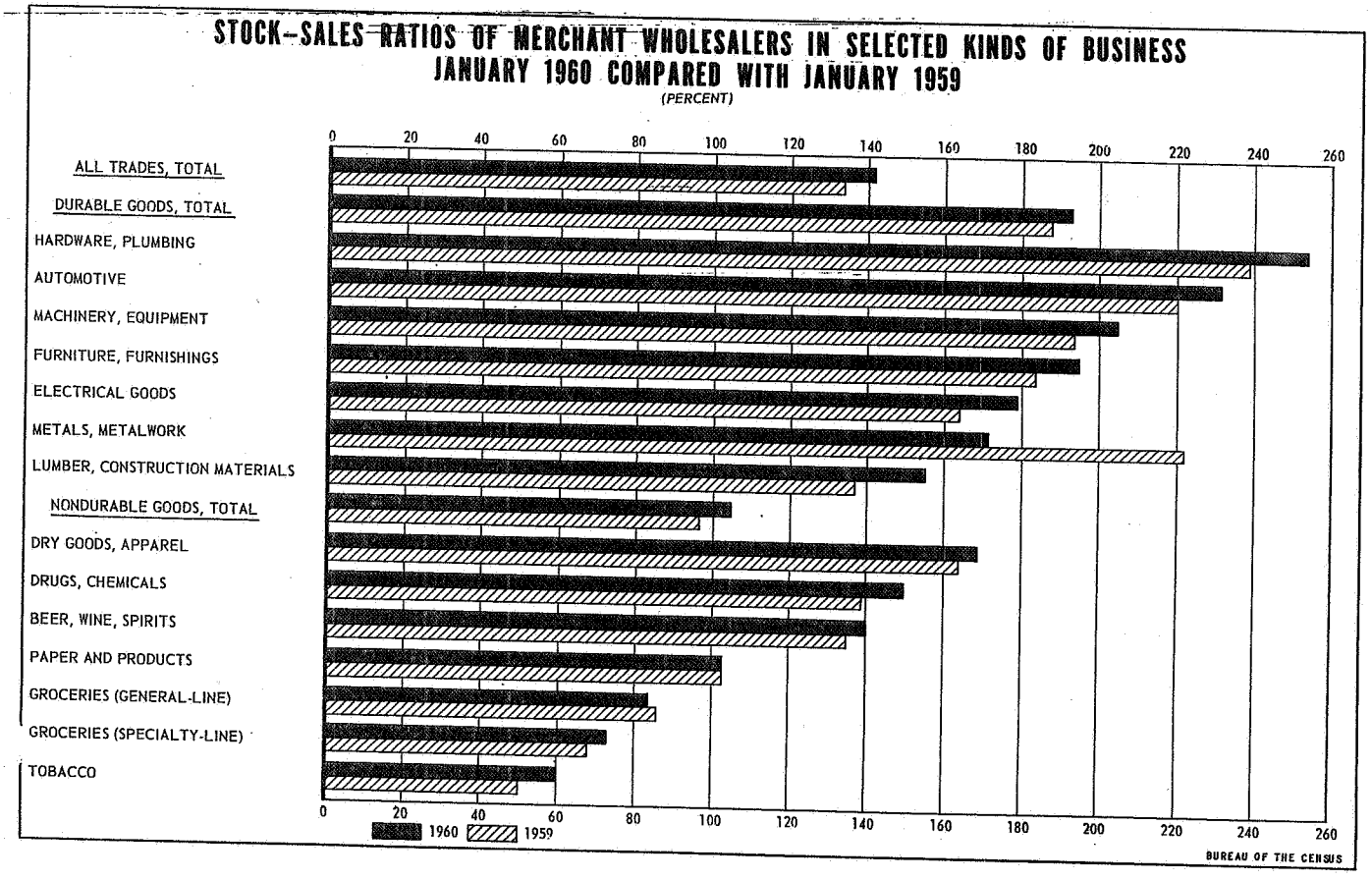

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
JANUARY 1960 COMPARED WITH JANUARY 1959
(PERCENT)
ALL TRADES, TOTAL
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
AUTOMOTIVE
MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS
ELECTRICAL GOODS
METALS, METALWORK
LUMBER, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
DRY GOODS, APPAREL
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
GROCERIES (GENERAL-LINE)
GROCERIES (SPECIALTY-LINE)
TOBACCO
0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200 220 240 260
1960
1959
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Table 3. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS

JANUARY 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*		Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	January 1960 from--		January 1960 from--				
	January 1959	December 1959	January 1959	December 1959	January 1960	January 1959	December 1959
	(percent change)		(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	+3	-14	+8	0	142	134	122
New England	+1	-16	+9	0	151	138	129
Middle Atlantic	+4	-12	+6	-1	118	115	105
East North Central	+4	-15	+4	0	132	132	111
West North Central	-5	-25	+6	0	153	134	113
South Atlantic	-2	-11	+8	-2	158	142	138
East South Central	+7	-7	+7	0	174	177	160
West South Central	+2	-11	+12	+4	169	155	149
Mountain	+1	-12	+9	+3	161	147	139
Pacific	+3	-11	+11	-2	143	132	128
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+7	-1	+4	0	245	235	239
New England	+15	0	+34	+7	229	209	206
Middle Atlantic	+7	-4	-2	-1	218	247	210
East North Central	+18	-9	(X)	-3	197	183	180
West North Central	-15	+3	+1	0	276	250	283
South Atlantic	+7	+6	+4	-1	216	219	237
East South Central	-7	+5	+10	+4	236	230	247
West South Central	-5	-5	+12	+1	249	220	224
Mountain	-2	-10	+5	+1	270	287	280
Pacific	-2	-5	+8	0	278	260	261
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+1	-22	+7	+2	176	174	130
New England	(X)	-27	+6	+1	194	201	131
Middle Atlantic	+13	-16	+2	+3	135	152	117
East North Central	+10	-27	+1	-1	156	181	118
West North Central	-8	-36	+3	-3	249	221	158
South Atlantic	-2	-33	+4	+3	187	171	121
East South Central	+8	(X)	+6	+3	218	215	149
West South Central	-5	-20	+20	+6	275	209	174
Mountain	(X)	-21	+13	+5	171	167	130
Pacific	-4	-25	+14	+1	158	131	111
Elec. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	+4	-18	+15	+1	182	155	152
New England	-6	-34	+5	-1	157	149	101
Middle Atlantic	-1	-26	+8	-1	170	137	130
East North Central	+7	-20	+18	-3	163	146	129
West North Central	-1	-15	+23	-1	199	160	183
South Atlantic	(X)	-7	+13	+1	169	141	157
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+5	-13	+11	-1	218	194	195
Pacific	-2	-16	+23	+2	209	165	171
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-4	-26	+10	0	195	184	146
New England	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+5	-17	+5	0	174	177	148
East North Central	-3	-19	+7	+2	183	171	118
West North Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+20	-22	+8	-4	234	271	163
West South Central	-7	-17	+16	+4	237	164	170
Pacific	0	-17	+19	-3	203	190	158
Hardware wholesalers	0	-12	+7	+5	264	245	219
New England	0	-10	+7	+9	152	159	141
Middle Atlantic	+7	-11	+12	0	235	219	204
East North Central	+6	-13	+3	+13	241	248	180
West North Central	+6	+5	+9	+11	264	259	264
South Atlantic	+3	-11	+12	+1	298	283	254
East South Central	-6	-7	+12	+8	266	226	228
West South Central	-10	-22	+15	+8	378	314	273
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-8	-14	-1	+1	225	202	193
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+7	-10	+9	+1	245	233	208
New England	(X)	-16	+11	+3	294	292	238
Middle Atlantic	+5	-10	+4	-3	190	188	173
East North Central	+13	-10	+13	+3	288	275	248
West North Central	+3	-9	-4	+1	255	275	232
South Atlantic	+2	-10	+11	+5	238	216	195
West South Central	-17	-9	+10	-1	309	245	279
Pacific	+7	-19	+22	+4	242	219	186
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+6	-13	+7	0	155	137	141
New England	-5	-14	+18	+7	135	102	113
Middle Atlantic	+10	-18	+5	0	179	166	149
East North Central	+3	-14	+13	-3	183	151	163
West North Central	-5	-6	+8	-2	228	163	220
South Atlantic	+8	-7	-3	+4	206	241	187
West South Central	-13	-1	+16	-1	104	84	104
Pacific	+2	-9	+18	-2	63	69	62

See footnotes at end of table.

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

JANUARY 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*		Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	January 1960 from--		January 1960 from--		January 1960	January 1959	December 1959
	January 1959	December 1959	January 1959	December 1959			
	(percent change)		(percent change)		(percent)		
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	+7	-6	+1	+1	175	172	167
Middle Atlantic	+14	-4	+8	+1	135	138	143
East North Central	+16	+7	+6	+3	132	146	140
West North Central	(X)	-15	+9	-1	187	195	155
South Atlantic	(X)	-5	(X)	+2	126	98	113
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-4	-12	+2	+4	212	196	178
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-3	-6	+9	-3	177	152	180
General-line grocery wholesalers	+3	+1	+2	-1	84	86	84
New England	-1	-9	+2	-3	104	108	101
Middle Atlantic	+14	-6	+19	+2	75	73	74
East North Central	+11	-2	+5	-5	77	81	82
West North Central	+3	0	0	-5	80	81	85
South Atlantic	-7	-8	0	+1	105	95	95
East South Central	-2	-8	-8	-1	96	97	88
West South Central	+9	+1	-5	-6	92	105	91
Mountain	+2	+4	-10	+9	87	91	80
Pacific	-5	+6	+1	-2	72	70	75
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+7	-6	+9	-2	73	68	69
Middle Atlantic	+1	-3	+4	0	61	54	62
East North Central	-3	-12	+14	+3	78	66	66
South Atlantic	-4	-4	(X)	-10	76	81	67
West South Central	(X)	-2	+6	-11	64	64	62
Pacific	+24	-7	(X)	-3	59	66	55
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-1	-14	+12	0	30	28	25
New England	+4	-11	+25	+3	31	24	27
Middle Atlantic	+7	-22	+3	+11	18	18	12
East North Central	-3	-20	+19	+4	26	23	21
West North Central	+17	-1	(X)	+1	45	39	37
South Atlantic	+10	-16	(X)	+15	24	26	13
West South Central	+11	-6	(X)	+17	24	24	26
Pacific	+1	-4	+10	-2	35	33	34
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+2	0	+8	+1	165	154	158
New England	0	-7	(X)	0	204	188	183
Middle Atlantic	0	-14	+9	-1	152	140	134
East North Central	+8	+3	+9	+2	159	157	162
West North Central	-1	-9	+2	+3	172	166	157
South Atlantic	+2	-4	+3	+5	178	171	150
East South Central	+3	-2	+4	+5	200	197	187
West South Central	+8	+7	+9	+2	179	162	161
Mountain	0	+10	-3	+5	189	192	195
Pacific	+10	+7	+1	-7	140	120	167
Tobacco distributors	+1	-23	+4	-2	60	58	47
New England	-1	-19	+9	+2	65	63	53
Middle Atlantic	+2	-26	+1	-9	55	55	47
East North Central	+2	-21	+3	-4	51	52	42
West North Central	+2	-20	+6	-1	70	74	61
South Atlantic	+2	-24	-2	+5	59	58	44
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-1	-15	+16	+17	67	45	36
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-5	-2	+10	+4	169	164	163
New England	-7	(X)	+12	+5	127	123	165
Middle Atlantic	+1	-3	+9	0	160	155	159
East North Central	-2	-29	+11	+2	226	183	174
West North Central	+2	(X)	+4	+5	233	228	225
South Atlantic	+10	+2	+6	+10	183	183	193
Pacific	+17	(X)	(X)	(X)	162	160	135

* See text, page 8.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

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 10 through 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) and 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), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 1, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of the data" below.)

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, 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.

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.

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 how-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

ever, 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for each of the monthly estimates of sales in July 1958--June 1959, for the ratios of current month to previous month sales and current month to year-ago sales, for four months--September 1958, October 1958, December 1958, and March 1959. 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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. Table 4 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians for the period July 1958 through June 1959. The sampling errors for individual months, however, are available upon request.

Evaluation of the sampling variability of the ratio based on weighted identicals has not been completed. 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 10 percent of the total sales are imputed for nonresponse.

Table 4. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales--July 1958 to June 1959		Sampling error of the ratio of current month sales compared to--			
			Previous month sales		Year-ago sales	
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5
Automotive	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8
Automotive, equipment, tire, tube	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3
Furniture, home furnishings	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3
Furniture	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6
Home furnishings, floor coverings	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2
Hardware	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3
Lumber, construction materials	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2
Lumber, millwork	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4
Construction materials	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Machinery, equipment, supplies	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4
Professional equipment, supplies	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5
Service establishment supplies	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Iron, steel and products	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5
Nonferrous metals	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4
Scrap, waste materials	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4
Iron, steel scrap	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6
Waste materials	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2
General-line grocery	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2
Specialty-line grocery	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5
Confectionery	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Meat, meat products	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4
Farm products (edible)	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3
Poultry, poultry products	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5
Fresh fruit, vegetables	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4
Beer, wine, distilled spirits	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2
Beer, ale	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3
Wine, distilled spirits	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Drugs, chemicals, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Drugs (general, specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial chemicals, explosives	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3
Paint, varnish	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Tobacco	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2
Dry goods, apparel	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Clothing, furnishings, footwear	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5
Dry goods (general, specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5
Paper, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Paper	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2
Coal	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2
Farm supplies	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6

Note: The use of sampling errors shown above is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 June 1959. The published estimate is $5,118 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is .6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $5,118 million by .016, we obtain $82 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $5,036 and $5,200 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,954 to $5,282 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1959 to June 1959 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $5,118 million by $4,794 million, is 1.07 (it can also be expressed as a 7% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.07 by .009, we obtain .010 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 1.06 to 1.08 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 6% and 8% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.05 to 1.09.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

FEBRUARY 1960

BW-60-2

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
APRIL 7, 1960[1]

Sales

February 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $9.9 billion, were up 2 percent over January sales and 7 percent above a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first two months of 1960 totaled $19.7 billion, an increase of 5 percent over sales in the comparable period of 1959.

Sales in the durable goods trades, totaling $4.2 billion in February, increased 4 percent over their January level and were 10 percent higher than February 1959 sales. The nondurable goods trades, with sales of $5.7 billion, indicated a smaller increase (1%) over previous month sales and a smaller gain over a year ago (6%) than the durable goods trades.

Most trades reported February sales above last month. Large increases were indicated by wholesalers of clothing, furnishings (18%), and commercial machines, equipment (16%). The sharpest decline from January 1960 sales was shown by nonferrous metals distributors, book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers, and coal wholesalers (7% each). Iron, steel and products distributors also reported a decline (2%) below January sales, but showed an increase (11%) over a year ago. Other large year-ago gains were reported by retailer-cooperative grocery wholesalers (22%) nonferrous metals distributors (20%), professional equipment distributors (19%) iron, steel scrap dealers (18%) and farm products (raw materials) merchants (18%). Among the five trades indicating declines from year-ago sales, the sharpest drop was shown by coal wholesalers (12%).

Two geographic divisions, New England and the East South Central, reported sales declines of 3 and 5 percent, respectively, below last month. All other divisions indicated increases, the largest (8%) occuring in the West North Central and Mountain Divisions. Compared with a year ago, all geographic divisions experienced sales gains ranging from 2 to 12 percent, with the West South Central Division reporting the largest increase.

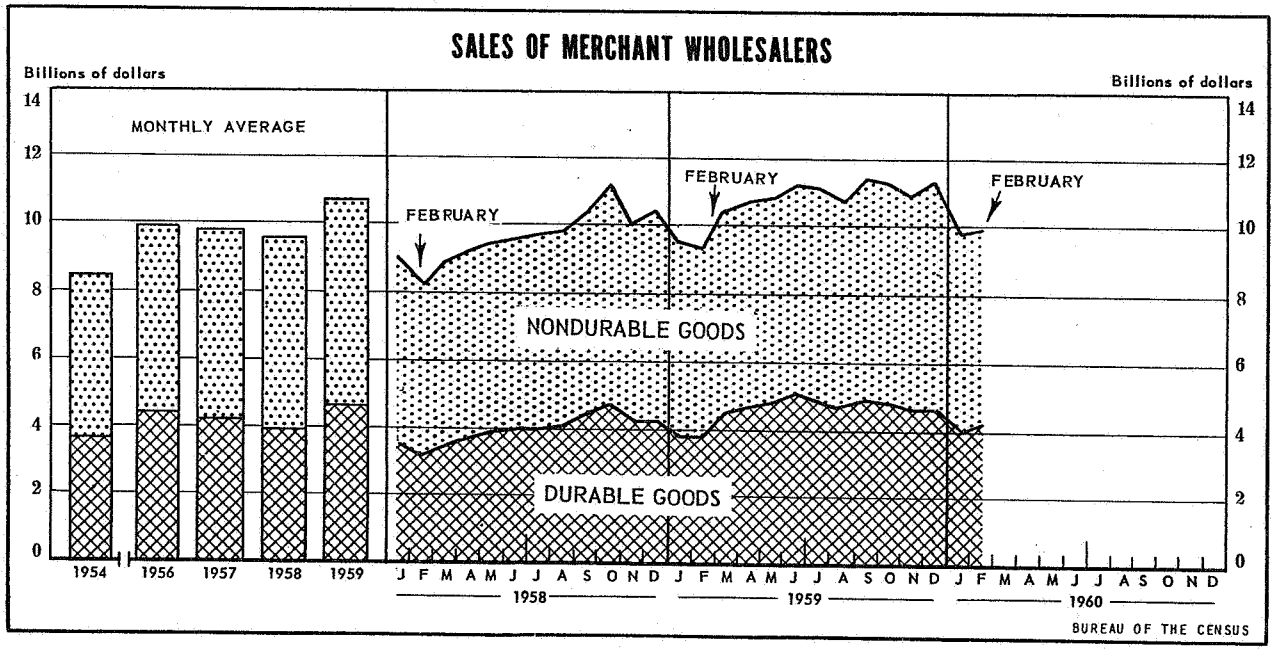
Inventories

Inventories of merchant wholesalers at the end of February remained unchanged from their January level but were 8 percent higher than stocks on hand a year ago. Stocks in the durable goods trades rose 3 percent during the month, while stocks in the nondurable goods trades declined 4 percent. Both trade groups however, indicated higher inventories than a year ago --up 7 percent for durable goods, and 9 percent for the nondurable goods trades. Coal wholesalers and farm products merchants reported the sharpest declines from previous month inventories, but indicated substantial increases over year-ago stocks. Iron, steel and products distributors reported the largest increase (15%) over January 31 stocks, but showed no change from last February.

The February 1960 stock-sales ratio for all merchant wholesalers reporting inventories in conjunction with their sales was 140 percent, down 3 points from January but up 1 point over February 1959. The February 1960 stocks-sales ratio for durable goods was 193 percent compared to 100 percent for nondurable goods.

General

The data in this report 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 8 and 9.



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

[1]An advance release of February 1960 data was issued on March 31, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960		1959											Total 2 mos.	
	Jan.[1]	Feb.[2]	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,939	9,262	10,410	10,709	10,757	11,203	11,095	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312	19,667	18,796
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,212	3,837	4,471	4,697	4,794	5,118	4,917	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632	8,257	7,666
Automotive wholesalers	453	502	424	501	499	497	547	562	520	517	536	515	498	955	868
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	333	375	392	389	429	419	405	428	439	429	379	757	685
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	647	595	631	619	657	713	702	695	779	769	750	787	1,267	1,207
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	305	278	303	300	322	347	331	336	375	367	353	365	590	559
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	342	317	328	319	335	366	371	359	404	403	397	421	677	648
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	201	199	231	231	222	223	211	225	237	248	234	239	383	384
Furniture wholesalers	60	65	60	67	67	67	70	69	72	74	76	71	72	125	118
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	135	139	164	164	155	153	143	153	163	172	163	167	257	266
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers	377	393	371	422	461	459	484	482	475	511	517	460	424	770	736
Hardware wholesalers	166	179	169	196	212	208	210	202	201	219	216	195	190	345	337
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	213	202	226	250	251	274	279	274	292	301	265	234	424	399
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	547	502	664	746	773	823	838	801	797	754	655	612	1,068	1,005
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	294	389	403	426	452	466	444	434	399	351	333	631	585
Construction materials distributors	214	224	209	275	343	347	371	373	357	363	355	304	279	438	421
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,120	1,004	1,153	1,244	1,297	1,386	1,287	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165	2,206	2,017
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	514	468	528	553	572	608	535	517	533	520	501	545	1,014	945
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	106	89	103	101	100	117	115	127	129	118	113	114	209	182
Service establishment supply houses	137	141	124	138	143	150	149	143	127	144	153	132	140	278	244
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	417	368	448	476	490	539	464	419	474	430	426	455	848	729
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	301	271	334	357	364	403	350	312	340	305	292	302	608	538
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	115	96	114	119	126	136	114	107	134	125	134	152	239	190
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	281	323	322	292	301	272	260	271	289	309	349	638	540
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	199	169	192	187	159	163	144	129	139	159	179	228	390	317
Waste materials dealers	124	125	112	131	135	134	139	129	131	132	130	129	121	249	223
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,726	5,425	5,939	6,012	5,963	6,084	6,178	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680	11,408	11,130
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,719	1,619	1,725	1,775	1,734	1,729	1,822	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828	3,458	3,334
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	762	713	737	758	753	750	793	739	803	791	740	768	1,518	1,465
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	600	560	609	616	589	572	612	589	640	609	612	646	1,208	1,132
Confectionery wholesalers	58	57	56	57	56	56	57	59	55	59	63	64	71	115	113
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	299	291	322	346	336	350	357	325	370	348	322	344	616	624
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	350	347	375	407	400	442	424	362	393	383	391	432	705	729
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	114	121	125	132	128	133	129	121	143	136	155	160	232	266
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	236	226	250	274	272	309	295	241	249	247	235	272	473	463
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	477	454	521	551	578	614	603	559	569	584	595	743	908	907
Beer, ale distributors	165	178	165	189	213	240	272	282	261	236	210	188	223	343	328
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	299	289	332	337	338	342	321	298	333	373	407	520	565	579
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	378	348	398	402	393	391	383	380	419	410	374	376	750	723
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	244	218	249	243	235	238	238	235	265	263	243	239	485	452
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	107	106	121	126	124	118	111	111	120	114	105	113	212	224
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	26	24	28	33	34	35	33	34	35	32	27	25	51	47
Tobacco distributors	294	299	277	301	317	318	349	358	332	343	351	326	380	593	564
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	494	516	530	583	538	511	526	528	597	627	624	568	509	1,010	1,054
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	196	197	214	197	192	174	190	240	240	231	211	167	362	377
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	196	194	196	224	213	196	226	235	242	254	256	233	222	390	402
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	336	301	333	343	339	344	326	343	366	373	350	358	669	628
Paper wholesalers	290	294	261	292	301	299	303	288	300	323	322	299	305	584	549
Coal wholesalers	76	71	81	79	73	73	71	61	65	73	76	78	86	147	171
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	140	145	172	174	145	119	112	115	125	107	107	116	268	281

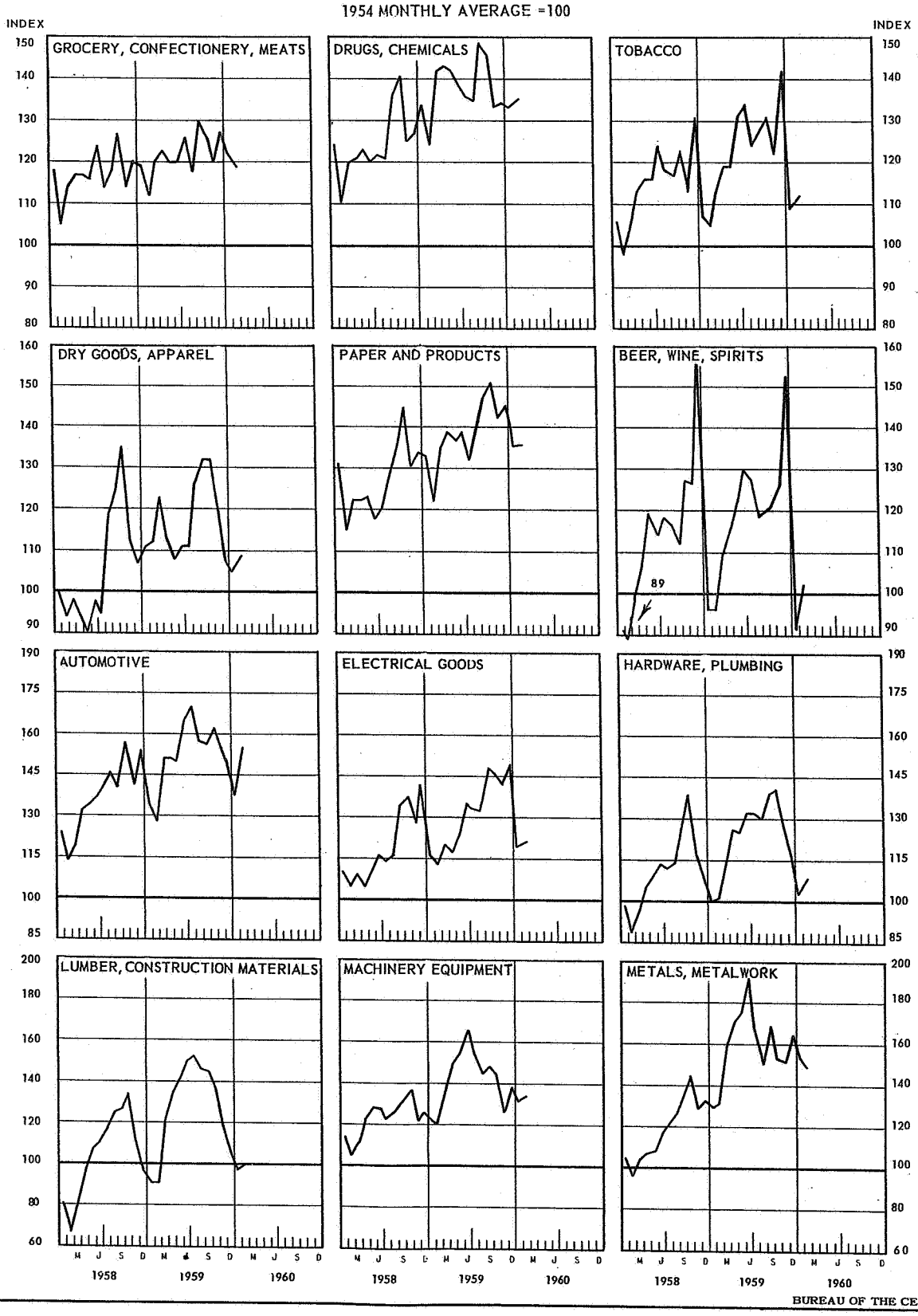
[1] Final estimate
[2] Preliminary estimate

See page 8, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Hawaii and Alaska which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.3 percent and 0.04 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--KIND OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE =100



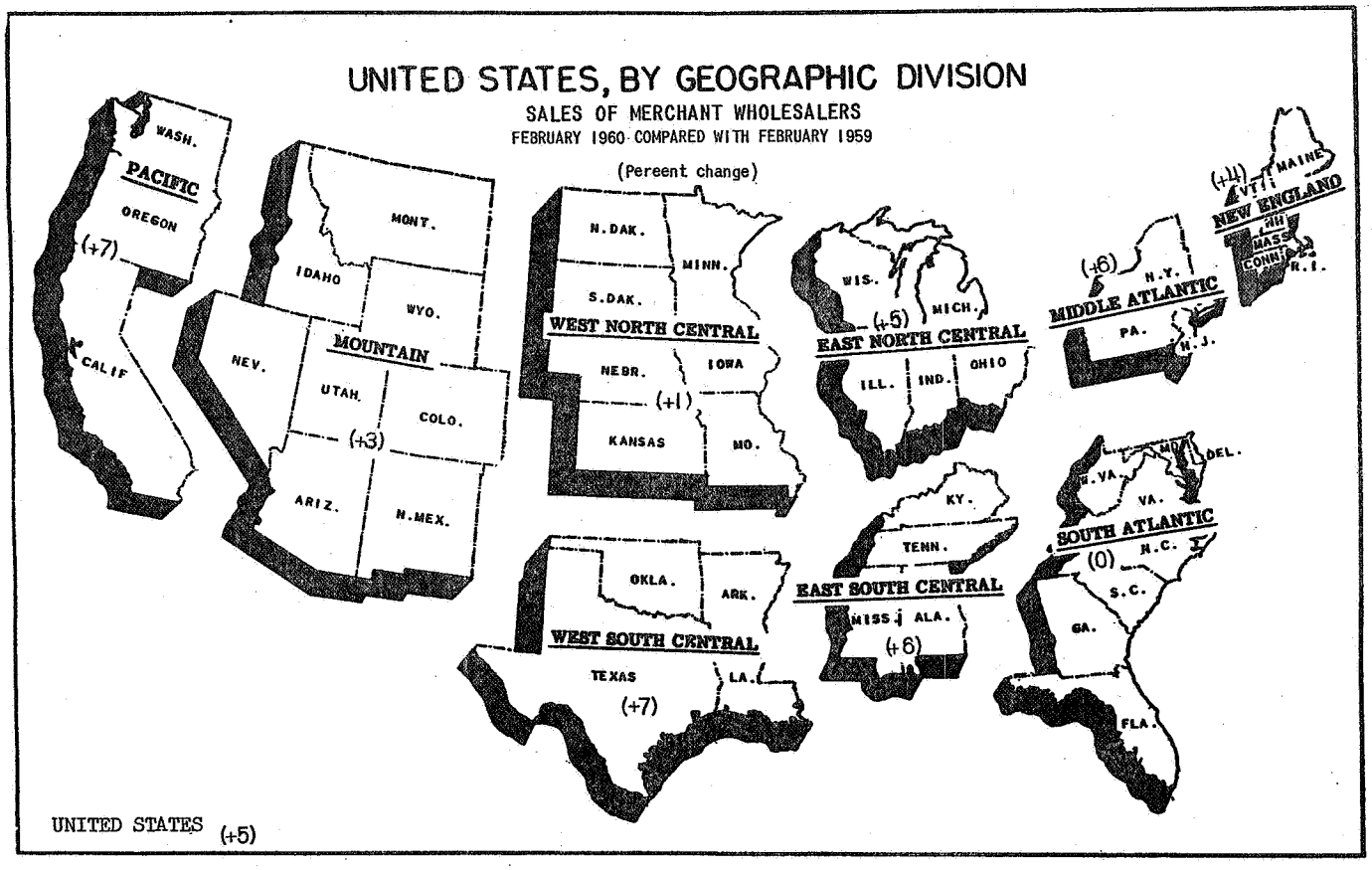
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DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS

Table 2. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS
FEBRUARY 1960

Kind of business	Sales*			Inventories, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	February 1960 from--		2 mos. 1960 from 2 mos. 1959	February 1960 from--		February 1960	February 1959	January 1960
	February 1959	January 1960		February 1959	January 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	r+7	+2	+5	+8	0	140	139	143
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+10	+4	+8	+7	+3	193	192	194
Automotive wholesalers	r+18	r+11	r+10	+6	+2	225	219	227
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+15	+2	+11	+4	+2	239	237	243
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	+9	+4	+5	+7	+2	188	185	192
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+10	+7	+6	+5	+3	170	172	178
Electrical appl., TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	+8	+2	+4	+9	+1	207	199	205
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+1	+10	0	+9	+5	177	170	185
Furniture wholesalers	+8	+8	+6	+4	+1	148	164	163
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-3	+11	-3	+11	+7	191	173	195
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+6	+4	+5	+7	+3	240	233	243
Hardware wholesalers	+6	+8	+2	+9	+4	252	248	264
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+5	+1	+6	+6	+2	230	221	226
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+9	+5	+6	+13	+4	148	142	147
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	+10	+5	+8	+15	+6	171	162	164
Construction materials distributors	+7	+5	+4	+11	+1	127	124	132
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+12	+3	+9	+10	0	205	203	217
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*	+16	-1	+7	+13	+3	234	248	241
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*	+14	+16	+11	+10	-1	122	131	153
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+10	+3	+7	+3	+1	170	191	184
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	+19	+3	+15	+5	+4	176	181	170
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+7	+4	+10	-2	+2	152	166	162
Service establishment supply houses	+14	+3	+14	+5	0	127	131	129
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+13	-3	+16	+2	+13	214	220	181
Iron, steel and products distributors	+11	-2	+13	0	+15	238	255	198
Nonferrous metals distributors	+20	-7	+26	+14	+4	139	121	126
Scrap, waste materials dealers	+15	+3	+18	-1	-5	68	85	72
Iron, steel scrap dealers	+18	+4	+23	-3	-4	63	87	67
Waste materials dealers	+12	+1	+12	+3	-7	76	82	82
Jewelry wholesalers*	0	+8	-3	-3	0	303	307	355
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+6	+1	+2	+9	r-4	100	100	107
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+6	-1	+4	+5	-1	76	78	74
General-line grocery wholesalers	+7	+1	+4	+3	+2	88	93	86
Voluntary groups*	+6	+1	+7	+2	+1	78	80	77
Retailer-cooperative*	+22	+2	+13	+7	+6	65	78	64
Nonaffiliated*	+3	0	+3	+3	+1	118	115	113
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+7	-1	+7	+7	-5	85	86	84
Confectionery wholesalers	+2	-2	+2	+9	0	77	80	77
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+3	-6	-1	-1	-5	23	24	23
Farm products (edible) distributors	+1	-1	-3	+10	-7	32	32	35
Poultry, poultry products distributors	-6	-3	-13	+19	-6	30	24	32
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+4	0	+2	+7	-7	33	36	36
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+5	+11	0	+2	-4	116	118	134
Beer, ale distributors	+8	+8	+5	+2	-4	64	65	71
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+3	+12	-2	+2	-4	151	155	178
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+9	+2	+4	+9	0	145	147	148
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+12	+1	+7	+7	0	153	158	155
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+1	+2	-5	+16	0	117	113	120
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+8	+4	+9	+6	+2	214	199	221
Tobacco distributors	+8	+2	+5	+6	+1	61	62	61
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-3	+4	-4	+7	-2	156	154	171
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	0	+18	-4	+3	-3	153	166	198
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-1	-1	-3	+10	-1	150	134	148
Piece goods converters*	+6	-6	+8	+8	-1	175	176	173
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+12	+1	+7	+5	-1	126	130	129
Paper wholesalers	+13	+1	+6	+5	-1	120	125	124
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*	+15	+1	+11	+4	+1	169	171	168
Farm products (raw materials) merchants*	+18	-3	+5	+33	-14	138	135	169
Other nondurable goods wholesalers*	-1	+3	-3	+5	-2	102	98	108
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	+2	+9	+6	+12	+5	206	202	218
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*	+2	-7	+3	+9	-1	147	145	131
Coal wholesalers	-12	-7	-14	+14	-16	61	50	66
Farm supplies wholesalers	-3	+9	-5	+8	-3	136	114	151

* See text, page 8.
r Revised since Advance Release dated March 31, 1960.


UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
FEBRUARY 1960 COMPARED WITH FEBRUARY 1959
(Percent change)
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+7)
CALIF
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH
COLO.
(+3)
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(+1)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
(+5)
MICH.
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+6)
N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+4)
VT.
MAINE
NEW ENGLAND
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
MD.
DEL.
W.VA.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
(0)
N.C.
S.C.
GA.
FLA.
KY.
TENN.
MISS.
ALA.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
(+6)
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
LA.
(+7)
UNITED STATES (+5)

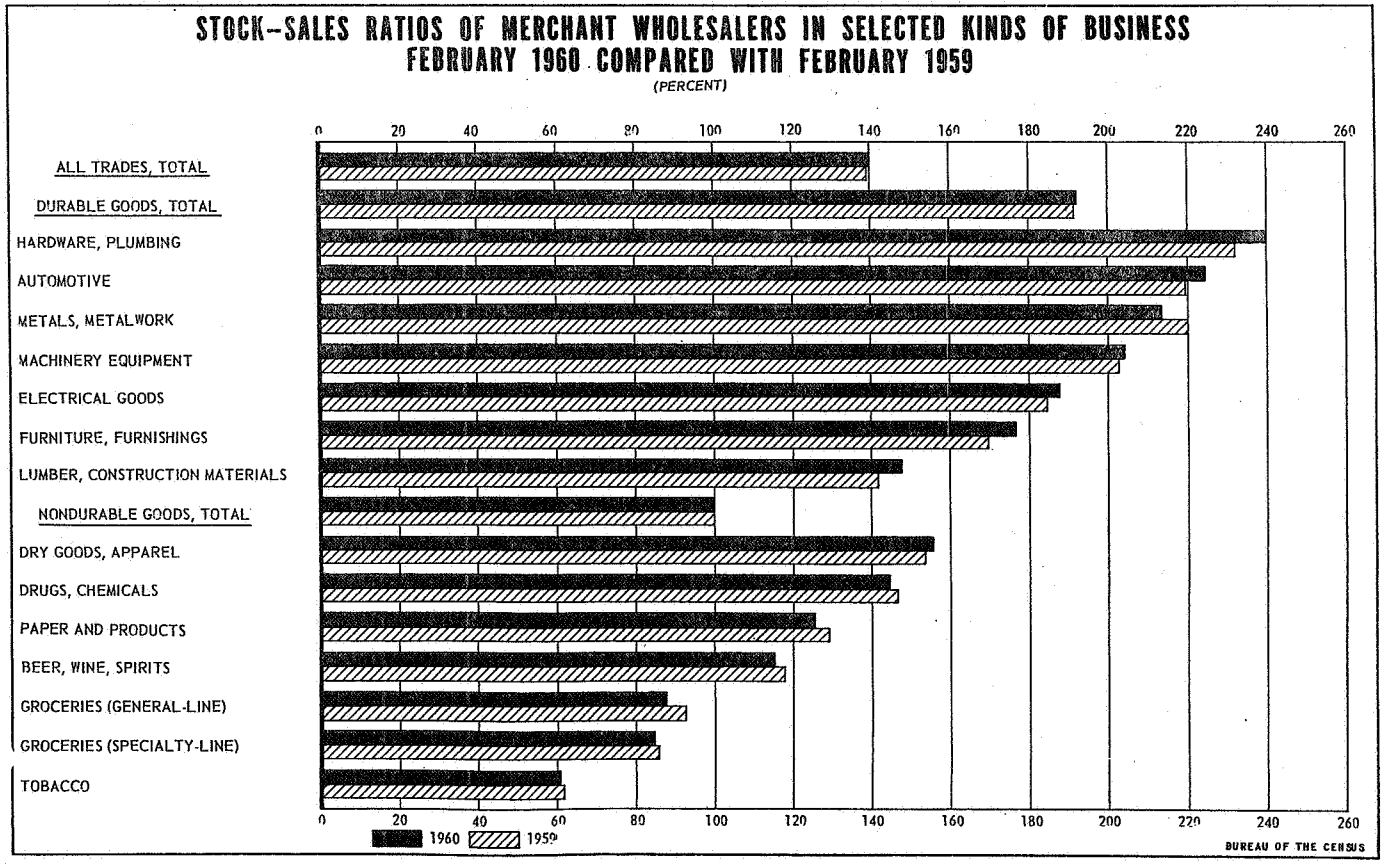

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
FEBRUARY 1960 COMPARED WITH FEBRUARY 1959
(PERCENT)
0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200 220 240 260
ALL TRADES, TOTAL
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
AUTOMOTIVE
METALS, METALWORK
MACHINERY EQUIPMENT
ELECTRICAL GOODS
FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS
LUMBER, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
DRY GOODS, APPAREL
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
GROCERIES (GENERAL-LINE)
GROCERIES (SPECIALTY-LINE)
TOBACCO
1960
1959
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Table 3. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
FEBRUARY 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	February 1960 from--		2 mos. 1960 from 2 mos. 1959	February 1960 from--		February 1960	February 1959	January 1960
	February 1959	January 1960		February 1959	January 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	+7	+2	+5	+8	0	140	139	143
New England	+8	-3	+4	+7	+3	132	129	120
Middle Atlantic	+9	+2	+6	+6	0	114	119	119
East North Central	+7	+2	+5	+3	+1	141	147	142
West North Central	+7	+8	+1	+7	0	147	148	159
South Atlantic	+2	+2	0	+9	+2	159	146	156
East South Central	+3	-5	+6	+12	-2	172	160	158
West South Central	+12	+1	+7	+12	-2	146	150	153
Mountain	+5	+8	+3	+7	+2	166	162	176
Pacific	+11	+5	+7	+16	-3	144	134	157
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+15	+2	+11	+4	+2	239	237	243
New England	-11	-6	+4	+7	+6	250	222	223
Middle Atlantic	+6	-10	+6	+11	+3	230	224	211
East North Central	+9	+15	+12	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
West North Central	-2	+3	-6	+8	0	278	235	290
South Atlantic	+3	-2	+5	-9	+1	191	194	180
East South Central	+3	+4	-3	+10	0	250	233	258
West South Central	-4	+2	-5	+16	+1	218	197	225
Mountain	+9	+14	+5	+6	+5	292	285	313
Pacific	+11	+3	+4	+4	+7	201	233	203
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+10	+7	+6	+5	+3	170	172	178
New England	+2	-3	+15	+6	+4	188	180	175
Middle Atlantic	+13	+8	+13	+2	+2	138	153	154
East North Central	+22	+8	+16	+1	+4	160	185	162
West North Central	-14	+9	-11	-4	+6	265	230	277
South Atlantic	+13	+9	+6	+13	+9	174	169	178
East South Central	+9	+11	+9	+6	+14	220	203	190
West South Central	-7	+16	-6	+2	+2	203	187	225
Mountain	0	(X)	+12	-10	-10	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+7	+5	+2	+21	-5	140	125	155
Elec. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	+8	+2	+4	+9	+1	207	199	205
New England	+23	+12	+7	+1	0	157	181	174
Middle Atlantic	+11	+4	+5	-2	0	180	203	179
East North Central	+12	+6	+9	+13	-1	217	212	230
West North Central	-2	+8	-2	+6	+2	258	235	248
South Atlantic	-4	+12	+2	+8	+9	177	162	179
East South Central	+30	(X)	+24	(X)	+6	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-2	-2	+1	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+11	-2	+4	-7	-1	178	172	175
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+1	+10	0	+9	+5	177	170	185
New England	+21	+24	+16	+11	+10	162	163	200
Middle Atlantic	+8	+7	+7	+11	+13	161	145	148
East North Central	+7	+11	+1	+4	+2	174	186	177
West North Central	+16	+20	+7	+15	-2	241	226	305
South Atlantic	+5	0	+13	+14	+5	277	222	277
East South Central	-10	-4	-8	+9	+1	319	296	375
West South Central	+11	+14	+5	+22	-7	158	158	178
Pacific								
Hardware wholesalers	+6	+8	+2	+9	+4	252	248	264
New England	(X)	+13	(X)	(X)	(X)	((X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+5	+5	+6	+16	+1	212	197	226
East North Central	+16	+14	+12	+9	+6	202	220	222
West North Central	+5	+3	+6	+11	+6	260	245	250
South Atlantic	+4	-5	+4	+13	+4	334	293	302
East South Central	+1	-2	-3	+12	0	264	239	258
West South Central	+9	+12	-1	+16	+4	321	301	344
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	-X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	0	+23	-4	+5	-1	248	254	287
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+5	+1	+6	+6	+2	230	221	226
New England	+16	+11	+11	+6	0	206	199	218
Middle Atlantic	+10	0	+8	-2	0	256	274	265
East North Central	+8	+4	+13	+7	+2	208	226	205
West North Central	+6	-9	+5	+3	0	245	218	222
South Atlantic	+4	-1	+3	+7	+6	218	215	201
East South Central	0	+6	-14	+4	+6	237	201	223
West South Central	-1	+5	+3	+8	-2	221	205	238
Pacific								
Lumber, construction materials distributors	+9	+5	+6	+13	+4	148	142	147
New England	+26	+4	+8	+15	+9	156	162	150
Middle Atlantic	+2	+8	+6	-6	0	100	107	117
East North Central	+12	+4	+8	+14	+8	169	171	155
West North Central	-2	+5	-3	+7	+4	184	151	201
South Atlantic	-2	+1	+2	+1	+3	212	190	190
East South Central	+9	+8	-5	+16	+1	136	151	144
West South Central	+12	+7	+6	+25	-1	126	93	134
Pacific								

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued
FEBRUARY 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	February 1960 from--		2 mos. 1960 from 2 mos. 1959	February 1960 from--		February 1960	February 1959	January 1960
	February 1960	January 1960		February 1960	January 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	+10	+3	+7	+3	+1	170	191	184
Middle Atlantic	+18	+17	+17	+1	0	169	197	189
East North Central	+24	+6	+19	0	+1	149	193	160
West North Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+13	+5	+3	+22	+1	192	191	208
East South Central	(X)	-3	(X)	(X)	+6	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-3	+6	-4	+8	+6	208	185	208
Mountain	+6	+24	-3	-10	+2	188	219	225
Pacific	+8	+8	+2	+16	-5	182	192	233
General-line grocery wholesalers	+7	+1	+4	+3	+2	88	93	86
New England	-3	+2	-2	0	+2	84	70	79
Middle Atlantic	+11	0	+13	+8	-2	90	93	93
East North Central	+2	0	+8	-3	-1	81	85	81
West North Central	+8	+1	+5	+5	+4	91	93	88
South Atlantic	+9	+7	0	+8	+5	95	94	93
East South Central	+8	-2	+3	+1	+3	108	114	103
West South Central	-3	-7	+2	-3	+6	75	96	76
Mountain	+8	+4	+5	-8	-1	86	97	90
Pacific	+2	-4	-1	+4	+1	77	79	69
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+7	-1	+7	+7	-5	85	86	84
Middle Atlantic	+17	+1	+9	+20	-1	81	80	84
East North Central	-5	0	-4	+10	-2	92	82	94
South Atlantic	-7	-7	-6	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+10	+1	+4	+2	+5	78	96	77
Pacific	+17	-1	+20	+15	-17	96	85	95
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+4	0	+2	+7	-7	33	36	36
New England	(X)	+2	+7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+15	-3	+12	+26	+3	17	18	19
East North Central	+17	-1	+5	-3	-5	21	25	21
West North Central	+5	+2	+9	+17	0	44	45	43
South Atlantic	+10	-1	+10	0	-3	38	41	38
West South Central	+8	-5	+10	+9	-2	33	32	32
Pacific	+9	0	+5	+4	-19	45	49	58
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+12	+1	+7	+7	0	153	158	155
New England	+18	0	+10	0	-5	155	176	165
Middle Atlantic	+10	-1	+5	+10	-2	129	128	130
East North Central	+9	-2	+9	+2	+1	153	163	147
West North Central	+9	+3	+5	-3	+1	181	204	190
South Atlantic	+13	+6	+8	+5	+3	162	169	169
East South Central	+20	+5	+11	+15	0	159	172	171
West South Central	+23	+5	+14	+13	+3	181	199	185
Mountain	+17	-1	+9	+23	+2	175	176	166
Pacific	+19	0	+15	+5	-4	131	118	136
Tobacco distributors	+8	+2	+5	+6	+1	61	62	61
New England	+3	+4	+1	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+8	-1	+5	+5	0	48	51	49
East North Central	+6	+2	+4	+2	+3	68	70	65
West North Central	+6	+1	+4	+12	+4	71	69	69
South Atlantic	+1	+1	+2	0	-3	68	70	71
East South Central	+12	-7	+12	+11	+8	67	70	64
West South Central	+9	-2	+4	-3	-1	56	56	56
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-3	+4	-4	+7	-2	156	154	171
New England	+7	(X)	0	+18	-5	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+6	+3	+3	+5	0	161	160	171
East North Central	+1	-5	0	(X)	+4	(X)	(X)	(X)
West North Central	-5	+1	-1	+11	+3	291	243	279
South Atlantic	+10	+16	+10	-2	+6	175	178	198
Pacific	+12	+5	+14	(X)	-7	(X)	(X)	(X)

* See text, page 8.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 10 through 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 four times 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) and 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), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 1, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

5. 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, 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.

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 previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

The procedure to develop final "composite" estimates was instituted effective with the data for January 1960. Dollar volume estimates shown prior to January 1960 were obtained in the same manner as the preliminary "composite" estimates.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for each of the monthly estimates of sales in July 1958--June 1959, for the ratios of current month to previous month sales and current month to year-ago sales, for four months--September 1958, October 1958, December 1958, and March 1959. 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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. Table 4 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians for the period July 1958 through June 1959. The sampling errors for individual months, however, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 4 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates have not yet been completed but are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates.

Estimates of the sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. 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 10 percent of the total sales are inputed for nonresponse.

Table 4. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales--July 1958 to June 1959		Sampling error of the ratio of current month sales compared to--: Previous month sales		Sampling error of the ratio of current month sales compared to--: Year-ago sales	
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5
Automotive	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8
Automotive, equipment, tire, tube	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3
Furniture, home furnishings	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3
Furniture	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6
Home furnishings, floor coverings	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2
Hardware	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3
Lumber, construction materials	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2
Lumber, millwork	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4
Construction materials	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Machinery, equipment, supplies	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4
Professional equipment, supplies	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5
Service establishment supplies	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Iron, steel and products	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5
Nonferrous metals	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4
Scrap, waste materials	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4
Iron, steel scrap	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6
Waste materials	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2
General-line grocery	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2
Specialty-line grocery	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5
Confectionery	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Meat, meat products	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4
Farm products (edible)	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3
Poultry, poultry products	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5
Fresh fruit, vegetables	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4
Beer, wine, distilled spirits	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2
Beer, ale	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3
Wine, distilled spirits	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Drugs, chemicals, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Drugs (general, specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial chemicals, explosives	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3
Paint, varnish	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Tobacco	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2
Dry goods, apparel	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Clothing, furnishings, footwear	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5
Dry goods (general, specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5
Paper, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Paper	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2
Coal	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2
Farm supplies	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6

Note: The use of sampling errors shown above is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 June 1959. The published estimate is $5,118 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $5,118 million by .016, we obtain $82 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $5,036 and $5,200 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,954 to $5,282 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1959 to June 1959 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $5,118 million by $4,794 million, is 1.07 (it can also be expressed as a 7% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.07 by .009, we obtain .010 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 1.06 to 1.08 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 6% and 8% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.05 to 1.09.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

MARCH 1960

BW-60-3

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
May 9, 1960[1]

First Quarter Sales

First quarter 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, amounting to $30.4 billion, were up 4 percent above sales in the first quarter of 1959. Durable goods trades, with sales totaling $12.7 billion, showed a 5 percent increase during the same period, while sales in the nondurable goods trades, totaling $17.7 billion, rose 4 percent.

Most trades reported first quarter sales moderately ahead of a year ago. Nonferrous metals distributors with sales up 18 percent, registered the principal gain. Coal wholesalers, with quarterly sales down 10 percent from a year ago, indicated the largest decline among the 9 trades showing declines from first quarter 1959.

First quarter sales in all geographic divisions were ahead of a year ago. The increases ranged from 1 percent in the West North Central Division to 6 percent in New England, Middle Atlantic, and Pacific Divisions.

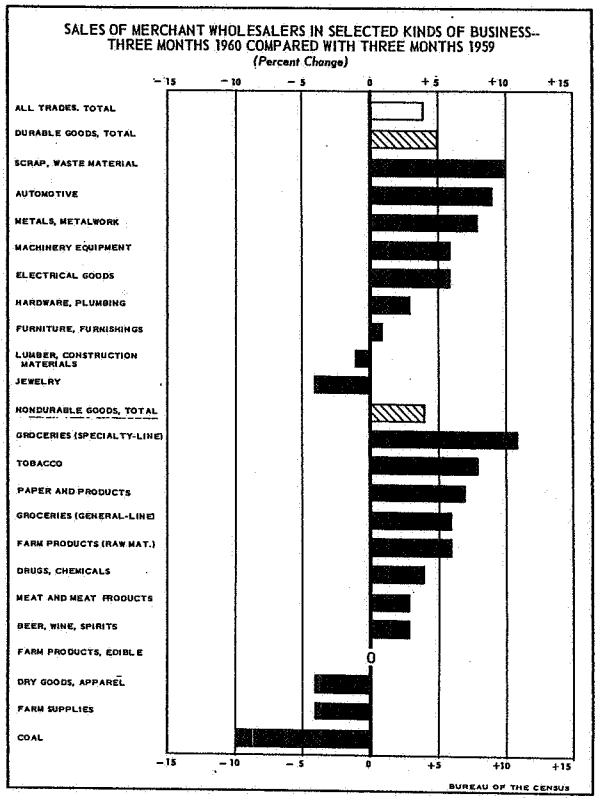
March Sales

March 1960 sales, estimated at $10.7 billion, were 8 percent higher than February sales and 3 percent above sales a year ago. The durable goods trades, with sales totaling $4.4 billion in March, showed a 5 percent increase over previous month sales, but were slightly (1%) below a year ago. The nondurable goods trades, with sales of $6.3 billion, indicated a larger increase over previous month sales (9%) than the durable goods trades, and also showed a gain over a year ago (6%).

Only two trades--iron and steel scrap dealers (-11%) and jewelry wholesalers (-4%)--reported declines from previous month sales. Substantial increases were experienced by distributors of farm supplies (20%), amusement, sporting goods (20%), wine, distilled spirits (19%), poultry products (19%), air conditioning equipment (18%), and fresh fruit, vegetables (16%). Most trades also reported gains over year-ago sales but these were somewhat smaller than the gains over previous month sales. The largest increases over March 1959 were reported by retailer-cooperative grocery wholesalers (18%) and specialty-line grocery wholesalers (16%). The sharpest declines from March 1959 were indicated by construction materials distributors (15%) and lumber, millwork wholesalers (9%).

Inventories

Inventories of wholesalers at the end of March were unchanged from their February level but were 9 percent higher than a year ago. Stocks in the durable goods trades rose 2 percent above February, while stocks of nondurable goods trades were reduced 2 percent. However, both trades groups indicated a 9 percent increase over their year-ago inventories.



Most trades reported small increases between February and March, but showed somewhat larger gains over their year-ago levels. However, 11 trades indicated declines from February, the sharpest being reported by coal wholesalers (21%), farm products merchants (14%), and iron, steel scrap dealers (11%). Only three trades indicated stocks below their year-ago levels--iron, steel scrap dealers showing the principal drop (10%).

The March 1960 stock-sales ratio for all merchant wholesalers reporting inventories in conjunction with their sales was 130 percent, down 10 points from February, but 4 points above the March 1959 ratio. The March 1960 stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 190 percent compared with the nondurable goods ratio of 89 percent.

General

The data in this report 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 8 and 9.

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

An advance release of March 1960 data was issued on April 29, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Sales in millions of dollars)

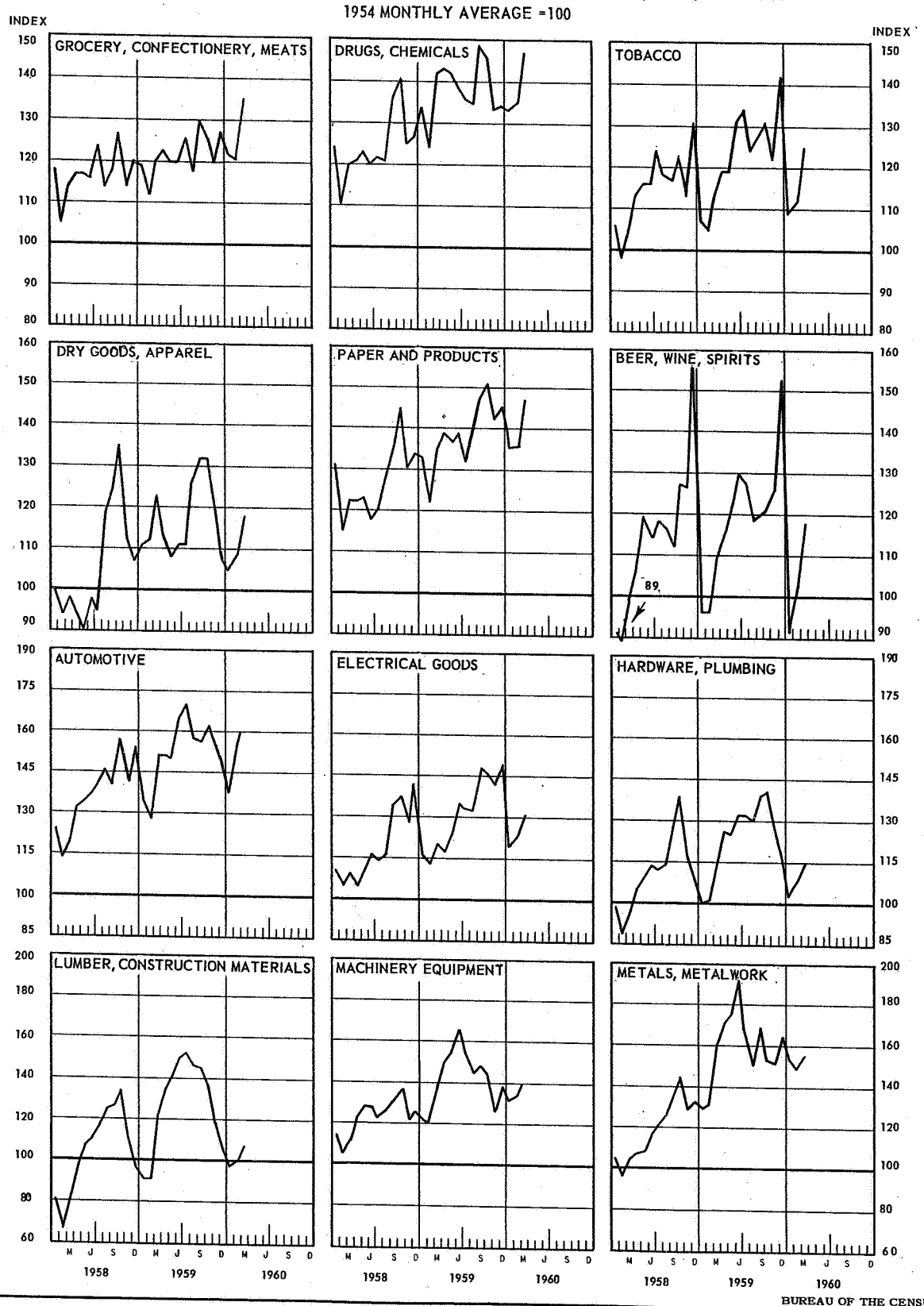
Kind of business	1960			1959										Total 3 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.[1]	Mar.[2]	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,733	10,410	10,709	10,757	11,203	11,095	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312	30,426	29,206
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,440	4,471	4,697	4,794	5,118	4,917	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632	12,695	12,137
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	531	501	499	497	547	562	520	517	536	515	498	1,489	1,369
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	412	375	392	389	429	419	405	428	439	429	379	1,169	1,060
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	690	631	619	657	713	702	695	779	769	750	787	1,955	1,838
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	326	303	300	322	347	331	336	375	367	353	365	915	862
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	364	328	319	335	366	371	359	404	403	397	421	1,040	976
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	229	231	231	222	223	211	225	237	248	234	239	620	615
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	69	67	67	67	70	69	72	74	76	71	72	196	185
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	161	164	164	155	153	143	153	163	172	163	167	425	430
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	422	461	459	484	482	475	511	517	460	424	1,189	1,158
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	193	196	212	208	210	202	201	219	216	195	190	537	533
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	228	226	250	251	274	279	274	292	301	265	234	653	625
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	590	664	746	773	823	838	801	797	754	655	612	1,656	1,669
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	335	389	403	426	452	466	444	434	399	351	333	986	974
Construction materials distributors	214	221	235	275	343	347	371	373	357	363	355	304	279	670	696
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,170	1,153	1,244	1,297	1,386	1,287	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165	3,374	3,170
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	533	528	553	572	608	535	517	533	520	501	545	1,534	1,473
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	113	103	101	100	117	115	127	129	118	113	114	326	285
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	148	138	143	150	149	143	127	144	153	132	140	422	382
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	435	448	476	490	539	464	419	474	430	426	455	1,276	1,177
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	315	334	357	364	403	350	312	340	305	292	302	918	872
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	114	119	126	136	114	107	134	125	134	152	358	304
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	313	323	322	292	301	272	260	271	289	309	349	951	863
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	176	192	187	159	163	144	129	139	159	179	228	564	509
Waste materials dealers	124	126	137	131	135	134	139	129	131	132	130	129	121	387	354
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,293	5,939	6,012	5,963	6,084	6,178	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680	17,730	17,069
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,946	1,725	1,775	1,734	1,729	1,822	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828	5,425	5,059
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	829	737	758	753	750	793	739	803	791	740	768	2,325	2,202
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	705	609	616	589	572	612	589	640	609	612	646	1,928	1,741
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	62	57	56	56	57	59	55	59	63	64	71	176	170
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	350	322	346	336	350	357	325	370	348	322	344	976	946
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	405	375	407	400	442	424	362	393	383	391	432	1,107	1,104
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	134	125	132	128	133	129	121	143	136	155	160	365	391
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	271	250	274	272	309	295	241	249	247	235	272	742	713
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	560	521	551	578	614	603	559	569	584	595	743	1,471	1,428
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	198	189	213	240	272	282	261	236	210	188	223	539	517
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	362	332	337	338	342	321	298	333	373	407	520	932	911
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	413	398	402	393	391	383	380	419	410	374	376	1,170	1,121
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	263	249	243	235	238	238	235	265	263	243	239	754	701
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	121	126	124	118	111	111	120	114	105	113	334	345
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	29	28	33	34	35	33	34	35	32	27	25	84	75
Tobacco distributors	294	303	335	301	317	318	349	358	332	343	351	326	380	932	865
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	494	516	561	583	538	511	526	528	597	627	624	568	509	1,571	1,637
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	216	214	197	192	174	190	240	240	231	211	167	575	591
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	196	196	210	224	213	196	226	235	242	254	256	233	222	602	626
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	363	333	343	339	344	326	343	366	373	350	358	1,025	961
Paper wholesalers	290	289	319	292	301	299	303	288	300	323	322	299	305	898	841
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	79	73	73	71	61	65	73	76	78	86	225	250
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	167	172	174	145	119	112	115	125	107	107	116	434	453

[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate. See page 8, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Hawaii and Alaska which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.3 percent and 0.04 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--KIND OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE =100



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

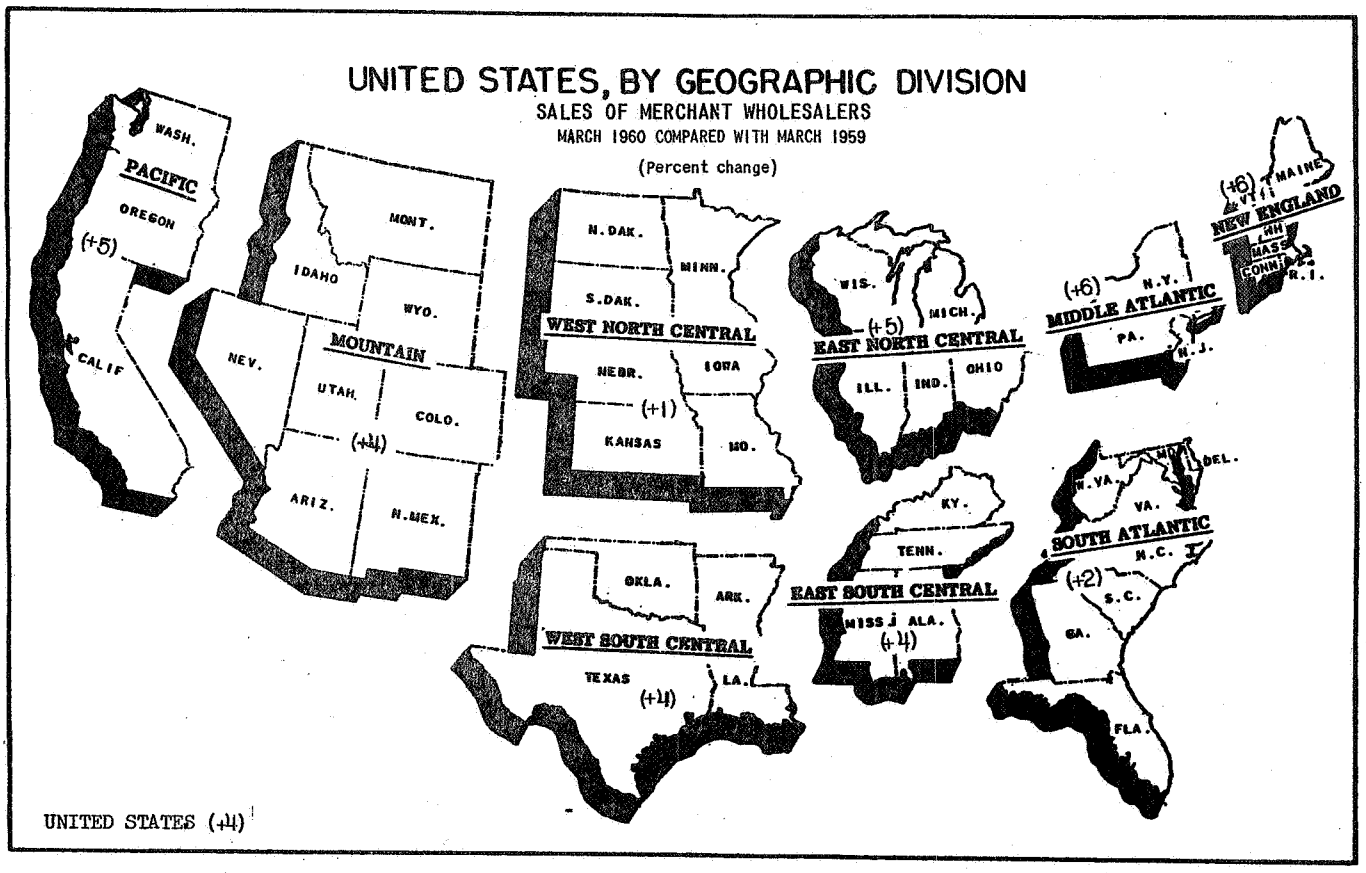
DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS

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

MARCH 1960

Kind of business	Sales*			Inventories, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	March 1960 from—		3 mos. 1960 from 3 mos. 1959	March 1960 from—		March 1960	March 1959	Feb. 1960
	March 1959	Feb. 1960		March 1959	Feb. 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	+3	+8	+4	+9	0	130	126	140
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-1	+5	+5	+9	+2	190	172	200
Automotive wholesalers	+6	+5	+9	+10	+2	205	200	222
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+10	+8	+10	+7	+2	219	221	232
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	+9	+7	+6	+8	+3	179	175	187
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+8	+7	+6	+7	+4	166	159	171
Electrical appl., TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	+11	+7	+7	+8	+2	194	193	203
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-1	+10	+1	+8	+4	153	145	161
Furniture wholesalers	+3	+3	+6	+7	+2	173	163	178
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-2	+13	-1	+8	+4	145	137	153
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	0	+8	+3	+9	+3	252	225	265
Hardware wholesalers	-2	+8	+1	+10	+2	271	232	288
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+1	+7	+4	+8	+3	234	218	242
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-11	+8	-1	+14	+2	151	118	164
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-9	+10	+1	+11	+3	165	137	183
Construction materials distributors	-15	+6	-4	+19	+2	136	98	145
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+1	+5	+6	+10	+1	201	177	215
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*	+2	+18	+5	+5	+3	211	209	246
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*	+10	+5	+10	+13	+3	177	171	168
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+1	+6	+4	+7	+1	178	165	185
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	+10	+4	+14	+9	+3	173	173	178
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+14	+4	+11	+5	+3	146	155	139
Service establishment supply houses	+7	+8	+10	+3	+1	111	120	125
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-3	+6	+8	+6	+5	222	206	237
Iron, steel and products distributors	-6	+6	+5	+4	+5	257	251	277
Nonferrous metals distributors	+5	+5	+18	+19	+3	125	95	128
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-3	-3	+10	-1	-6	65	65	
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-8	-11	+11	-10	-11	59	63	
Waste materials dealers	+5	+9	+9	+10	-1	75	68	
Jewelry wholesalers*	-4	-4	-4	+3	0	285	272	284
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+6	+9	+4	+9	-2	89	90	100
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+13	+12	+7	+5	+1	62	68	69
General-line grocery wholesalers	+12	+9	+6	+5	+3	84	89	89
Voluntary groups*	+11	+7	+8	+6	+4	78	82	80
Retailer-cooperative*	+18	+17	+14	+13	0	60	62	68
Nonaffiliated*	+6	+7	+4	+2	+4	101	107	108
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+16	+15	+11	+8	-3	60	66	70
Confectionery wholesalers	+9	+11	+4	-2	-1	83	96	92
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+9	+13	+3	-2	+4	21	25	23
Farm products (edible) distributors	+8	+17	0	+13	-3	24	25	30
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+7	+19	-7	+14	-2	24	24	28
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+8	+16	+4	+12	-3	25	26	31
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+7	+17	+3	+10	+2	111	113	128
Beer, ale distributors	+5	+13	+4	+12	+8	58	55	61
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+9	+19	+2	+9	0	142	148	169
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+4	+7	+4	+11	0	129	124	138
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	+5	+8	+10	+1	141	133	147
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	0	+12	-3	+17	-1	101	97	113
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+4	+7	+12	0	+1	157	160	174
Tobacco distributors	+11	+11	+8	+3	+2	49	53	53
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-4	+9	-4	+8	+1	188	180	204
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+1	+12	-3	+12	+1	194	176	208
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-6	+7	-4	+5	+2	201	196	218
Piece goods converters*	+9	+7	+8	+7	-2	155	160	175
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+9	+10	+7	+5	+1	107	107	116
Paper wholesalers	+9	+10	+7	+6	+1	104	104	112
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*	+11	+11	+11	+3	+1	138	141	152
Farm products (raw materials) merchants*	+8	0	+6	+25	-14	116	109	126
Other nondurable goods wholesalers*	-2	+6	-2	+5	-2	101	95	115
Amusement, sporting goods distributors*	+9	+20	+9	+9	+1	206	197	239
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*	+7	+8	+4	+5	+4	136	150	148
Coal wholesalers	-3	+7	-10	+1	-21	45	45	59
Farm supplies wholesalers	-3	+20	-4	+20	-7	114	97	149

* See text, page 8.


UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
MARCH 1960 COMPARED WITH MARCH 1959
(Percent change)
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+5)
CALIF
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH.
COLO.
(+4)
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(+1)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
MICH.
(+5)
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+6)
N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+6)
VT.
MAINE
NEW ENGLAND
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
(+4)
LA.
KY.
TENN.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MISS.
ALA.
(+4)
MD.
DEL.
W.VA.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
N.C.
(+2)
S.C.
GA.
FLA.
UNITED STATES (+4)

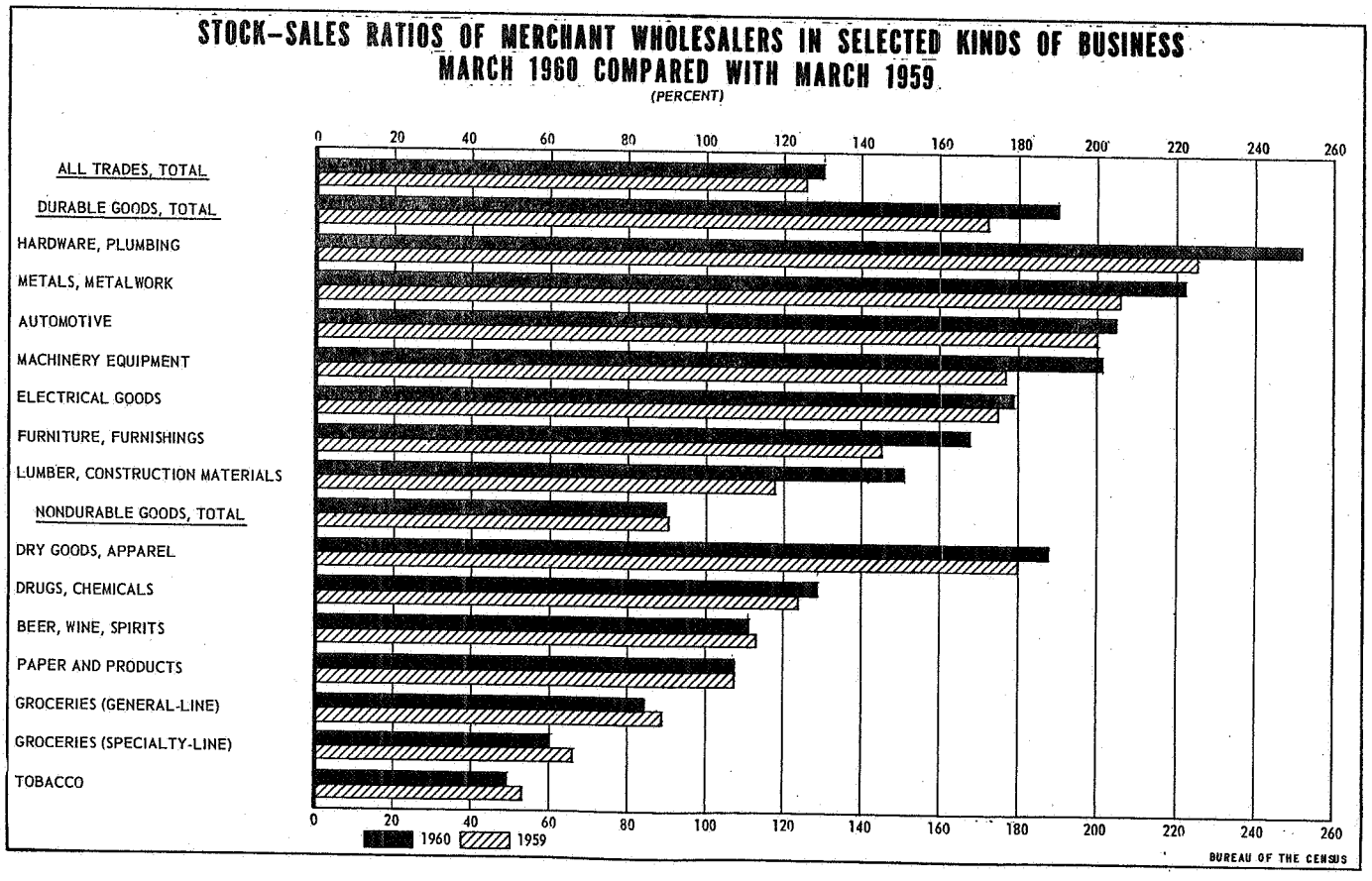

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
MARCH 1960 COMPARED WITH MARCH 1959
(PERCENT)
ALL TRADES, TOTAL
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
METALS, METALWORK
AUTOMOTIVE
MACHINERY EQUIPMENT
ELECTRICAL GOODS
FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS
LUMBER, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
DRY GOODS, APPAREL
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
GROCERIES (GENERAL-LINE)
GROCERIES (SPECIALTY-LINE)
TOBACCO
0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200 220 240 260
1960
1959
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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

MARCH 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	March 1960 from--		3 mos. 1960 from 3 mos. 1959	March 1960 from--		March 1960	March 1959	February 1960
	March 1960	February 1960		March 1960	February 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	+3	+8	+4	+9	0	130	126	140
New England	+8	+11	+6	+6	+1	128	135	144
Middle Atlantic	+5	+8	+6	+5	+1	110	144	117
East North Central	+5	+9	+5	+9	+2	132	129	142
West North Central	+1	+6	+1	+15	-1	134	120	144
South Atlantic	+5	+8	+2	+10	0	148	142	156
East South Central	+3	+7	+4	+10	-3	164	146	181
West South Central	+1	+3	+4	+10	-1	153	140	159
Mountain	+7	+11	+4	+11	-2	157	165	190
Pacific	+4	+16	+6	+8	+4	123	110	138
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+10	+8	+10	+7	+2	219	221	232
New England	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+3	+5	+5	+3	+2	234	236	238
East North Central	+11	+10	+12	+4	+6	275	292	282
West North Central	+1	+11	-6	+9	0	196	212	214
South Atlantic	+9	+1	+6	+5	0	189	197	192
East South Central	0	+5	-2	+5	+1	226	214	246
West South Central	-3	+5	-4	+19	+1	239	195	236
Mountain	+8	+9	+7	(X)	+4	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+23	+17	+11	+8	0	168	178	207
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+8	+7	+6	+7	+4	166	159	171
New England	+6	+6	+12	+8	+5	147	136	155
Middle Atlantic	+1	+4	+10	+3	+2	132	140	132
East North Central	+14	+9	+15	+8	+3	158	165	166
West North Central	-17	+9	-14	-3	+4	213	193	223
South Atlantic	+2	+2	+5	+13	+3	178	161	175
East South Central	+1	+16	+4	+17	-3	149	145	182
West South Central	-4	+8	-6	+8	+4	218	195	228
Mountain	-1	+14	+9	+4	+5	157	164	171
Pacific	0	+5	+1	+12	+7	154	138	150
Elec. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	+11	+7	+7	+8	+2	194	193	203
New England	+5	+3	+6	+5	+11	248	257	240
Middle Atlantic	+18	+11	+10	+8	+7	145	168	136
East North Central	+7	+8	+8	+12	+1	183	173	195
West North Central	-8	0	-4	0	+1	242	232	253
South Atlantic	0	0	+1	+6	-1	161	177	183
East South Central	-7	+7	+12	(X)	-6	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-9	-3	-2	+2	-1	286	258	313
Pacific	+7	+17	+5	+13	+5	182	163	203
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-1	+10	+1	+8	+4	153	145	161
New England	(X)	+9	(X)	(X)	+14	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+7	+15	+7	+23	+6	142	127	149
East North Central	+7	+18	+4	0	+1	120	139	141
West North Central	+8	+8	+7	+17	-1	169	149	183
South Atlantic	+3	+3	+10	+2	+4	164	136	125
West South Central	-10	+1	-9	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+1	+9	+4	+4	+6	201	189	201
Hardware wholesalers	-2	+8	+1	+10	+2	271	232	288
New England	+11	+28	+8	+6	-1	267	283	358
Middle Atlantic	0	+8	+4	+18	+3	271	230	311
East North Central	+3	+12	+8	+9	+2	233	226	251
West North Central	-15	+4	-3	+9	+4	316	245	327
South Atlantic	-9	+5	0	+12	+3	323	260	344
East South Central	-12	-1	-6	+13	+4	282	219	266
West South Central	-15	-2	-8	+16	0	346	250	340
Mountain	+1	-1	-3	-8	0	301	298	328
Pacific	-6	+14	-5	+6	+3	211	187	226
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+1	+7	+4	+8	+3	234	218	242
New England	(X)	-1	+8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	-1	+3	+4	+6	+2	247	221	242
East North Central	+2	+3	+9	+10	+3	275	259	274
West North Central	-16	+6	-2	+14	+3	326	203	325
South Atlantic	-9	+2	-1	+10	0	215	182	218
East South Central	(X)	+14	-13	+10	+5	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+9	+20	+5	+13	+8	213	225	249
Pacific								
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-11	+8	-1	+14	+2	151	118	164
New England	+12	+12	+10	+10	+8	188	166	205
Middle Atlantic	-11	-1	-1	+13	+3	136	107	144
East North Central	-13	+6	-1	+24	+3	196	144	207
West North Central	-13	+5	-8	(X)	+3	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	(X)	0	-2	(X)	+2	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-30	+8	-17	+3	-2	150	107	167
Pacific	-10	+15	0	+34	+9	70	52	81

See footnotes at end of table.

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

MARCH 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	March 1960 from--		3 mos. 1960 from 3 mos. 1959	March 1960 from--		March 1960	March 1959	Feb. 1960
	March 1960	Feb. 1960		March 1960	Feb. 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	+1	+6	+4	+7	+1	178	165	185
Middle Atlantic	+4	+14	+12	+9	-1	163	178	191
East North Central	+7	+2	+15	+13	+2	147	143	146
West North Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+4	0	+4	+11	+3	169	159	162
East South Central	(X)	+15	(X)	-7	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-15	+5	-7	-2	+3	203	175	211
Mountain	-13	0	-6	+17	+2	248	208	244
Pacific	+4	+12	+2	+21	+8	188	163	197
General-line grocery wholesalers	+12	+9	+6	+5	+3	84	89	89
New England	+13	+8	+4	+16	+6	93	100	102
Middle Atlantic	+4	+10	+10	+5	+5	84	77	87
East North Central	+12	+8	+10	+3	0	76	83	81
West North Central	+13	+6	+7	+5	+1	73	77	75
South Atlantic	+18	+16	+5	+2	0	88	103	107
East South Central	+7	+8	+4	+12	+2	119	114	124
West South Central	+13	+11	+6	+5	+11	91	99	99
Mountain	+18	+7	+10	(X)	-2	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+3	+14	0	+6	+7	72	76	73
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+16	+15	+11	+8	-3	60	66	70
Middle Atlantic	+16	+16	+9	+10	-7	59	61	67
East North Central	+6	+16	0	+22	+2	75	70	85
South Atlantic	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+13	+3	+7	+15	+2	87	92	82
Pacific	+18	+23	+19	(X)	-13	(X)	(X)	(X)
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+8	+16	+4	+12	-3	25	26	31
New England	(X)	+15	+1	+43	+15	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+18	+22	+14	(X)	+8	(X)	(X)	(X)
East North Central	+12	+14	+8	+8	+3	17	15	20
West North Central	(X)	+22	+10	+10	+5	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	(X)	+12	+10	+2	-4	22	25	27
West South Central	-5	+7	+4	(X)	-13	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+10	+24	+7	0	-12	30	37	42
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+6	+5	+8	+10	+1	141	133	147
New England	+12	-7	+11	+3	0	132	137	122
Middle Atlantic	+7	+7	+6	+15	+2	118	110	142
East North Central	+2	+3	+6	+6	-3	141	140	148
West North Central	+3	-3	+5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+8	-1	+8	+8	+2	153	148	144
East South Central	+9	+3	+11	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+10	-6	+13	+5	0	206	220	189
Mountain	+10	-6	+9	+36	+4	174	140	167
Pacific	+6	+6	+12	+11	+2	144	115	146
Tobacco distributors	+11	+11	+8	+3	+2	49	53	53
New England	+5	+10	+2	-2	+7	50	50	53
Middle Atlantic	+16	+9	+9	-6	-4	42	50	48
East North Central	+13	+12	+8	+1	+2	48	53	51
West North Central	+15	+11	+6	+8	+1	63	65	70
South Atlantic	+12	+9	+5	+8	+1	53	55	56
East South Central	+17	+13	+14	(X)	+1	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+8	+4	+5	0	-1	49	58	48
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-4	+9	-4	+8	+1	188	180	204
New England	0	+4	0	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+9	+7	+6	+6	0	170	166	187
East North Central	+16	+33	+6	+12	+2	224	228	279
West North Central	-4	(X)	-2	+5	-3	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+9	+15	+10	+7	+2	181	153	194
Pacific	+11	+7	+13	-9	+2	194	210	192

* See text, page 8.

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 10 through 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 four times 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) and 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), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 1, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

5. 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, 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.

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 previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

The procedure to develop final "composite" estimates was instituted effective with the data for January 1960. Dollar volume estimates shown prior to January 1960 were obtained in the same manner as the preliminary "composite" estimates.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for each of the monthly estimates of sales in July 1958--June 1959, for the ratios of current month to previous month sales and current month to year-ago sales, for four months--September 1958, October 1958, December 1958, and March 1959. 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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. Table 4 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians for the period July 1958 through June 1959. The sampling errors for individual months, however, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 4 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates have not yet been completed but are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates.

Estimates of the sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. 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 10 percent of the total sales are inputed for nonresponse.

Table 4. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales--July 1958 to June 1959		Sampling error of the ratio of current month sales compared to--			
			Previous month sales		Year-ago sales	
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5
Automotive	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8
Automotive, equipment, tire, tube	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3
Furniture, home furnishings	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3
Furniture	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6
Home furnishings, floor coverings	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2
Hardware	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3
Lumber, construction materials	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2
Lumber, millwork	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4
Construction materials	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Machinery, equipment, supplies	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4
Professional equipment, supplies	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5
Service establishment supplies	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Iron, steel and products	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5
Nonferrous metals	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4
Scrap, waste materials	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4
Iron, steel scrap	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6
Waste materials	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2
General-line grocery	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2
Specialty-line grocery	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5
Confectionery	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Meat, meat products	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4
Farm products (edible)	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3
Poultry, poultry products	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5
Fresh fruit, vegetables	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4
Beer, wine, distilled spirits	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2
Beer, ale	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3
Wine, distilled spirits	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Drugs, chemicals, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Drugs (general, specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial chemicals, explosives	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3
Paint, varnish	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Tobacco	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2
Dry goods, apparel	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Clothing, furnishings, footwear	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5
Dry goods (general, specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5
Paper, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Paper	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2
Coal	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2
Farm supplies	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6

Note: The use of sampling errors shown above is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 June 1959. The published estimate is $5,118 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $5,118 million by .016, we obtain $82 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $5,036 and $5,200 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,954 to $5,282 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1959 to June 1959 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $5,118 million by $4,794 million, is 1.07 (it can also be expressed as a 7% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.07 by .009, we obtain .010 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 1.06 to 1.08 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 6% and 8% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.05 to 1.09.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

APRIL 1960

BW-60-4

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
JUNE 7, 1960[1]

Sales

April 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $10.5 billion, declined 3 percent from March sales and, for the first time since August 1958, were below (2%) sales a year ago. However, cumulative sales for the first four months of 1960, totaling $41.1 billion, were 3 percent above sales in the comparable period of 1959.

Durable goods trades, with sales totaling $4.6 billion in April, showed an increase of 2 percent over their March level, while the nondurable goods trades, with sales of $6.0 billion, indicated a decline of 6 percent. Both trade groups, however, reported sales below a year ago--durable goods, down 3 percent and nondurable goods, off 1 percent.

Most trades reported April sales below last month. Large declines were indicated by coal wholesalers (16%), specialty-line grocery wholesalers (13%), farm products (raw materials) merchants (11%), and drug wholesalers (10%). The sharpest increase over March 1960 sales was shown by construction materials distributors (31%). Air conditioning, refrigeration equipment distributors reported April sales 27 percent larger than March and also showed the biggest gain over year-ago sales (25%). Other large year-ago gains were noted by surgical, medical supply houses (16%) and by automotive equipment wholesalers (13%). The largest decline from last April's sales was shown by iron, steel and products distributors (18%).

Three geographic divisions reported increases over March sales, one showed no change, and the remaining 5 indicated declines. The largest increase (9%) occurred in the West North Central Division and the largest decline (5%) in the West South Central and Pacific Divisions. Most geographic divisions showed little change from their year-ago sales. The only significant change was indicated by the East North Central Division which reported a decline of 4 percent.

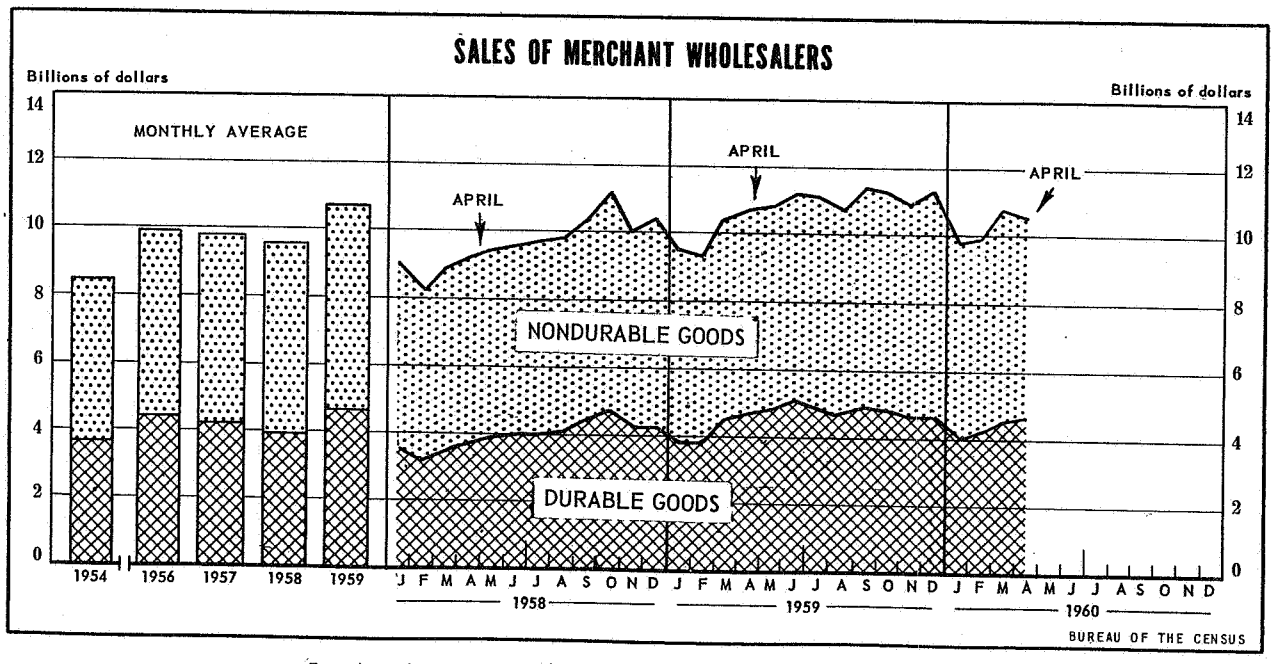
Inventories

Inventories of merchant wholesalers at the end of April were down slightly (1%) from the March level but were 9 percent higher than stocks on hand a year ago. Stocks in the durable goods trades remained unchanged during the month, while stocks in the nondurable goods trades declined 2 percent. Both trade groups, however, indicated higher inventories than a year ago--up 8 percent for the durable goods trades and 10 percent for the nondurable goods trades. Iron, steel and products distributors indicated the largest increase over March inventories (5%), while farm supplies wholesalers reported the sharpest decline (16%). Farm products (raw materials) merchants, who indicated a 7 percent decline from March inventories, reported the largest increase (32%) over year-ago stocks.

The April 1960 stock-sales ratio for all merchant wholesalers reporting inventories in conjunction with their sales was 132 percent, up 2 points over March and 10 points over the April 1959 stock-sales ratio. The April 1960 stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 181 percent compared with the nondurable goods ratio of 97 percent.

General

The data in this report 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 8 and 9.



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

[1]An advance release of April 1960 data was issued on May 31, 1960

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

1959 AND 1960

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960				1959									Total 4 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar[1]	Apr.[2]	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,544	10,709	10,757	11,203	11,095	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312	41,062	39,915
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,577	4,697	4,794	5,118	4,917	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632	17,304	16,834
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	575	499	497	547	562	520	517	536	515	498	2,073	1,868
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	444	392	389	429	419	405	428	439	429	379	1,619	1,452
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	644	619	657	713	702	695	779	769	750	787	2,591	2,457
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	316	300	322	347	331	336	375	367	353	365	1,225	1,162
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	328	319	335	366	371	359	404	403	397	421	1,365	1,295
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	212	231	222	223	211	225	237	248	234	239	831	846
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	62	67	67	70	69	72	74	76	71	72	256	252
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	150	164	155	153	143	153	163	172	163	167	576	594
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	444	461	459	484	482	475	511	517	460	424	1,633	1,619
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	204	212	208	210	202	201	219	216	195	190	740	745
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	239	250	251	274	279	274	292	301	265	234	893	875
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	686	746	773	823	838	801	797	754	655	612	2,345	2,415
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	376	403	426	452	466	444	434	399	351	333	1,363	1,377
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	310	343	347	371	373	357	363	355	304	279	981	1,039
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,254	1,244	1,297	1,386	1,287	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165	4,649	4,414
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	529	553	472	608	535	517	533	520	501	545	2,072	2,026
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	111	101	100	117	115	127	129	118	113	114	437	386
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	148	143	150	149	143	127	144	153	132	140	569	525
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	410	476	490	539	464	419	474	430	426	455	1,691	1,653
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	357	364	403	350	312	340	305	292	302	1,217	1,229
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	116	119	126	136	114	107	134	125	134	152	474	423
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	290	322	292	301	272	260	271	289	309	349	1,242	1,185
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	166	187	159	163	144	129	139	159	179	228	733	696
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	125	135	134	139	129	131	132	130	129	121	510	489
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	5,967	6,012	5,963	6,084	6,178	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680	23,757	23,081
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,783	1,775	1,734	1,729	1,822	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828	7,199	6,834
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	792	758	753	750	793	739	803	791	740	768	3,140	2,960
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	607	616	589	572	612	589	640	609	612	646	2,525	2,357
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	59	56	56	57	59	55	59	63	64	71	233	226
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	326	346	336	350	357	325	370	348	322	344	1,301	1,292
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	419	407	400	442	424	362	393	383	391	432	1,537	1,511
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	132	128	133	129	121	143	136	155	160	496	523
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	290	274	272	309	295	241	249	247	235	272	1,041	987
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	570	551	578	614	603	559	569	584	595	743	2,048	1,979
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	224	213	240	272	282	261	236	210	188	223	766	730
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	346	337	338	342	321	298	333	373	407	520	1,282	1,248
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	385	402	393	391	383	380	419	410	374	376	1,552	1,523
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	235	243	235	238	238	235	265	263	243	239	986	944
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	116	126	124	118	111	111	120	114	105	113	450	471
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	33	34	35	33	34	35	32	27	25	116	108
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	327	317	318	349	358	332	343	351	326	380	1,260	1,182
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	494	516	578	545	538	511	526	528	597	627	624	568	509	2,133	2,124
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	212	197	192	174	190	240	240	231	211	167	794	788
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	196	196	216	203	213	196	226	235	242	254	256	233	222	811	830
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	347	343	339	344	326	343	366	373	350	358	1,374	1,304
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	302	301	299	303	288	300	323	322	299	305	1,201	1,142
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	73	73	71	61	65	73	76	78	86	290	323
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	185	174	145	119	112	115	125	107	107	116	623	627

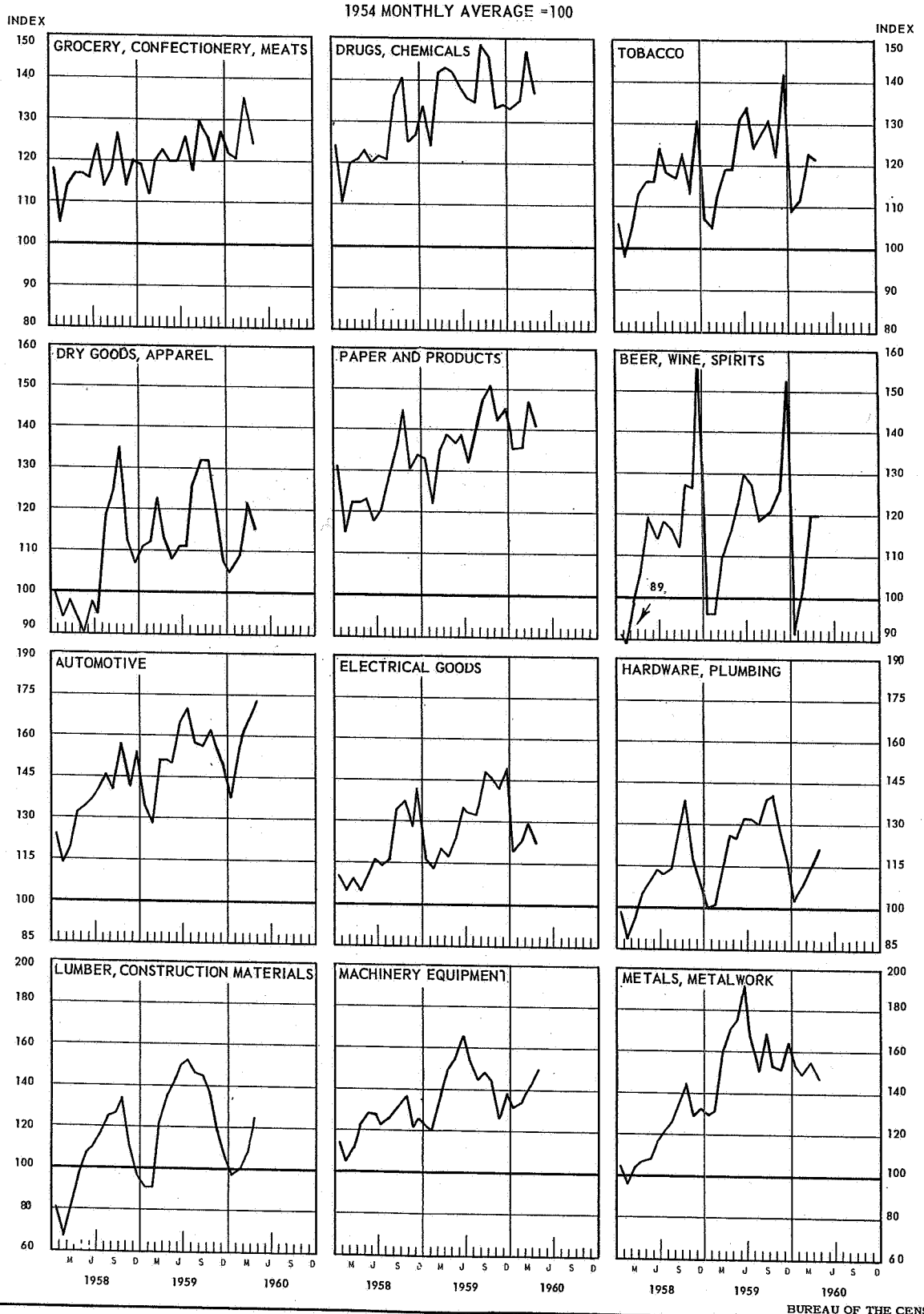
[1] Final estimate.

[2] Preliminary estimate. See page 8, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Hawaii and Alaska which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.3 percent and 0.04 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--KIND OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE =100



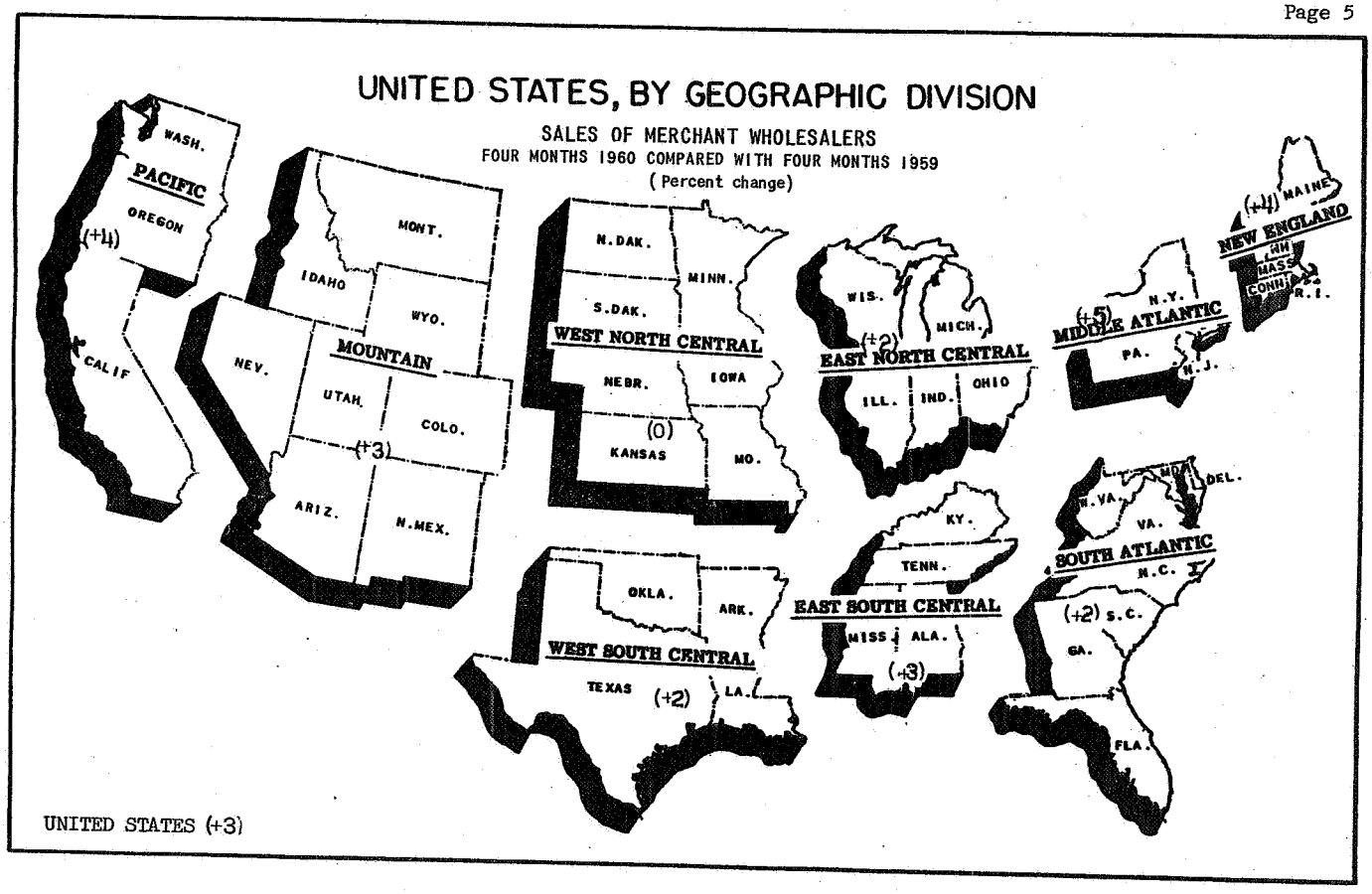
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DATA IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT ADJUSTED FOR NUMBER OF DAYS IN THE MONTH NOR FOR SEASONAL OR PRICE FLUCTUATIONS

Table 2. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS
APRIL 1960

Kind of business	Sales*			Inventories, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	April 1960 from--		4 mos. 1960 from 4 mos. 1959	April 1960 from--		April 1960	April 1959	March 1960
	April 1959	March 1960		April 1959	March 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	-2	-3	+3	+9	-1	132	120	130
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-3	+2	+3	+8	0	181	158	185
Automotive wholesalers	+15	+6	+11	+10	-1	193	177	195
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+13	+6	+12	+7	-1	200	191	206
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	+4	-6	+5	+5	+1	177	167	165
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+5	-2	+6	+7	+2	163	153	156
Electrical appl., TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	+3	-9	+5	+4	0	191	181	174
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-8	-7	-2	+8	+2	190	168	170
Furniture wholesalers	-7	-7	+2	-2	+1	202	191	192
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-9	-7	-3	+12	+3	185	158	161
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	-4	+5	+1	+7	-1	232	206	247
Hardware wholesalers	-4	+6	-1	+4	-2	242	223	260
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-4	+4	+2	+9	-1	223	190	235
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-8	+16	-3	+9	-1	118	95	142
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-7	+6	-1	+12	0	142	110	153
Construction materials distributors	-10	+31	-6	+6	-1	101	83	133
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	+1	+5	+5	+7	-3	186	169	202
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors*	+25	+27	+28	+7	-3	131	137	168
Commercial machines, equipment distributors*	+7	-1	+14	-3	0	154	160	155
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-4	-2	+2	+2	-1	189	168	187
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	+10	-3	+13	+9	+2	183	181	171
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+16	-5	+12	+5	+3	134	148	116
Service establishment supply houses	+3	+1	+8	+5	-2	125	125	129
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-14	-7	+2	+12	+4	240	177	215
Iron, steel and products distributors	-18	-8	-1	+12	+5	275	200	237
Nonferrous metals distributors	-3	-3	+12	+12	+1	118	92	125
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-10	-8	+5	+1	+2	81	72	74
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-11	-7	+5	+2	+3	81	74	74
Waste materials dealers	-7	-7	+4	-2	0	80	69	75
Jewelry wholesalers*	-6	-3	-4	+15	+1	221	190	221
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-1	-6	+3	+10	-2	97	90	93
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	0	-8	+5	+10	-2	73	68	69
General-line grocery wholesalers	+4	-5	+6	+8	0	95	92	92
Voluntary groups*	+5	-4	+8	+6	-1	82	81	80
Retailer-cooperative*	+10	-7	+13	+13	0	84	83	84
Nonaffiliated*	+1	-5	+3	+8	0	110	105	105
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-1	-13	+7	+17	-3	73	61	66
Confectionery wholesalers	+5	-2	+3	0	-6	57	62	61
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-6	-7	+1	-2	-3	21	22	20
Farm products (edible) distributors	+2	+1	+2	+7	-11	20	21	23
Poultry, poultry products distributors	-2	-5	-5	+19	-14	21	19	24
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+6	+4	+5	+1	-10	20	22	23
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+3	+1	+3	+9	+2	110	106	108
Beer, ale distributors	+5	+11	+5	-6	+3	53	59	57
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+3	-5	+3	+14	+1	150	140	138
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	-4	-6	+2	+12	-1	148	131	140
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-3	-10	+4	+11	+1	168	152	152
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-8	-4	-4	+19	-6	109	87	107
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+3	+13	+7	-1	-6	178	175	224
Tobacco distributors	+3	-3	+7	0	-2	53	54	52
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+1	-6	0	+10	0	179	160	162
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+8	-5	+1	+11	-1	204	178	180
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-5	-6	-2	+6	+2	181	159	157
Piece goods converters*	+2	-6	+4	+18	-2	140	135	141
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+1	-5	+5	+2	+1	123	122	113
Paper wholesalers	0	-6	+5	+2	+1	122	122	113
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers*	+5	-4	+6	+1	+1	129	125	114
Farm products (raw materials) merchants*	-4	-11	+4	+32	-7	125	102	131
Other nondurable goods wholesalers*	-4	-6	-1	+4	-3	98	98	96
Amusement, sporting goods distributors*	+8	-1	+9	+14	-2	162	151	166
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers*	+2	-8	+2	+6	-2	153	155	140
Coal wholesalers	-11	-16	-10	+6	-12	56	49	49
Farm supplies wholesalers	+6	+8	-1	+3	-16	83	81	109

* See text, page 8.


UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
FOUR MONTHS 1960 COMPARED WITH FOUR MONTHS 1959
(Percent change)
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+4)
CALIF
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH
COLO.
(+3)
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(0)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
MICH.
(+2)
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+5)
N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+4) MAINE
NEW ENGLAND
VT.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
MD.
DEL.
W.VA.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
N.C.
(+2) S.C.
GA.
FLA.
KY.
TENN.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MISS.
ALA.
(+3)
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
(+2)
LA.
UNITED STATES (+3)

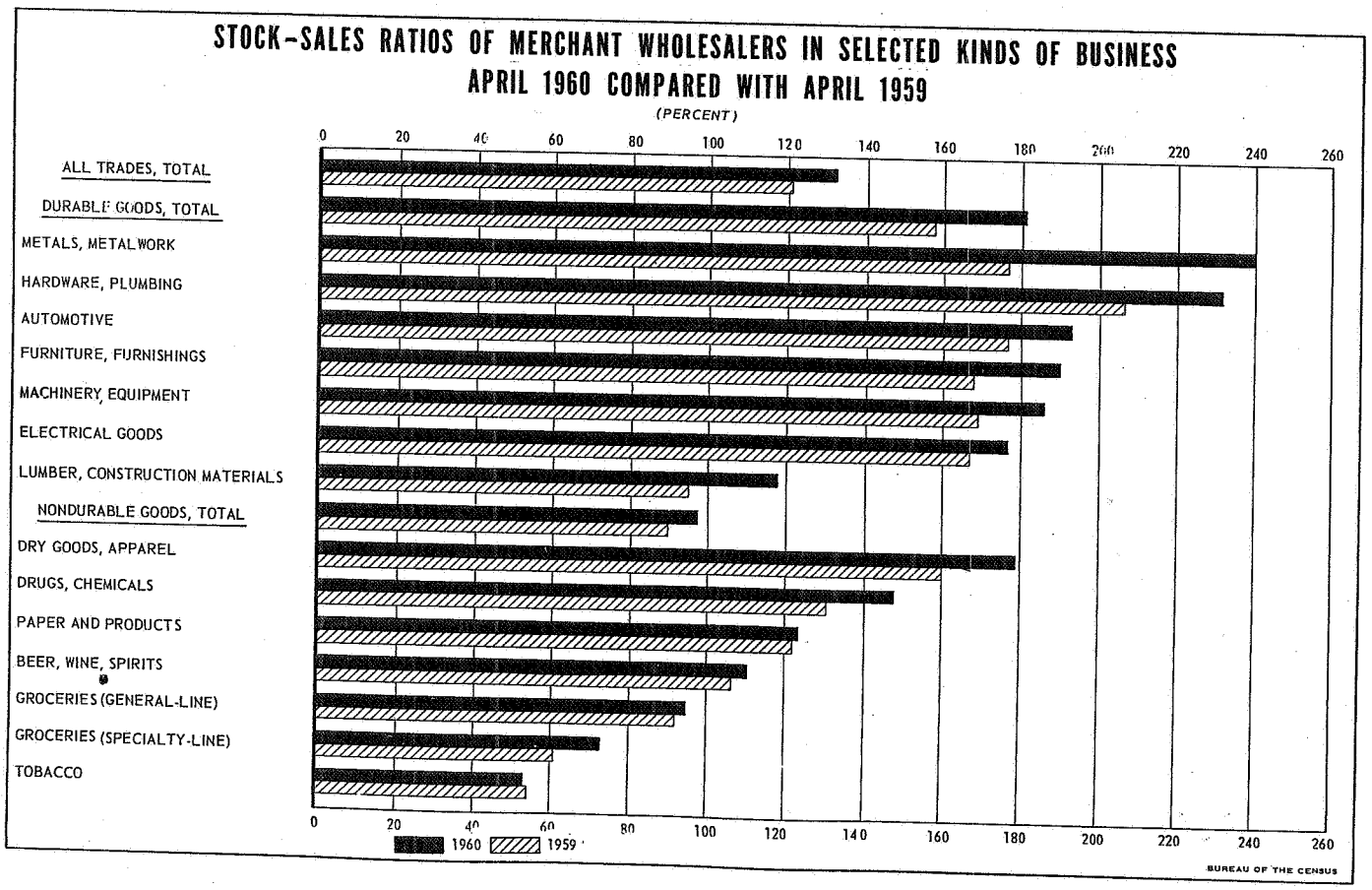

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
APRIL 1960 COMPARED WITH APRIL 1959
(PERCENT)
ALL TRADES, TOTAL
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
METALS, METALWORK
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
AUTOMOTIVE
FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS
MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
ELECTRICAL GOODS
LUMBER, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
DRY GOODS, APPAREL
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
GROCERIES (GENERAL-LINE)
GROCERIES (SPECIALTY-LINE)
TOBACCO
0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200 220 240 260
1960
1959
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Table 3. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
APRIL 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	April 1960 from--		4 mos. 1960 from 4 mos. 1959	April 1960 from--		April 1960	April 1959	March 1960
	April 1959	March 1960		April 1959	March 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	-2	-3	+3	+9	-1	132	120	130
New England	0	-2	+4	+4	-1	116	108	111
Middle Atlantic	-1	-4	+5	+5	0	112	105	107
East North Central	-4	-4	+2	+7	0	135	120	126
West North Central	0	+9	0	+7	-4	130	122	148
South Atlantic	+1	0	+2	+16	-1	152	132	151
East South Central	-1	+2	+3	+14	-1	160	139	167
West South Central	-1	-5	+2	+11	-3	146	131	147
Mountain	+1	+1	+3	+3	-2	129	127	137
Pacific	0	-5	+4	+12	0	139	126	134
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+13	+6	+12	+7	-1	200	191	206
New England	+16	(X)	+9	(X)	+1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+2	+8	+4	-6	0	170	142	188
East North Central	+5	+7	+9	+11	-2	220	216	211
West North Central	+5	+26	-3	+4	0	223	224	254
South Atlantic	+1	+6	+5	+8	-7	228	225	259
East South Central	+11	+11	+2	-2	-3	236	264	268
West South Central	+1	+4	-3	+7	+7	263	242	260
Mountain	+11	+13	+8	+7	+1	231	227	255
Pacific	(X)	+1	+11	+10	-2	(X)	(X)	(X)
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+5	-2	+6	+7	+2	163	153	156
New England	-6	+1	+9	+8	+2	130	132	127
Middle Atlantic	+12	-4	+10	+6	+2	128	138	123
East North Central	0	-7	+11	+4	-1	165	158	153
West North Central	-10	-5	-13	+4	+1	213	189	197
South Atlantic	-4	+5	+2	+10	0	173	160	185
East South Central	-11	+5	0	+23	+9	196	143	195
West South Central	-1	-1	-5	+1	+1	199	197	195
Mountain	-1	+5	+7	+16	+5	152	147	154
Pacific	-8	-3	-1	+7	+5	160	132	141
Elec. appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	+3	-9	+5	+4	0	191	181	174
New England	-4	-13	+3	(X)	+2	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+3	-14	+8	-4	0	171	190	150
East North Central	+1	-9	+7	+8	-1	209	193	190
West North Central	-11	-9	-7	+11	-1	211	166	230
South Atlantic	-7	-8	-1	+3	-2	202	174	188
East South Central	+8	+8	+11	+24	+14	281	262	242
West South Central	-7	-4	-3	+2	+3	243	222	234
Pacific	-3	-18	+3	+6	+2	184	166	148
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-8	-7	-2	+8	+2	190	168	170
New England	-10	-4	+12	-3	+4	261	265	244
Middle Atlantic	0	-5	+5	+22	+2	161	136	148
East North Central	-2	-9	+2	+3	+1	167	159	147
West North Central	-15	-9	+1	+6	+2	259	206	231
South Atlantic	+4	-12	+8	+11	+1	293	223	280
West South Central	-16	+1	-11	+5	0	261	223	274
Pacific	-1	-10	+2	+6	+5	165	173	133
Hardware wholesalers	-4	+6	-1	+4	-2	242	223	260
New England	(X)	+26	+7	+3	0	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	-6	+3	+2	+7	-2	255	239	291
East North Central	-8	-2	+3	+1	-2	231	204	222
West North Central	-5	+13	-4	+3	-7	256	232	303
South Atlantic	+4	+18	+1	+2	+1	246	249	277
East South Central	-5	+19	-6	+7	-5	234	207	294
West South Central	-1	+6	-6	+12	-4	334	303	368
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-8	-4	-6	+6	+3	243	211	223
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-4	+4	+2	+9	-1	223	190	235
New England	-14	-7	+1	+7	0	251	214	218
Middle Atlantic	-3	-1	+3	+6	-2	219	198	212
East North Central	-4	+5	+6	+12	0	262	236	282
West North Central	-14	+14	-6	+5	0	247	202	282
South Atlantic	-2	+9	-1	+8	-2	223	204	250
West South Central	-5	+11	-10	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+5	+10	+5	+23	-5	181	128	195
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-8	+16	-3	+9	-1	118	95	142
New England	-14	+3	-1	-1	0	102	101	124
Middle Atlantic	-5	+15	-2	+4	-8	97	89	138
East North Central	-14	+27	-5	+16	-1	134	102	172
West North Central	-21	+30	-13	+7	+4	122	88	192
South Atlantic	-5	+15	-3	+3	+3	124	108	132
West South Central	-16	+19	-17	+2	-3	138	115	184
Pacific	-8	+4	-3	+11	+3	118	95	128

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued
APRIL 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 5)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)		Stock-sales ratios		
	April 1960 from--		4 mos. 1960 from 4 mos. 1959	April 1960 from--		April 1960	April 1959	March 1960
	April 1959	March 1960		April 1959	March 1960			
	(percent change)			(percent change)		(percent)		
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-4	-2	+2	+2	-1	189	168	187
Middle Atlantic	-5	-4	+7	-2	0	171	170	157
East North Central	-5	-7	+9	+2	-2	159	148	154
West North Central	(X)	-1	+3	-2	-11	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+12	(X)	+5	(X)	0	(X)	(X)	(X)
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-20	-5	-11	(X)	+1	(X)	(X)	(X)
Mountain	-32	-4	-13	-13	-7	269	194	259
Pacific	+10	+5	+4	+19	+5	231	211	226
General-line grocery wholesalers	+4	-5	+6	+8	0	95	92	92
New England	+6	+8	+4	(X)	-5	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	0	-8	+8	0	-4	117	118	114
East North Central	+6	-9	+8	+9	+4	94	87	82
West North Central	+7	-7	+7	+9	-2	79	83	77
South Atlantic	+7	+3	+6	+18	+2	113	103	115
East South Central	+4	+2	+4	+10	-2	109	99	117
West South Central	+6	-2	+6	+13	-1	97	91	96
Mountain	-7	-8	+6	-4	-3	93	89	86
Pacific	+8	-12	+2	+5	0	73	77	70
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-1	-13	+7	+17	-3	73	61	66
Middle Atlantic	-4	-11	+7	(X)	-8	(X)	(X)	(X)
East North Central	+7	-9	+2	0	-6	72	79	69
South Atlantic	+3	-6	+10	(X)	+2	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+10	-5	+7	+6	+1	74	72	70
Pacific	-10	-16	+12	(X)	-2	(X)	(X)	(X)
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+6	+4	+5	+1	-10	20	22	23
New England	+8	+1	+3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+5	+4	+11	+8	-17	15	16	18
East North Central	-13	+7	+1	(X)	-13	(X)	(X)	(X)
West North Central	(X)	0	+12	+4	-7	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+13	-6	+11	(X)	-6	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-1	0	+3	-5	-2	20	21	21
Pacific	+10	+2	+7	+3	-10	30	33	36
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-3	-10	+4	+11	+1	168	152	152
New England	-1	-3	+8	(X)	+3	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	-2	-17	+4	+10	-1	140	136	120
East North Central	-2	-7	+5	+5	+2	159	147	145
West North Central	-5	-4	+1	+16	+1	144	132	141
South Atlantic	+2	-10	+7	+9	+4	191	186	182
East South Central	-5	-11	+7	+6	+3	171	152	144
West South Central	+3	-10	+10	+11	0	213	194	192
Mountain	-4	-10	+6	+13	+4	210	187	191
Pacific	+1	-4	+9	+9	0	168	130	161
Tobacco distributors	+3	-3	+7	0	-2	53	54	52
New England	0	-4	+2	-4	-5	58	59	56
Middle Atlantic	+6	-1	+8	-7	0	53	60	53
East North Central	+3	-3	+6	+2	-3	44	45	45
West North Central	(X)	-1	+5	+9	-1	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	-2	-8	+3	-1	-1	60	60	57
East South Central	-2	-8	+8	-3	-7	50	52	51
West South Central	+2	+2	+4	+16	+2	40	37	41
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+1	-6	0	+10	0	179	160	162
New England	+1	-4	0	(X)	-5	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+4	-8	+5	+10	+1	143	130	125
East North Central	+9	+2	+6	+12	-3	209	205	223
West North Central	-4	-8	-3	+12	-2	262	230	238
South Atlantic	+15	-1	+11	+12	-1	211	199	213
Pacific	+9	-8	+12	+6	+4	185	174	150

* See Text, page 8.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 10 through 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 four times 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) and 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), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 1, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

5. 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, 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.

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 previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

The procedure to develop final "composite" estimates was instituted effective with the data for January 1960. Dollar volume estimates shown prior to January 1960 were obtained in the same manner as the preliminary "composite" estimates.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for each of the monthly estimates of sales in July 1958--June 1959, for the ratios of current month to previous month sales and current month to year-ago sales, for four months--September 1958, October 1958, December 1958, and March 1959. 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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. Table 4 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians for the period July 1958 through June 1959. The sampling errors for individual months, however, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 4 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates have not yet been completed but are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates.

Estimates of the sampling variability of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. 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 10 percent of the total sales are inputed for nonresponse.

Table 4. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--MONTHLY ESTIMATES OF SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales--July 1958 to June 1959		Sampling error of the ratio of current month sales compared to--			
			Previous month sales		Year-ago sales	
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5
Automotive	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8
Automotive, equipment, tire, tube	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Electrical, electronics, appliances	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3
Furniture, home furnishings	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3
Furniture	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6
Home furnishings, floor coverings	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2
Hardware	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3
Lumber, construction materials	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2
Lumber, millwork	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4
Construction materials	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Machinery, equipment, supplies	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4
Professional equipment, supplies	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5
Service establishment supplies	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5
Metals, metalwork (except scrap)	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Iron, steel and products	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5
Nonferrous metals	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4
Scrap, waste materials	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4
Iron, steel scrap	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6
Waste materials	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6

Kind of business	Sampling error of monthly dollar value of sales--July 1958 to June 1959		Sampling error of the ratio of current month sales compared to--			
			Previous month sales		Year-ago sales	
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2
General-line grocery	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2
Specialty-line grocery	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5
Confectionery	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Meat, meat products	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4
Farm products (edible)	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3
Poultry, poultry products	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5
Fresh fruit, vegetables	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4
Beer, wine, distilled spirits	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2
Beer, ale	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3
Wine, distilled spirits	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3
Drugs, chemicals, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Drugs (general, specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3
Industrial chemicals, explosives	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3
Paint, varnish	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4
Tobacco	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2
Dry goods, apparel	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3
Clothing, furnishings, footwear	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5
Dry goods (general, specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5
Paper, allied products	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2
Paper	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2
Coal	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2
Farm supplies	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6

Note: The use of sampling errors shown above is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 June 1959. The published estimate is $5,118 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $5,118 million by .016, we obtain $82 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $5,036 and $5,200 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,954 to $5,282 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1959 to June 1959 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $5,118 million by $4,794 million, is 1.07 (it can also be expressed as a 7% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.07 by .009, we obtain .010 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 1.06 to 1.08 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 6% and 8% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.05 to 1.09.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

MAY 1960

BW-60-5

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
JULY 11, 1960[1]

Effective with this report, statistics are shown for selected kinds of business on the dollar volume of end-of-month inventories (table 2) and on stock-sales ratios (table 3) based on the dollar volume figures. The stock-sales ratios in table 3 replace the ratios which were previously carried in this Report and which were based on reports of identical firms (i.e., firms reporting data for each of the months compared). Additional information about these statistics are presented on pages 11 and 12 of the report.

Sales

May 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $10.8 billion, were up 1 percent over April sales but this rise was less than seasonal. May 1960 sales were at the same level as sales a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first 5 months of 1960, totaling $52.0 billion, were 3 percent above sales in the comparable period of 1959.

Durable goods trades, with sales totaling $4.6 billion, showed no change from their April level, but were down 4 percent from a year ago. Nondurable goods trades, with sales of $6.2 billion, reported a 2 percent increase over previous month sales, and a 3 percent gain over a year ago.

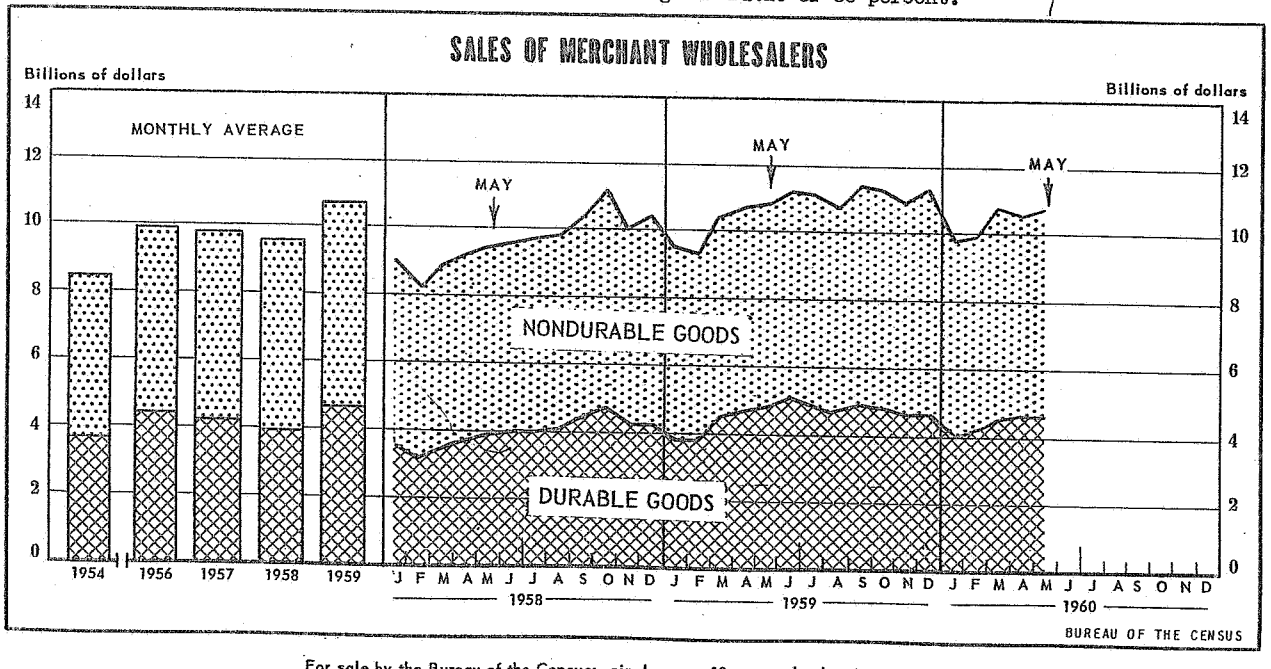
For individual trades, May 1960 sales reflected mixed trends with most trades reporting small to moderate changes from the April level. Among the large increases were those reported by distributors of beer, ale (12%), plumbing, heating equipment (10%) and construction materials (10%). Large declines from April 1960 were indicated by farm supplies wholesalers (19%) and clothing wholesalers (10%). Iron, steel and products distributors indicated the sharpest decline from year-ago sales (23%). While most other durable goods trades showed moderate year-to-year declines, large increases were noted by wholesalers of air-conditioning, refrigeration equipment (16%), professional equipment, supplies (14%) and automotive equipment (12%). Most nondurable goods trades reported gains over a year ago, with amusement, sporting goods showing the largest increase (15%).

Geographic divisions also reflected mixed trends from previous month sales. A relatively large increase (9%) was reported in the West North Central Division. Three other divisions showed moderate gains and four reported small declines from April sales. The West South Central Division showed no change from previous month sales or from a year ago. The East North Central Division reported the only decline (2%) from May 1959 sales, while the remaining divisions, led by the East South Central, up 8 percent, reported gains.

Inventories

Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw materials) merchants, estimated at $12.2 billion at the end of May, rose slightly (1%) over their April 30 level and were 7 percent higher than stocks on hand a year ago. Stocks in the durable goods trades rose slightly (1%) during the month, while nondurable goods stocks increased 2 percent. Compared with a year ago, both groups indicated larger inventories—up 7 percent in the durable goods trades and 5 percent in the nondurable goods trades.

The May 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 122 percent, up 1 point over April, and 8 points, above the May 1959 stock-sales ratio. The May 1960 stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 163 percent compared with the nondurable goods ratio of 86 percent.



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

[1] An advance release of May 1960 data was issued on June 20, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Sales in millions of dollars)

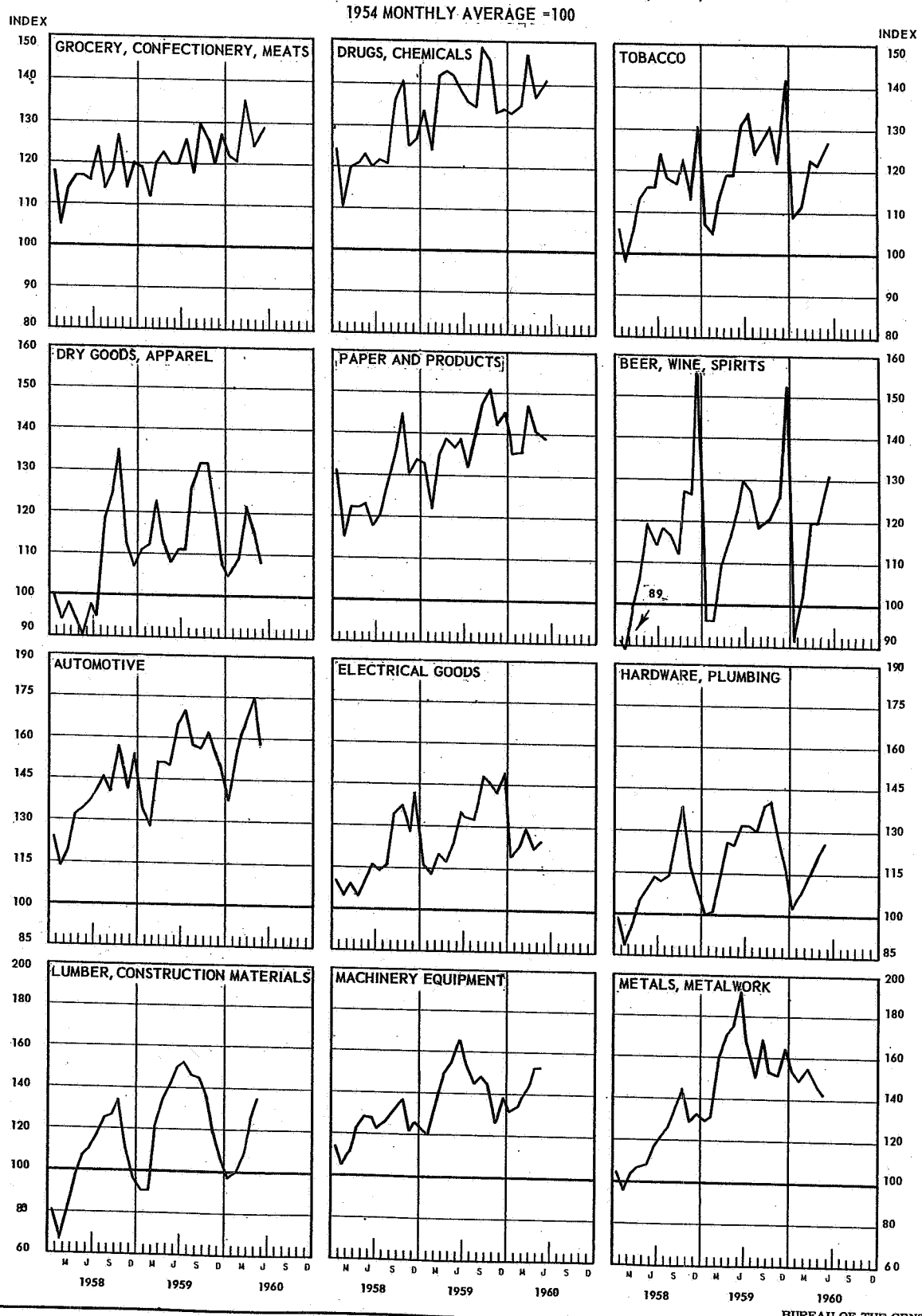
Kind of business	1960					1959								Total 5 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.[1]	May[2]	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,775	10,757	11,203	11,095	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312	51,968	50,672
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	10,030	10,007	10,443	10,238	9,910	10,502	10,357	9,952	10,304	48,171	47,047
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,616	4,794	5,118	4,917	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632	21,953	21,628
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	525	497	547	562	520	517	536	515	498	2,603	2,365
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	436	389	429	419	405	428	439	429	379	2,060	1,841
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	661	657	713	702	695	779	769	750	787	3,262	3,114
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	322	347	331	336	375	367	353	365	1,561	1,484
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	333	335	366	371	359	404	403	397	421	1,701	1,630
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	210	222	223	211	225	237	248	234	239	1,042	1,068
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	64	67	70	69	72	74	76	71	72	324	319
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	146	155	153	143	153	163	172	163	167	719	749
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	461	459	484	482	475	511	517	460	424	2,090	2,078
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	200	208	210	202	201	219	216	195	190	939	953
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	260	251	274	279	274	292	301	265	234	1,151	1,126
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	733	773	823	838	801	797	754	655	612	3,069	3,188
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	393	426	452	466	444	434	399	351	333	1,748	1,803
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	340	347	371	373	357	363	355	304	279	1,319	1,386
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,284	1,297	1,386	1,287	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165	5,958	5,711
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	572	608	535	517	533	520	501	545	2,626	2,598
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	114	100	117	115	127	129	118	113	114	550	486
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	144	150	149	143	127	144	153	132	140	719	675
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	398	490	539	464	419	474	430	426	455	2,090	2,143
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	279	364	403	350	312	340	305	292	302	1,496	1,593
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	119	126	136	114	107	134	125	134	152	595	549
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	279	292	301	272	260	271	289	309	349	1,523	1,497
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	155	159	163	144	129	139	159	179	228	887	855
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	125	134	139	129	131	132	130	129	121	637	623
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,160	5,963	6,084	6,178	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680	30,015	29,044
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,415	5,213	5,324	5,321	5,203	5,583	5,513	5,358	5,672	26,218	25,419
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,865	1,734	1,729	1,822	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828	9,078	8,568
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	833	753	750	793	739	803	791	740	768	3,991	3,713
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	617	589	572	612	589	640	609	612	646	3,135	2,946
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	56	57	59	55	59	63	64	71	290	282
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	356	336	350	357	325	370	348	322	344	1,660	1,628
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	414	400	442	424	362	393	383	391	432	1,955	1,911
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	128	133	129	121	143	136	155	160	626	651
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	284	272	309	295	241	249	247	235	272	1,329	1,259
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	622	578	614	603	559	569	584	595	743	2,672	2,557
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	249	240	272	282	261	236	210	188	223	1,013	970
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	373	338	342	321	298	333	373	407	520	1,659	1,586
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	396	393	391	383	380	419	410	374	376	1,952	1,916
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	237	235	238	238	235	265	263	243	239	1,224	1,179
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	122	124	118	111	111	120	114	105	113	574	595
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	36	34	35	33	34	35	32	27	25	152	142
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	339	318	349	358	332	343	351	326	380	1,600	1,500
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	494	516	578	541	512	511	526	528	597	627	624	568	509	2,641	[3]2,635
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	188	192	174	190	240	240	231	211	167	979	980
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	196	196	216	200	199	196	226	235	242	254	256	233	222	1,007	[4]1,026
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	339	344	326	343	366	373	350	358	1,725	1,643
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	298	299	303	288	300	323	322	299	305	1,509	1,441
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	97	103	120	123	128	111	125	128	129	154	155	155	149	571	512
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	73	71	61	65	73	76	78	86	357	396
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	145	119	112	115	125	107	107	116	776	772

[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate.
See page 12, Estimating Procedure.
[3] Revised. January 1959, 507; February 1959, 515; and March 1959, 564.
[4] Revised. January 1959, 206; March 1959, 224.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS--KIND OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1954 MONTHLY AVERAGE =100



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 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Inventories in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960					1959							
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.[1]	May[2]	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,207	11,456	11,495	11,549	11,535	11,625	11,651	11,666	11,298
Selected Kinds of Business													
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,028	953	946	928	907	935	921	938	929
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	896	854	834	812	795	822	807	822	804
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,156	1,038	1,044	1,039	1,011	1,024	1,080	1,117	1,044
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	511	485	481	466	454	467	477	492	456
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	600	627	626	625	645	553	563	573	557	557	603	624	587
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	928	909	914	914	909	886	861	854	852
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	443	443	445	448	447	427	411	410	412
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	485	466	469	467	462	459	450	444	440
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,190	2,052	2,084	2,065	2,074	2,062	2,075	2,061	2,096
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	881	865	878	850	858	841	831	809	816
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	853	761	772	794	735	650	585	597	649
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	705	632	640	665	604	521	460	460	515
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,212	1,185	1,144	1,169	1,198	1,220	1,235	1,233	1,185
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	709	689	628	637	651	682	674	660	642
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	637	607	608	588	635	693	732	725	591
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	507	485	475	465	509	565	604	609	494
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	535	492	485	488	507	527	530	520	499
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	385	355	352	353	366	387	386	380	355
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	339	322	326	327	327	330	336	328	326
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	286	271	275	275	275	275	281	274	274

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960					1959							
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.[1]	May[2]	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	114	110	113	116	111	112	117	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	147	138	143	148	140	142	150	148
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	196	192	173	165	174	181	172	182	187
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	206	220	194	194	196	192	184	192	212
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	175	158	146	148	145	131	140	149	133
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	151	139	141	135	125	130	139	125
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	194	165	154	154	155	138	150	157	139
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	201	198	189	190	191	173	167	186	201
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	213	212	222	222	195	190	210	217
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	186	171	167	169	157	150	168	188
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	171	158	150	160	161	166	173	181	180
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	163	183	144	159	166	158	160	161	150
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	214	155	143	171	175	137	136	140	143
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	253	174	159	190	194	153	151	158	171
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	85	83	85	88	84	87	89	78
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	68	66	64	70	65	68	71	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	85	92	84	80	88	85	85	89	84
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	102	105	99	98	114	122	125	122	80
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	136	143	139	145	171	170	162	150	95
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	125	124	127	133	126	129	139	139
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	162	151	148	148	156	146	147	156	149
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	95	95	100	109	90	90	94	91
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	96	91	91	95	92	85	87	92	90

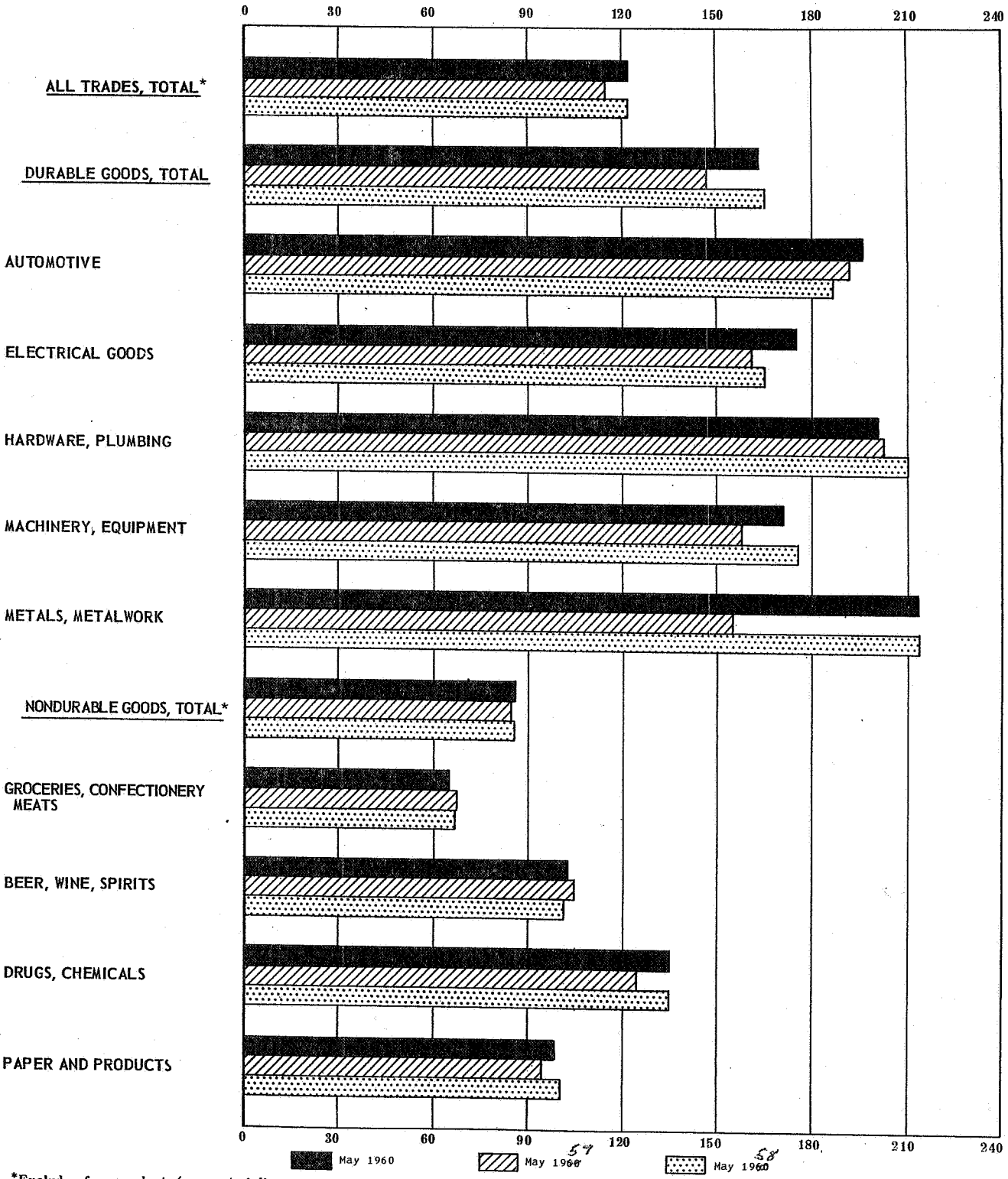
[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate.

See page 12, Estimating procedure.

Note: These data exclude Hawaii and Alaska. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS MAY 1960 COMPARED WITH MAY 1959 AND 1958

(Percent)



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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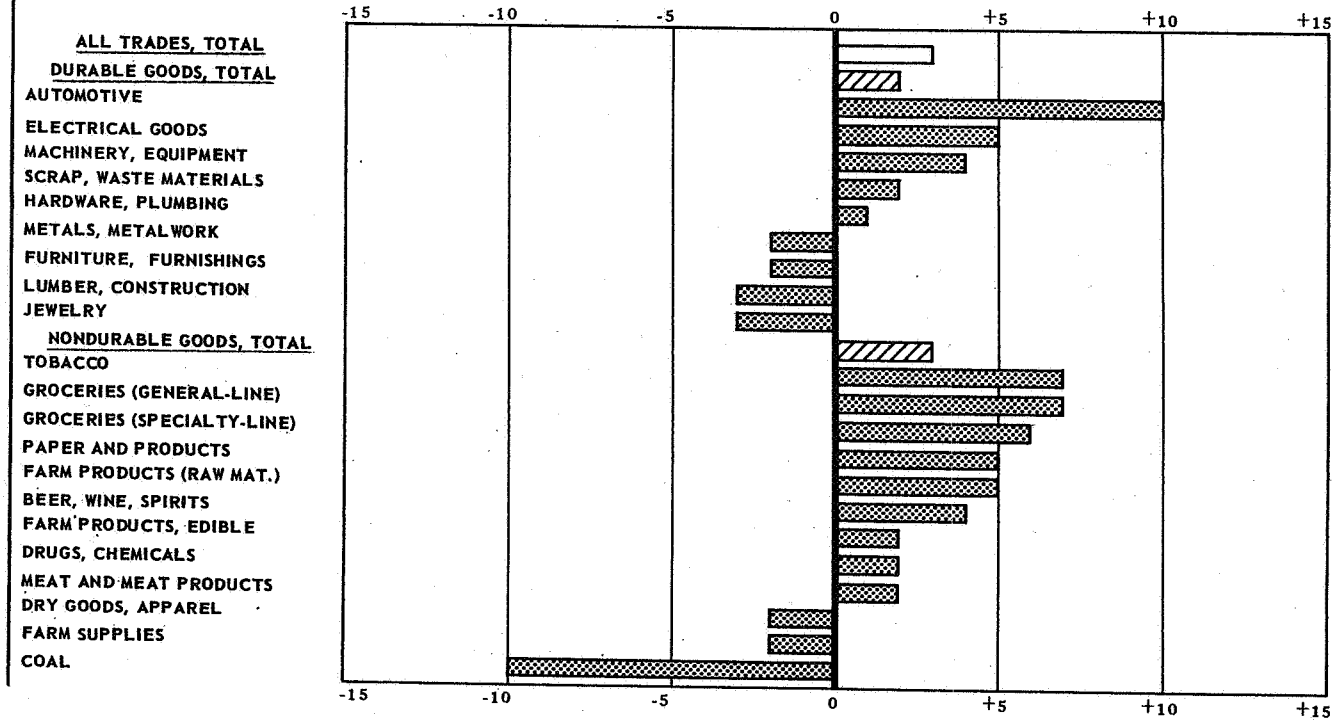
Table 4. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: MAY 1960

Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	May 1960 from—		5 mos. 1960 from 5 mos. 1959	May 1960 from—	
	May 1959	April 1960		May 1959	April 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0	+1	+3	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0	+1	+2	+7	+1
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-4	0	+2	+7	+1
Automotive wholesalers	+6	-9	+10	+8	+2
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+12	-3	+12	+5	+2
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	+1	+1	+5	+11	+1
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+2	+2	+5	+5	-2
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-1	+1	+4	+17	+3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-5	-1	-2	+10	+2
Furniture wholesalers	-4	-3	+2	+7	0
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-6	-1	-4	+12	+3
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	0	+5	+1	+2	0
Hardware wholesalers	-4	-1	-1	0	-1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+4	+10	+2	+4	0
Lumber, construction materials distributors	r-5	r+8	r-4	+7	+1
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-8	+7	-3	+6	0
Construction materials distributors	-2	+10	-5	+8	+1
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-1	0	+4	+7	0
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	+16	+9	+24	+6	-1
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+6	-1	+12	+8	0
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-6	-1	+1	+2	+1
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	+14	+4	+13	+18	+1
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+17	+8	+13	0	-2
Service establishment supply houses	-4	-6	+7	+8	+1
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-19	-3	-2	+12	+4
Iron, steel and products distributors	-23	-5	-6	+12	+2
Nonferrous metals distributors	-6	+1	+8	+15	+9
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-4	-4	+2	-4	0
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-3	-6	+4	-2	+1
Waste materials dealers	-7	-2	+2	-6	0
Jewelry wholesalers	-4	-2	-3	+6	-1
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+3	+2	+3	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	+4	+2	+3	+5	+2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+8	+4	+6	+2	+1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+11	+3	+7	+3	+1
Voluntary groups*	+10	+5	+8	+13	0
Retailer-cooperative*	+17	+2	+14	+6	+4
Nonaffiliated*	+7	+4	+4	+8	-3
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+5	+3	+6	+2	+3
Confectionery wholesalers	+4	0	+3	+5	0
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+6	+8	+2	-5	-5
Farm products (edible) distributors	+4	-2	+2	+8	0
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+2	+1	-4	+15	+3
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+4	-3	+6	+4	-2
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+8	+9	+4	+5	+5
Beer, ale distributors	+4	+12	+4	+7	+13
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+10	+7	+5	+5	+3
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+1	+2	+2	r+8	r0
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+1	0	+4	+8	+1
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-2	+3	-4	+13	0
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+6	+6	+7	-2	0
Tobacco distributors	+7	+3	+7	+2	+3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	0	-5	r0	+10	+1
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-2	-10	0	+15	+2
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+2	0	-2	+7	+3
Piece goods converters	+2	-5	+4	+6	-5
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+1	-4	+5	+5	+4
Paper wholesalers	0	-4	+5	+6	+5
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+10	-2	+7	+6	-2
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	+1	+2	+5	(X)	(X)
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-1	0	0	+4	+1
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	+15	+4	+12	+4	+7
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+11	+4	+4	-8	+3
Coal wholesalers	-8	+3	-10	+13	+31
Farm supplies wholesalers	+4	-19	+1	+10	-6

* See text, page 12.
(X) Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data. See "Inventories", page 11.
r Revised since Advance Release dated June 30, 1960.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--- FIVE MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH FIVE MONTHS OF 1959

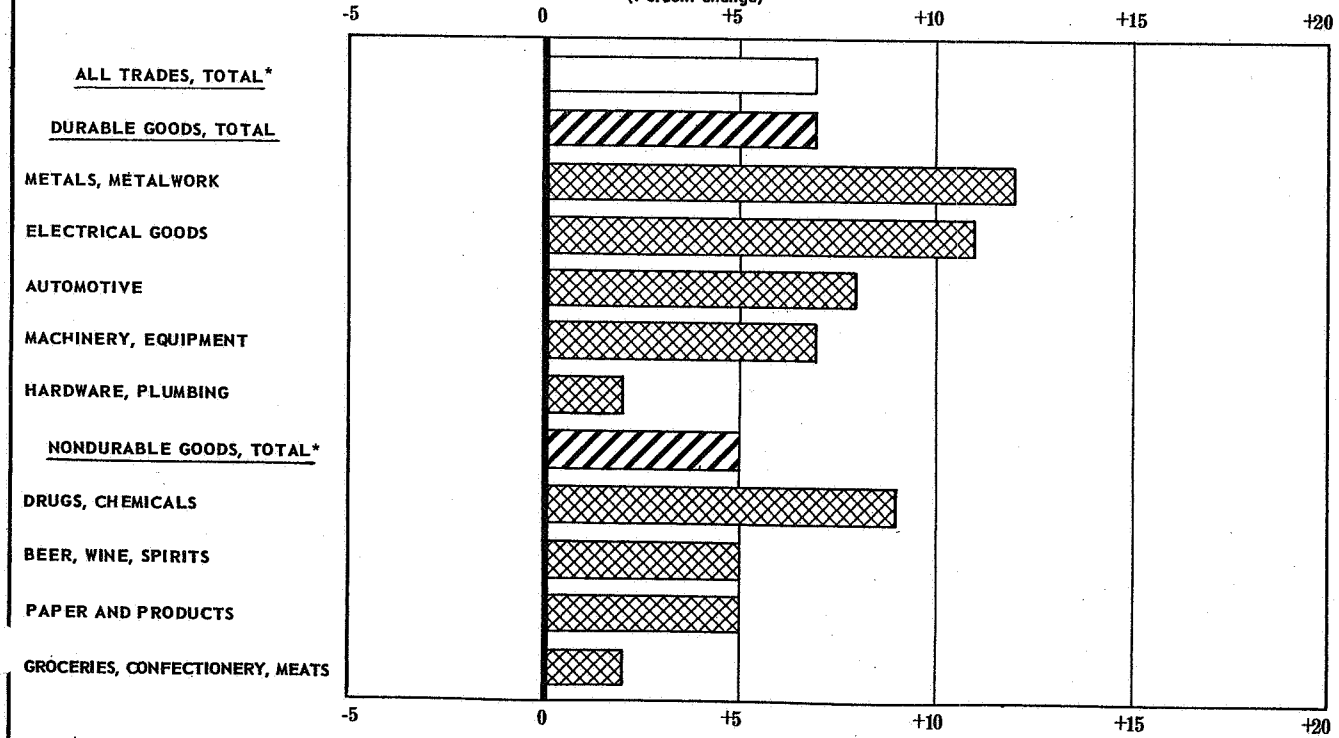
(Percent Change)



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INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS MAY 1960 COMPARED WITH MAY 1959

(Percent change)



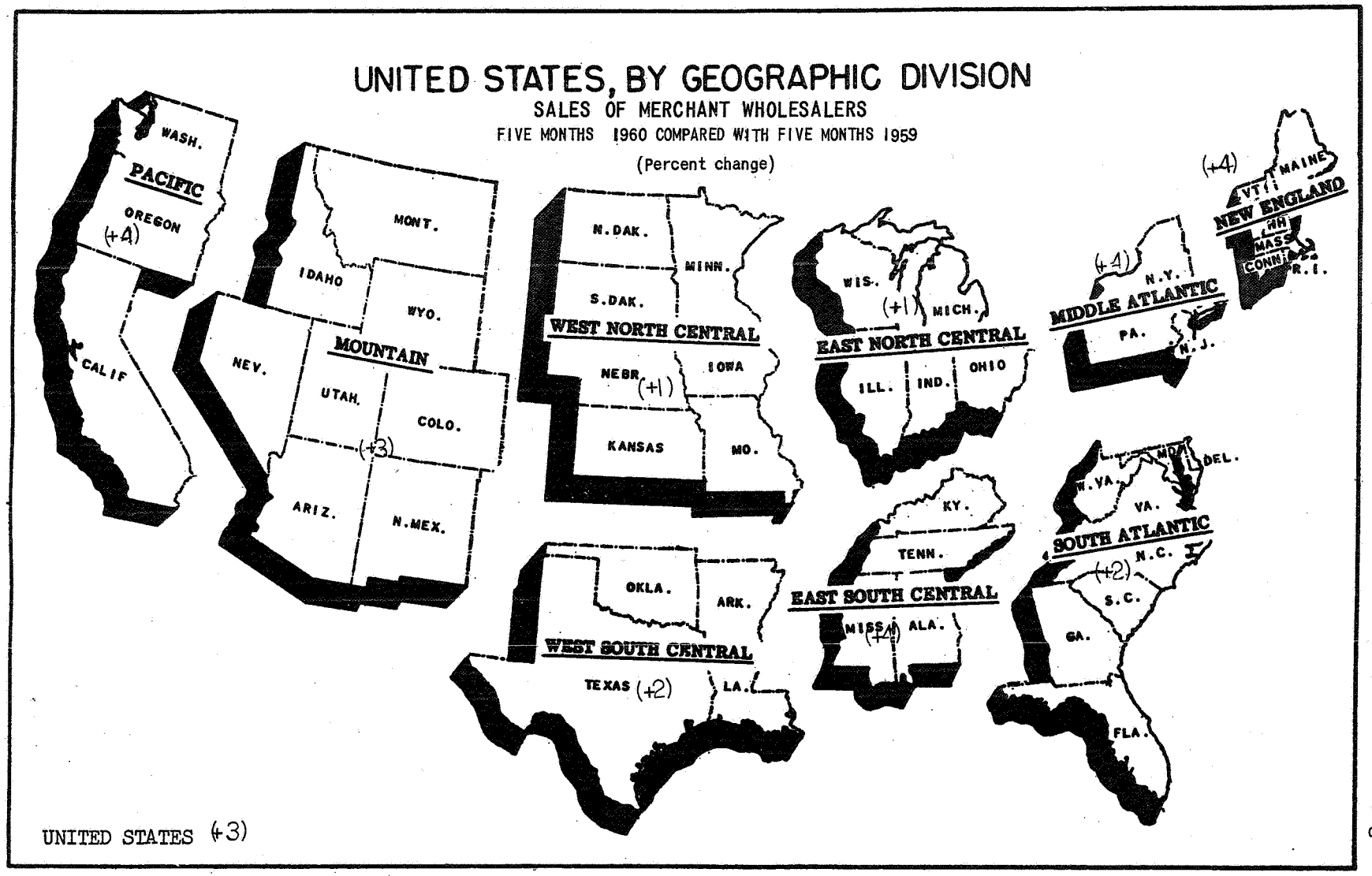
*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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Table 5. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
MAY 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales*			Inventory,* end-of-month (at cost)	
	May 1960 from--		5 mos. 1960 from 5 mos. 1959	May 1960 from--	
	May 1959	April 1960		May 1959	April 1960
	(Percent)			(Percent)	
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	0	+1	+3	+7	+1
New England	+6	+3	+4	+11	+1
Middle Atlantic	+1	+1	+4	+5	+1
East North Central	-2	+4	+1	+7	+2
West North Central	+3	+9	+1	+5	0
South Atlantic	+2	-1	+2	+5	-2
East South Central	+8	-2	+4	+9	+2
West South Central	0	0	+2	+5	0
Mountain	+3	-1	+3	0	+1
Pacific	+1	-1	+4	+13	+1
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+12	-3	+12	+5	+2
New England	+6	-2	+9	(X)	0
Middle Atlantic	-1	-7	+3	-4	0
East North Central	+12	+2	+10	+13	+3
West North Central	+6	0	-1	+16	+4
South Atlantic	+3	-2	+5	+7	+1
East South Central	+8	-6	+4	+13	+3
West South Central	-4	-6	-3	+11	0
Mountain	-8	-3	+5	+12	-2
Pacific	-2	-2	+8	+5	-1
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+2	+2	+5	+5	-2
New England	+11	(X)	+10	+16	-5
Middle Atlantic	-2	-5	+7	+5	-1
East North Central	+2	+6	+9	+5	-1
West North Central	-5	+11	-11	+1	-6
South Atlantic	-1	+3	+2	+10	-4
East South Central	-3	+4	-1	+18	-2
West South Central	-7	+9	-5	+8	-1
Mountain	+1	+5	+5	-1	-3
Pacific	-12	+5	-3	+12	-1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-1	+1	+4	+17	+3
New England	+16	+15	+5	+28	-4
Middle Atlantic	+9	+4	+8	+14	0
East North Central	-5	-2	+4	+14	+4
West North Central	-12	0	-8	+11	-2
South Atlantic	+4	+12	0	+5	-4
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-9	-2	-5	+14	-5
Pacific	-8	-2	0	+17	-1
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-5	-1	-2	+10	+2
New England	+3	(X)	+11	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+1	-5	+4	+22	-2
East North Central	+7	+1	+3	+6	+2
West North Central	-4	+4	0	+16	+4
South Atlantic	0	-10	+6	-1	-1
West South Central	-1	+28	-8	-3	-2
Pacific	-1	-5	+2	+4	0
Hardware wholesalers	-4	-1	-1	0	-1
New England	+6	+5	+7	+10	+1
Middle Atlantic	0	0	+1	+6	-2
East North Central	-6	0	+1	-3	-3
West North Central	-5	-5	-4	-5	0
South Atlantic	-12	-5	-2	-1	-6
East South Central	-4	-5	-5	+6	+10
West South Central	+3	0	-4	+2	-1
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-11	+1	-7	0	0
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+4	+10	+2	+4	0
New England	-4	+20	0	+13	+4
Middle Atlantic	+8	+9	+4	+2	-1
East North Central	-6	+11	+3	+4	0
West North Central	-3	+7	-5	-3	+1
South Atlantic	-6	+6	-2	+3	-2
West South Central	-7	+12	-9	+4	+2
Pacific	+2	+6	+4	+4	0
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-5	+8	-4	+7	+1
New England	+2	+20	0	(X)	+2
Middle Atlantic	-6	+12	-3	+5	0
East North Central	-9	+16	-8	+10	+1
West North Central	-10	+8	-12	+5	+3
South Atlantic	-12	-2	-5	+2	-2
West South Central	0	+9	-13	+8	0
Pacific	-11	-1	-5	+12	+2

See footnotes at end of table.



UNITED STATES (+3)

Table 5. TRENDS IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued
MAY 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 9)	Sales*			Inventory* end-of-month (at cost)	
	May 1960 from--		5 mos. 1960 from 5 mos. 1959	May 1960 from--	
	May 1959	April 1960		May 1959	April 1960
	(Percent)			(Percent)	
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-6	-1	+1	+2	+1
Middle Atlantic	+2	+14	+6	(X)	+8
East North Central	+8	-1	+9	+5	+1
West North Central	(X)	+6	-1	-3	0
South Atlantic	+16	+7	+7	-9	+1
East South Central	+1	-13	+5	(X)	-1
West South Central	-20	0	-13	-2	0
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-11	+1	0	+13	-1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+11	+3	+7	+3	+1
New England	+3	+6	+4	+10	-1
Middle Atlantic	+22	+5	+12	+12	-4
East North Central	+10	+5	+9	+6	0
West North Central	+9	+4	+8	+15	+2
South Atlantic	+5	+1	+6	+2	-2
East South Central	+6	+4	+4	+2	-2
West South Central	+8	-1	+7	+9	-6
Mountain	+16	+3	+8	-6	-3
Pacific	+11	+4	+4	+7	0
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+5	+3	+6	+2	+3
Middle Atlantic	+1	+1	+6	+14	+9
East North Central	-3	+4	0	-7	-1
South Atlantic	-6	+1	+6	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+14	-4	+9	+15	+2
Pacific	+7	+1	+11	(X)	+2
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+4	-3	+6	+4	-2
New England	+1	+9	+3	+26	+2
Middle Atlantic	+11	+8	+11	-7	-3
East North Central	+12	+4	+3	+19	+6
West North Central	-14	-24	+7	+16	-3
South Atlantic	+8	+6	+10	-8	+6
West South Central	-10	-2	-1	-11	+4
Pacific	+2	-7	+6	-3	-10
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+1	0	+4	+8	+1
New England	+4	+2	+8	+6	-1
Middle Atlantic	-3	0	+3	+6	-1
East North Central	+3	+2	+4	+5	+2
West North Central	+1	+2	+1	+4	0
South Atlantic	+6	+1	+6	+7	-3
East South Central	+12	-2	+8	+6	-5
West South Central	-2	0	+7	+9	-1
Mountain	+7	+1	+7	+9	-1
Pacific	+3	-1	+8	+12	+6
Tobacco distributors	+7	+3	+7	+2	+3
New England	+13	+8	+4	+13	+6
Middle Atlantic	+8	+5	+8	-5	-3
East North Central	+4	+2	+6	+18	+4
West North Central	+5	+3	+5	-5	+8
South Atlantic	+1	+1	+3	+2	+1
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+20	+2	+8	+24	+12
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	0	-5	0	+10	+1
New England	(X)	-17	-2	+23	+3
Middle Atlantic	-6	-5	+3	+5	-2
East North Central	+4	0	+6	+8	+8
West North Central	(X)	-26	-3	+10	+3
South Atlantic	+19	-16	+13	+5	+3
Pacific	+7	-9	+11	+10	+12

* See Text, page 11.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.
[1] Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants."

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 10 through 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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

The procedure to develop final "composite" estimates was instituted effective with the data for January 1960. Dollar volume estimates shown prior to January 1960 were obtained in the same manner as the preliminary "composite" estimates.

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1959. The published estimate is $5,118 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $5,118 million by .016, we obtain $82 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $5,200 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1959 to June 1959 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $5,118 million by $4,794 million, is 1.07 (it can also be expressed as a 7% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.07 by .009, we obtain .010 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 1.06 to 1.08 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 6% and 8% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.05 to 1.09.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to—				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to—	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-	-	0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, constructinn materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-5	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958--is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, Director

JUNE 1960

BW-60-6

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
AUGUST 9, 1960

First-half Sales

First-half 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $63.1 billion, were ahead of first-half 1959 sales by 2 percent. Durable goods trades, with sales totaling $26.7 billion in the first 6 months of 1960, showed no change from year-ago sales totals but the nondurable goods trades, with sales of $36.3 billion, indicated a 3 percent gain over first-half 1959 sales.

Most trades reported first-half sales moderately ahead of a year ago. The most substantial gain was reported by air conditioning, refrigeration equipment distributors (18%). The largest decrease was reported by iron, steel and products distributors (10%).

The East North Central Division showed no change in first-half sales. All other geographic divisions indicated increases ranging from 1 to 4 percent.

June Sales

June 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $11.1 billion, were 3 percent ahead of May 1960 sales but slightly (1%) below June sales a year ago. Sales in the durable goods trades, estimated at $4.8 billion in June, showed about the expected seasonal gain (4%) over May, but were 7 percent below June 1959 sales. This was the fourth successive month of year-to-year declines in sales of durable goods trades. The nondurable goods trades, with June 1960 sales of $6.3 billion, indicated an increase of 3 percent over previous month sales and a gain of 4 percent over sales a year ago.

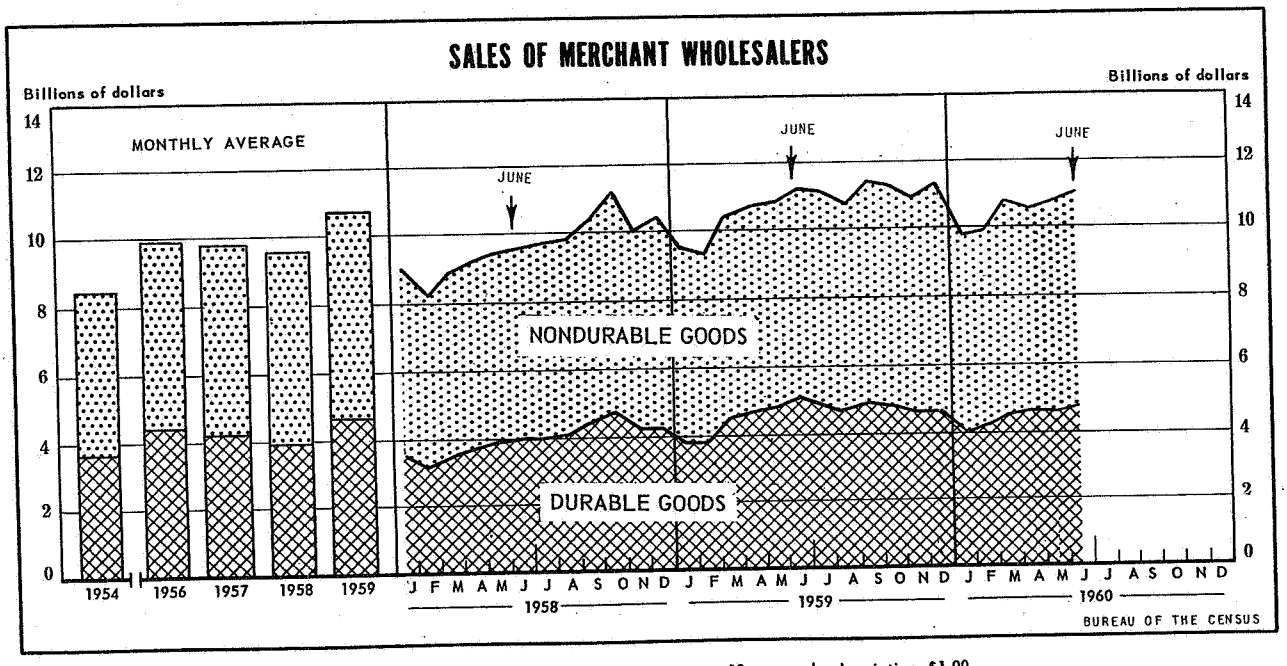
Most trades indicated increases over May sales, the largest being reported by air conditioning, refrigeration equipment wholesalers (14%). Farm supplies wholesalers indicated the sharpest decline (19%) from May sales. Compared with sales a year ago, nondurable goods trades experienced the larger gains, with general-line grocery wholesalers registering the principal increase (15%). Among the durable goods trades, automotive wholesalers, with sales up 8 percent over a year ago, accounted for the largest gain. Iron, steel and products distributors, who had reported record sales in June 1959, indicated the sharpest decline (26%) from year-ago sales.

Inventories

Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw materials) merchants, estimated at $12.2 billion at the end of June, showed little change from their May 31 level, but were 6 percent higher than a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined slightly (1%) from the May level, but nondurable goods stocks were up 1 percent. However, both trade groups reported inventories up 6 percent over their June 30, 1959 levels.

Most trades indicated small changes from their previous month inventory levels. However, large increases were reported by coal wholesalers (18%), beer, ale distributors (16%), and piece goods converters (10%). Farm supplies wholesalers, with stocks down 9 percent from previous month, showed the largest decline. All but 8 trades indicated increases over year-ago inventories, the largest gain being reported by distributors of professional equipment, supplies (19%).

The June 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 117 percent, down 5 points from May, but 7 points above the June 1959 stock-sales ratio. The June stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 156 percent compared to the nondurable goods ratio of 84 percent.



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

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960						1959							Total 6 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May[1]	June[2]	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,750	11,119	11,203	11,095	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312	63,062	61,875
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	9,986	10,387	10,443	10,238	9,910	10,502	10,357	9,952	10,304	58,514	57,490
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,614	4,785	5,118	4,917	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632	26,736	26,746
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	532	571	547	562	520	517	536	515	498	3,181	2,912
Automotive equipment, tire,tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	443	465	429	419	405	428	439	429	379	2,532	2,270
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	654	711	713	702	695	779	769	750	787	3,966	3,836
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	347	347	331	336	375	367	353	365	1,908	1,840
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	326	364	366	371	359	404	403	397	421	2,058	1,996
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	215	221	223	211	225	237	248	234	239	1,268	1,291
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	66	72	70	69	72	74	76	71	72	398	389
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	149	149	153	143	153	163	172	163	167	871	902
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	460	464	484	482	475	511	517	460	424	2,553	2,562
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	198	203	210	202	201	219	216	195	190	1,140	1,163
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	262	261	274	279	274	292	301	265	234	1,414	1,400
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	728	781	823	838	801	797	754	655	612	3,845	4,011
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	385	422	452	466	444	434	399	351	333	2,162	2,255
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	343	359	371	373	357	363	355	304	279	1,681	1,757
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,283	1,287	1,386	1,287	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165	7,244	7,097
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	534	608	535	517	533	520	501	545	3,160	3,206
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	112	114	117	115	127	129	118	113	114	662	603
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	151	151	149	143	127	144	153	132	140	877	824
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	400	421	539	464	419	474	430	426	455	2,513	2,682
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	284	299	403	350	312	340	305	292	302	1,800	1,996
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	115	122	136	114	107	134	125	134	152	713	685
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	276	269	301	272	260	271	289	309	349	1,789	1,778
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	153	150	163	144	129	139	159	179	228	1,035	1,018
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	123	119	139	129	131	132	130	129	121	754	762
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,136	6,334	6,084	6,178	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680	36,325	35,128
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,372	5,602	5,324	5,321	5,203	5,583	5,513	5,358	5,672	31,777	30,743
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,828	1,928	1,729	1,822	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828	10,969	10,297
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	802	861	750	793	739	803	791	740	768	4,821	4,463
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	614	636	572	612	589	640	609	612	646	3,768	3,518
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	62	57	59	55	59	63	64	71	352	339
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	354	370	350	357	325	370	348	322	344	2,028	1,978
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	410	439	442	424	362	393	383	391	432	2,390	2,353
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	139	133	129	121	143	136	155	160	765	784
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	280	300	309	295	241	249	247	235	272	1,625	1,568
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	614	649	614	603	559	569	584	595	743	3,313	3,171
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	247	272	272	282	261	236	210	188	223	1,283	1,242
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	367	378	342	321	298	333	373	407	520	2,031	1,928
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	391	400	391	383	380	419	410	374	376	2,347	2,307
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	236	242	238	238	235	265	263	243	239	1,465	1,417
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	120	120	118	111	111	120	114	105	113	692	713
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	35	38	35	33	34	35	32	27	25	189	177
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	343	373	349	358	332	343	351	326	380	1,977	1,849
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	494	516	578	541	506	535	526	528	597	627	624	568	509	3,170	3,161
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	185	181	174	190	240	240	231	211	167	1,157	1,154
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	196	196	216	200	199	224	226	235	242	254	256	233	222	1,231	1,252
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	348	344	326	343	366	373	350	358	2,073	1,987
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	299	302	303	288	300	323	322	299	305	1,812	1,744
Amusement, sporting goods wholesalers	97	103	120	123	125	134	125	128	129	154	155	155	149	702	637
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	70	71	61	65	73	76	78	86	427	467
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	123	119	112	115	125	107	107	116	899	891

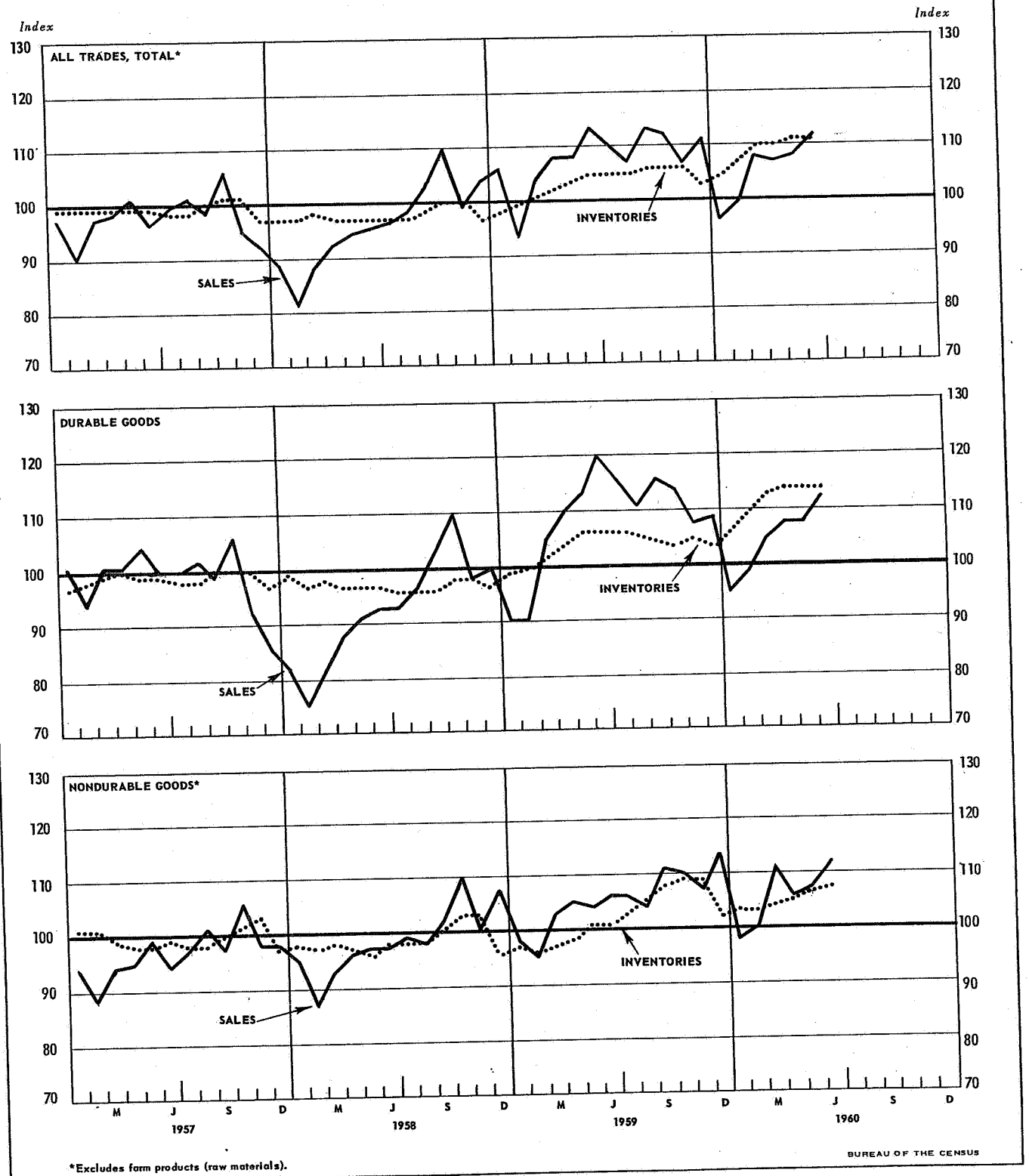
[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate.

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
1957, 1958, 1959 AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100



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

Table 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960						1959						
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May[1]	June[2]	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,172	12,180	11,495	11,549	11,535	11,625	11,651	11,666	11,298
Selected Kinds of Business													
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,013	1,019	946	928	907	935	921	938	929
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	874	867	834	812	795	822	807	822	804
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,166	1,151	1,044	1,039	1,011	1,024	1,080	1,117	1,044
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	512	501	481	466	454	467	477	492	456
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	600	627	626	625	654	650	563	573	557	557	603	624	587
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	929	897	914	914	909	886	861	854	852
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	440	423	445	448	447	427	411	410	412
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	489	473	469	467	462	459	450	444	440
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,181	2,166	2,084	2,065	2,074	2,062	2,075	2,061	2,096
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	871	854	878	850	858	841	831	809	816
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	852	854	772	794	735	650	585	597	649
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	708	711	640	665	604	521	460	460	515
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,191	1,184	1,144	1,169	1,198	1,220	1,235	1,233	1,185
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	676	662	628	637	651	682	674	660	642
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	631	667	608	588	635	693	732	725	591
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	496	511	475	465	509	565	604	609	494
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	526	532	485	488	507	527	530	520	499
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	379	383	352	353	366	387	386	380	355
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	338	335	326	327	327	330	336	328	326
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	284	281	275	275	275	275	281	274	274

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960						1959						
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May[1]	June[2]	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	117	110	113	116	111	112	117	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	156	138	143	148	140	142	150	148
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	190	178	173	165	174	181	172	182	187
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	197	186	194	194	196	192	184	192	212
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	178	162	146	148	145	131	140	149	133
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	144	139	141	135	125	130	139	125
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	201	179	154	154	155	138	150	157	139
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	202	193	189	190	191	173	167	186	201
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	208	212	222	222	195	190	210	217
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	181	171	167	169	157	150	168	188
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	170	168	150	160	161	166	173	181	180
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	161	160	144	159	166	158	160	161	150
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	213	203	143	171	175	137	136	140	143
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	249	238	159	190	194	153	151	158	171
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	84	83	85	88	84	87	89	78
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	61	66	64	70	65	68	71	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	84	77	84	80	88	85	85	89	84
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	103	103	99	98	114	122	125	122	80
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	135	135	139	145	171	170	162	150	95
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	133	124	127	133	126	129	139	139
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	161	158	148	148	156	146	147	156	149
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	96	95	100	109	90	90	94	91
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	95	93	91	95	92	85	87	92	90

[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate. See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

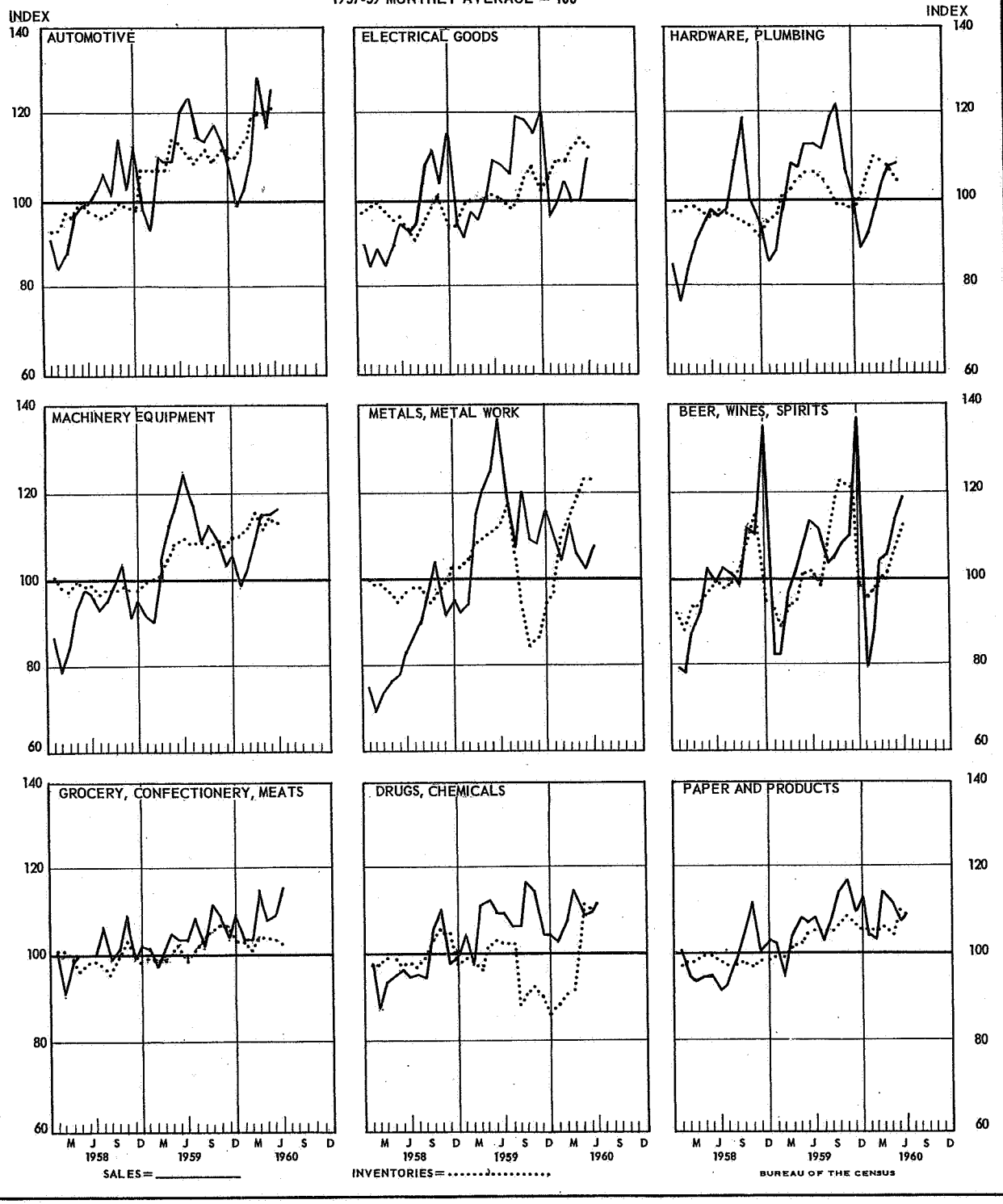
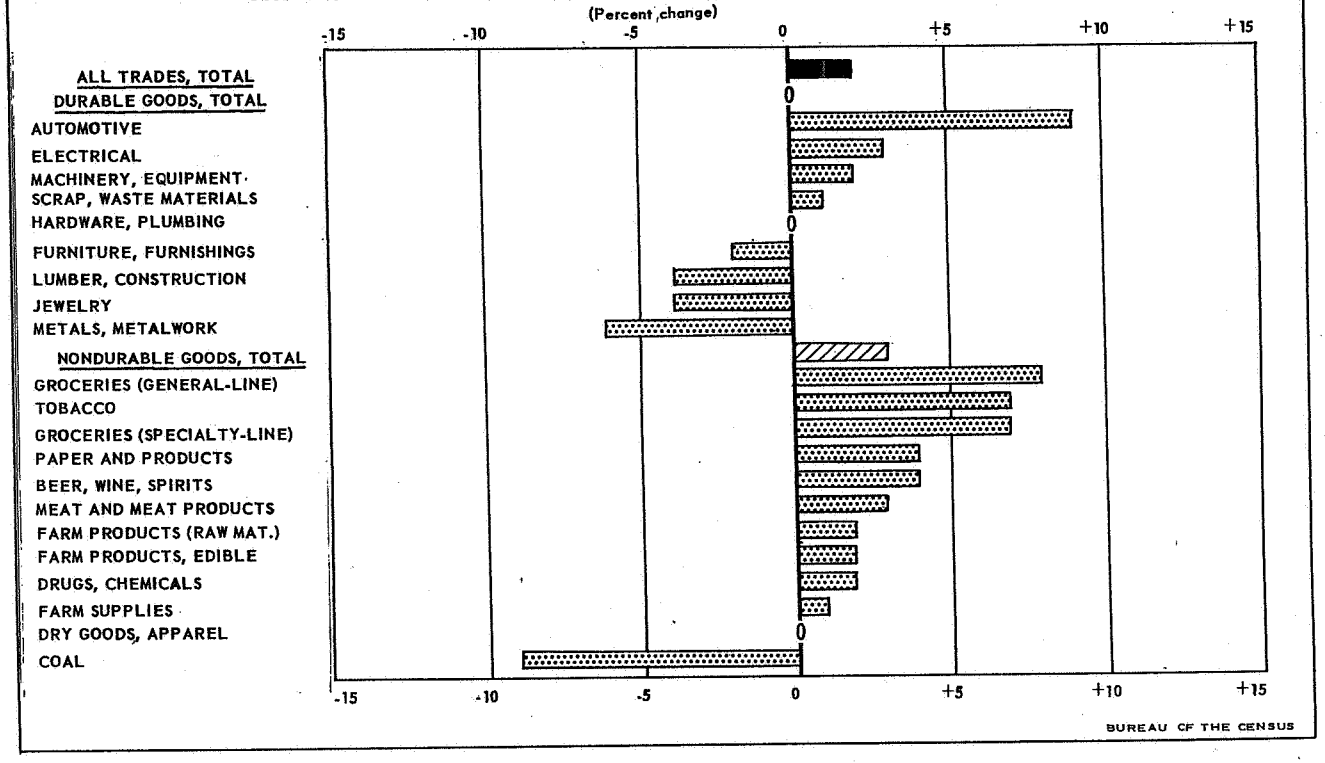


Table 4. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: JUNE 1960

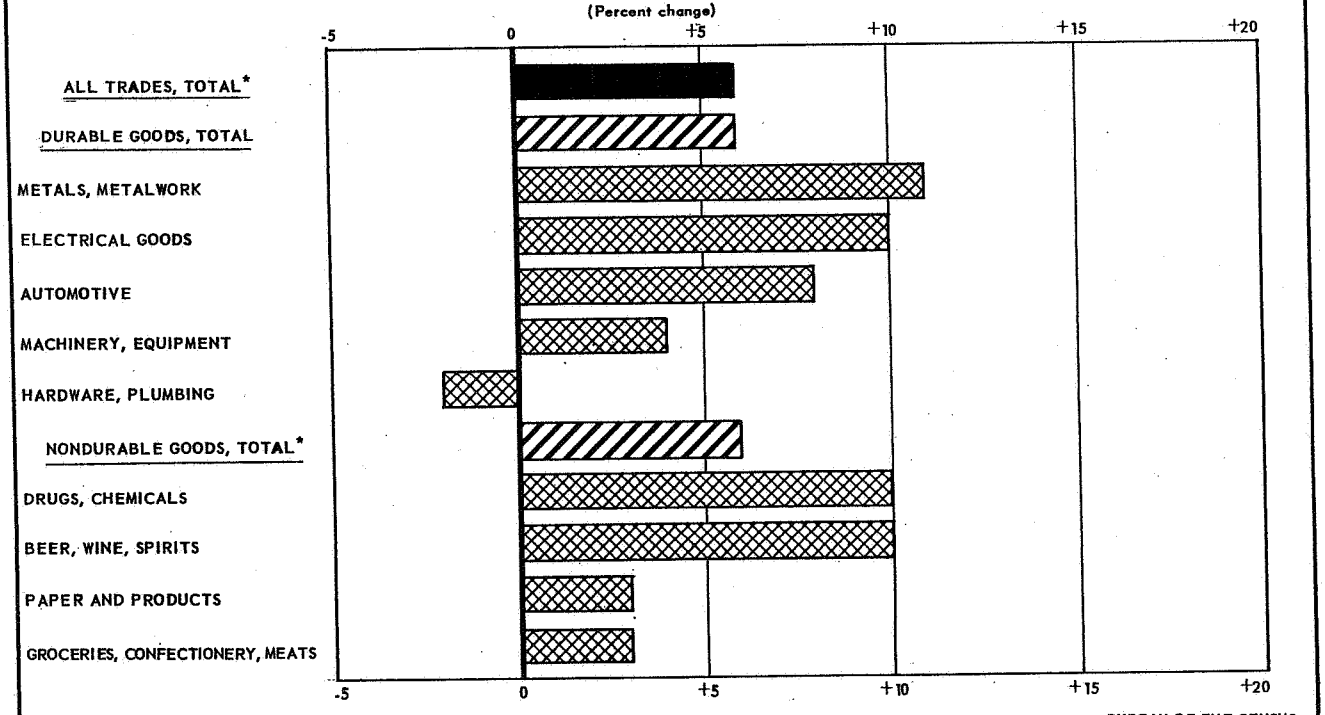
Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	June 1960 from—		6 mos. 1960 from 6 mos. 1959	June 1960 from—	
	June 1959	May 1960		June 1959	May 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	-1	+3	+2	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	-1	+4	+2	+6	0
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-7	+4	0	+6	-1
Automotive wholesalers	+4	+7	+9	+8	+1
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+8	+5	+12	+4	-1
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	-1	+9	+3	+10	-1
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-1	+6	+4	+4	-2
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-1	+12	+3	+15	-1
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-1	+3	-2	+8	-3
Furniture wholesalers	+3	+9	+2	0	-6
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-3	0	-3	+10	-1
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	-4	+1	0	-2	-3
Hardware wholesalers	-3	+3	-2	-5	-4
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-5	0	+1	+1	-3
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-5	+7	-4	+11	+2
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-7	+10	-4	+8	0
Construction materials distributors	-3	+5	-4	+15	+4
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-7	0	+2	+4	-1
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	+7	+14	+18	+4	-1
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+4	+3	+11	+4	-3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-12	-1	-1	-3	-2
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	-3	+2	+10	+19	+2
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+7	+1	+12	+10	+3
Service establishment supply houses	+1	0	+6	+8	0
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-22	+5	-6	+11	0
Iron, steel and products distributors	-26	+5	-10	+11	0
Nonferrous metals distributors	-10	+6	+4	+8	-1
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-11	-3	+1	0	-3
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-8	-2	+2	+4	-2
Waste materials dealers	-14	-3	-1	-6	-5
Jewelry wholesalers	-12	-8	-4	+3	+2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+4	+3	+3	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	+5	+4	+3	+6	+1
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+12	+5	+7	+3	-1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+15	+7	+8	+5	-2
Voluntary groups*	+10	+6	+9	+3	-2
Retailer-cooperative*	+23	+10	+16	+7	-2
Nonaffiliated*	+5	+7	+4	+1	-1
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+11	+4	+7	+1	+1
Confectionery wholesalers	+9	+7	+4	+8	+3
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+6	+5	+3	-3	+1
Farm products (edible) distributors	-1	+7	+2	+1	-1
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+5	+7	-2	+3	0
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-3	+7	+4	-2	-4
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+6	+5	+4	+10	+6
Beer, ale distributors	0	+10	+3	+18	+16
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+11	+3	+5	+8	+3
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+2	+2	+2	+10	+1
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+2	+3	+3	+9	+1
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+2	0	-3	+17	+2
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+9	+9	+7	+2	+2
Tobacco distributors	+7	+9	+7	0	0
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+2	+6	0	+13	+6
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+4	-2	0	+14	+4
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-1	+13	-2	+11	+6
Piece goods converters	+4	+7	+4	+16	+10
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+1	+2	+4	+3	-1
Paper wholesalers	0	+1	+4	+2	-1
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+12	+7	+8	+4	0
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-4	-4	+2	(X)	(X)
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	0	-1	-1	0	-2
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	+7	+7	+10	+8	+4
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+2	+3	+4	-9	0
Coal wholesalers	-1	+4	-9	+11	+18
Farm supplies wholesalers	+3	-19	+1	+2	-9

* See text, page 11.
(X) Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data. See "Inventories", page 11.

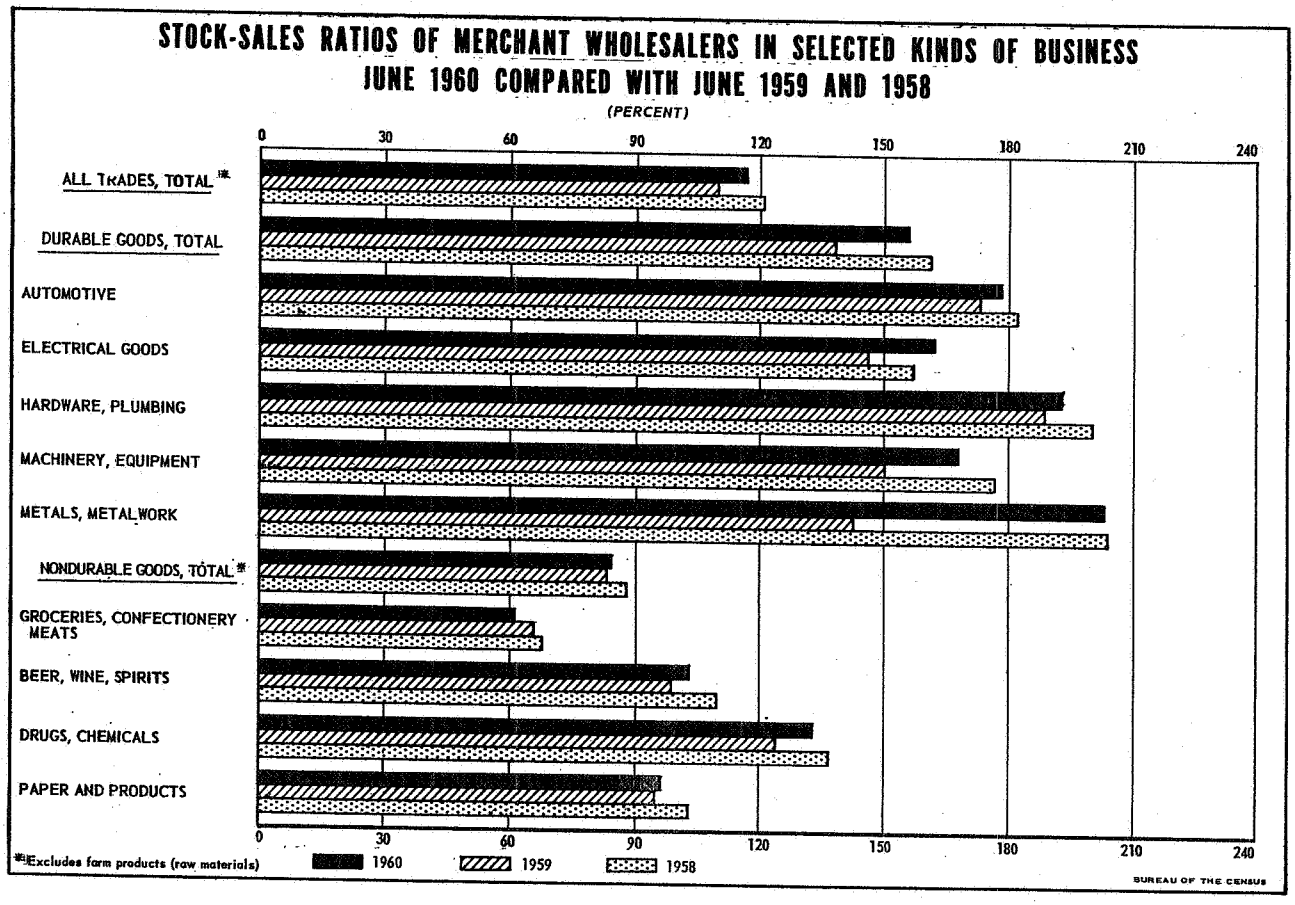
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS– SIX MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH SIX MONTHS OF 1959



INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS JUNE 1960 COMPARED WITH JUNE 1959



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).


STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
JUNE 1960 COMPARED WITH JUNE 1959 AND 1958
(PERCENT)
0
30
60
90
120
150
180
210
240
ALL TRADES, TOTAL*
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
AUTOMOTIVE
ELECTRICAL GOODS
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
METALS, METALWORK
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL*
GROCERIES, CONFECTIONERY MEATS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
*Excludes farm products (raw materials)
1960
1959
1958
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

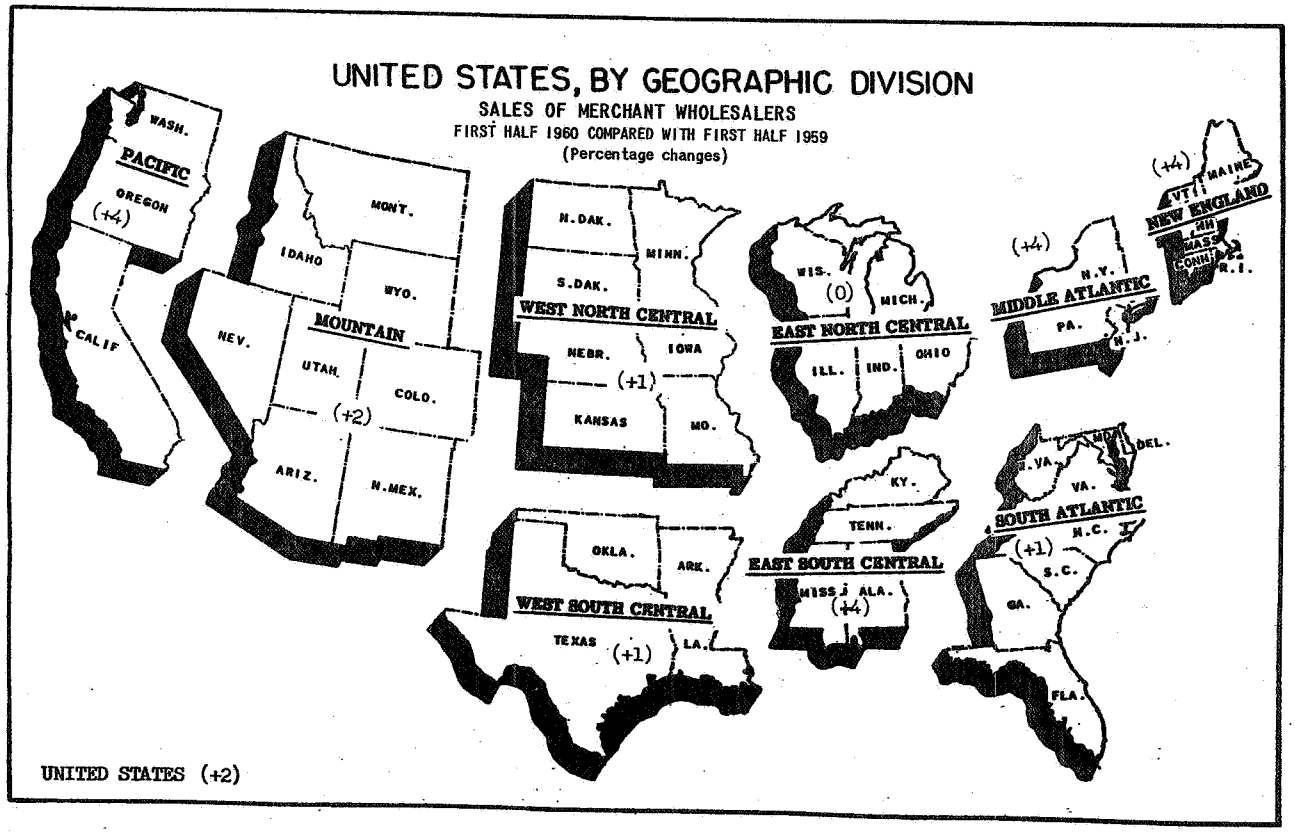

UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
FIRST HALF 1960 COMPARED WITH FIRST HALF 1959
(Percentage changes)
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+4)
CALIF
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH
COLO.
(+2)
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(+1)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
(0)
MICH.
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+4)
N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+4)
MAINE
VT.
NEW ENGLAND
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
MD.
DEL.
W.VA.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
N.C.
(+1)
S.C.
GA.
FLA.
KY.
TENN.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MISS.
ALA.
(+4)
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
(+1)
LA.
UNITED STATES (+2)

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
JUNE 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	June 1960 from—		6 mos. 1960 from 6 mos. 1959	June 1960 from—	
	June 1959	May 1960		June 1959	May 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	-1	+3	+2	+6	0
New England	+4	+5	+4	+7	+1
Middle Atlantic	+2	+5	+4	+2	0
East North Central	-5	+2	0	+8	0
West North Central	-1	-1	+1	+2	0
South Atlantic	0	-1	+1	+6	+2
East South Central	+5	-1	+4	0	-2
West South Central	-2	+4	+1	+5	0
Mountain	-5	+2	+2	-4	-2
Pacific	+3	+8	+4	+8	0
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+8	+5	12	+4	-1
New England	+7	+6	+8	+5	+4
Middle Atlantic	+12	+17	+5	+10	-5
East North Central	+2	0	+8	+4	0
West North Central	0	+1	-1	+3	-1
South Atlantic	-7	-3	-1	+4	-1
East South Central	+2	+5	+3	-1	-1
West South Central	+2	+9	-2	(X)	-1
Mountain	-15	+10	-1	(X)	+4
Pacific	-2	+1	+6	+2	+2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-1	+6	+4	+4	-2
New England	-1	+10	+7	-2	-1
Middle Atlantic	-7	+7	+5	+1	-5
East North Central	-11	+7	+5	+1	-1
West North Central	-6	+8	-10	-1	-4
South Atlantic	-6	-2	0	+4	-1
East South Central	-2	+18	-1	+13	-2
West South Central	-7	+3	-5	0	-2
Mountain	-14	-7	+2	-9	-3
Pacific	-3	+8	-3	+6	-2
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-1	+12	+3	+15	-1
New England	+5	+8	+5	+17	+2
Middle Atlantic	+1	+9	+7	+11	-1
East North Central	-8	+6	+2	+20	+1
West North Central	+3	+27	-6	+9	-4
South Atlantic	0	+3	0	+11	+1
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	(X)	+5	-7	(X)	-8
Pacific	-3	+26	0	+11	0
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-1	+3	-2	+8	-3
New England	+8	-5	+10	-1	-6
Middle Atlantic	+4	+1	+4	+28	+2
East North Central	0	+7	+3	-1	-3
West North Central	(X)	+12	-1	+2	-1
South Atlantic	+8	-1	+7	+5	-5
West South Central	-14	0	-10	+18	-5
Pacific	-2	+10	+1	-2	-3
Hardware wholesalers	-3	+3	-2	-5	-4
New England	(X)	+5	+7	(X)	-3
Middle Atlantic	-9	0	-1	-1	-3
East North Central	-4	0	0	-4	-4
West North Central	-1	+14	-3	-3	-4
South Atlantic	-6	-2	-3	-3	-4
East South Central	-2	0	-5	-1	-6
West South Central	-9	0	-5	-1	-3
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-9	+9	-7	-6	-2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-5	0	+1	+1	-3
New England	+2	+8	+1	+4	-1
Middle Atlantic	-6	+3	+2	-11	-8
East North Central	-11	+8	0	-2	-3
West North Central	-11	+10	-7	-2	-2
South Atlantic	-7	+4	-3	+1	0
West South Central	-9	-17	-9	-12	-2
Pacific	-11	0	+2	+9	-1
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-5	+7	-4	+11	+2
New England	+6	(X)	+1	+16	+3
Middle Atlantic	-10	-1	-5	+9	+1
East North Central	-12	+5	-9	+11	+1
West North Central	-13	+17	-13	-7	-4
South Atlantic	-8	-4	-6	(X)	+4
West South Central	+2	-1	-10	+5	-2
Pacific	-4	+13	-4	+8	-6

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS—Continued
JUNE 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	June 1960 from—		6 mos. 1960 from 6 mos. 1959	June 1960 from—	
	June 1959	May 1960		June 1959	May 1960
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-12	-1	-1	-3	-2
Middle Atlantic	+19	+1	+8	-9	+4
East North Central	-4	-5	+7	-4	-1
West North Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	(X)	-2	+4	(X)	+1
East South Central	(X)	+3	+6	(X)	-3
West South Central	-33	-1	-16	-6	-4
Mountain	-17	(X)	-15	-5	-2
Pacific	-10	-5	-3	0	+2
General-line grocery wholesalers	+15	+7	+8	+5	-2
New England	+14	+6	+5	+11	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+5	+10	+11	+11	-1
East North Central	+8	+5	+9	+4	-1
West North Central	+13	+7	+9	+6	-5
South Atlantic	+7	+7	+6	+14	+2
East South Central	+10	+2	+5	-6	-6
West South Central	+8	+3	+7	-5	-2
Mountain	+20	+9	+10	-5	-3
Pacific	+18	+14	+6	+9	+4
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+11	+4	+7	+1	+1
Middle Atlantic	+17	+1	+8	+5	-4
East North Central	+2	+9	+1	+9	+2
South Atlantic	+3	+2	+6	(X)	0
West South Central	+19	-3	+10	(X)	-6
Pacific	+6	+16	+10	+20	+2
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-3	+7	+4	-8	-4
New England	+7	+21	+3	(X)	+1
Middle Atlantic	+5	+16	+10	(X)	0
East North Central	+3	+3	+3	+20	+7
West North Central	-1	+17	+6	-8	-3
South Atlantic	+2	-3	+9	-4	-4
West South Central	-8	-4	-2	-16	-7
Pacific	+3	+11	+6	-10	-11
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+2	+3	+3	+9	+1
New England	+3	+8	+7	+5	0
Middle Atlantic	-1	+2	+2	+9	+4
East North Central	+5	+6	+4	+10	-2
West North Central	-7	+3	-1	0	0
South Atlantic	+3	0	+6	-1	0
East South Central	+4	-4	+8	+13	+4
West South Central	+4	-1	+7	+8	+1
Mountain	+8	+8	+7	+5	-1
Pacific	+1	+2	+7	+1	+1
Tobacco distributors	+7	+9	+7	0	0
New England	+10	+8	+5	-3	+8
Middle Atlantic	+1	+7	+7	-5	+1
East North Central	+6	+9	+6	+2	+2
West North Central	+3	+9	+5	+8	+2
South Atlantic	+20	+12	+5	+3	-3
East South Central	+19	+10	+10	+11	-1
West South Central	+18	+3	+10	-7	-4
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+2	+6	0	+13	+6
New England	(X)	-16	-2	+12	0
Middle Atlantic	+2	+10	+3	+11	+7
East North Central	+5	+5	+6	+33	+3
West North Central	-2	+23	-3	-3	+13
South Atlantic	0	+1	+11	+6	+8
Pacific	+13	+6	+12	(X)	+4

* See Text, page 11.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.
[1] Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants."

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 14 through 16.

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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

The procedure to develop final "composite" estimates was instituted effective with the data for January 1960. Dollar volume estimates shown prior to January 1960 were obtained in the same manner as the preliminary "composite" estimates.

Percentage changes--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (2) percentage 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 chance. 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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1959. The published estimate is $5,118 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $5,118 million by .016, we obtain $82 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $5,036 and $5,200 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,954 to $5,282 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1959 to June 1959 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $5,118 million by $4,794 million, is 1.07 (it can also be expressed as a 7% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.07 by .009, we obtain .010 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 1.06 to 1.08 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 6% and 8% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.05 to 1.09.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY—ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to—				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to—	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-	-	0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-3	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958—is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

JULY 1960

BW-60-7

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 8, 1960[1]

Sales

July 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $10.0 billion, were down 10 percent below June sales, and were also 10 percent behind July sales a year ago. These declines are partly due to the fewer trading days in July 1960 compared to June 1960 and July 1959. However, cumulative sales for the first 7 months of 1960, totaling $73.1 billion, were at approximately the same level as in the comparable period of 1959.

The durable goods trades, with sales totaling $4.2 billion in July, were down 12 percent below June sales and, for the fifth successive month, showed a decline (14%) from sales a year ago. The nondurable goods trades reported somewhat smaller declines for the month, with July sales of $5.8 billion, being 9 percent below June 1960 sales and 7 percent below July 1959 sales. For the seven month period, durable goods trades indicated a small decline (2%) from seven month 1959 sales while the nondurable goods trades showed a small gain (2%) in the same period.

Most trades reported sales below last month, the largest declines being indicated by piece goods converters (20%), commercial machines distributors (19%), and wines, distilled spirits wholesalers (19%); the only increase over June was shown by book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers (7%). Compared with a year ago, only five nondurable and two durable goods trades showed small gains (up to 6%). Iron, steel and products distributors indicated the sharpest decline, with sales 25 percent below their year ago level.

All geographic divisions reported July 1960 sales below last month as well as a year ago. The Middle Atlantic Division experienced the sharpest drop from the previous month (15%) and, together with the West North Central Division, indicated the largest decline from a year ago (10%).

Inventories

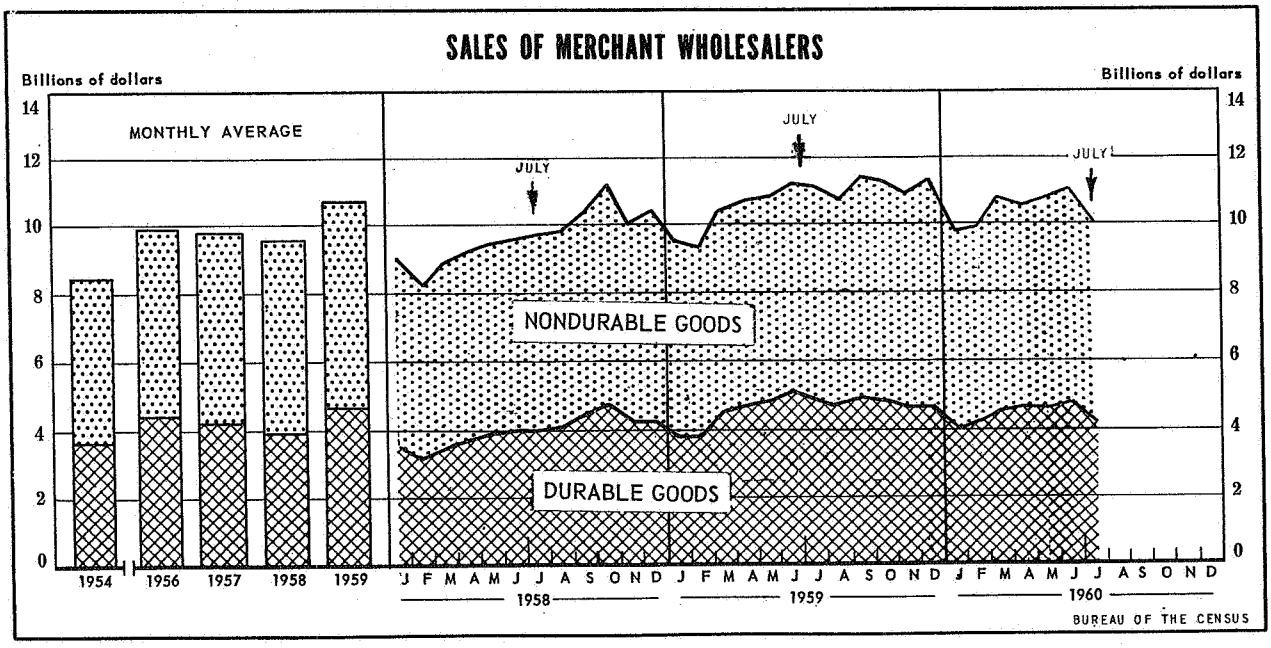
Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw material) merchants, estimated at $12.2 billion at the end of July, remained virtually unchanged from their June 30 level, but were 6 percent higher than a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined slightly (1%) from the June level, but nondurable goods stocks were unchanged. However, both trade groups reported larger inventories than a year ago--durable goods, up 6 percent, and nondurable goods, up 5 percent over July 1959 stocks.

Most trades, showed relatively small changes from their June inventory level. The largest changes were reported by wholesalers of coal (up 16%), meats, meat products (up 11%), and fresh fruits, vegetables (down 8%). Compared with a year ago, individual trades showed more substantial changes in inventories.

The July 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 131 percent--the highest since March 1958--up 13 points over June and 18 points above the July 1959 stock-sales ratio. The July 1960 stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 177 percent compared with the nondurable goods ratio of 93 percent.

General

The data in this report are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of the sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 11-13.



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

[1] An advance release of July 1960 data was issued on August 31, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960							1959						Total 7 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June[1]	July[2]	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,750	11,142	10,007	11,095	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312	73,092	72,969
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	9,986	10,404	9,312	10,238	9,910	10,502	10,357	9,952	10,304	67,843	67,652
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,614	4,798	4,235	4,917	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632	30,984	31,663
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	532	573	516	562	520	517	536	515	498	3,699	3,474
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	443	469	432	419	405	428	439	429	379	2,968	2,689
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	654	711	654	702	695	779	769	750	787	4,620	4,538
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	349	317	331	336	375	367	353	365	2,227	2,171
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	326	362	337	371	359	404	403	397	421	2,393	2,347
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	215	226	195	211	225	237	248	234	239	1,468	1,502
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	66	72	64	69	72	74	76	71	72	462	458
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	149	154	132	143	153	163	172	163	167	1,008	1,045
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	460	466	430	482	475	511	517	460	424	2,985	3,044
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	198	201	182	202	201	219	216	195	190	1,320	1,365
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	262	266	247	279	274	292	301	265	234	1,666	1,679
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	728	779	686	838	801	797	754	655	612	4,529	4,849
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	385	420	358	466	444	434	399	351	333	2,518	2,721
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	343	359	328	373	357	363	355	304	279	2,009	2,130
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,283	1,288	1,088	1,287	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165	8,333	8,384
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	533	440	535	517	533	520	501	545	3,599	3,741
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	112	119	104	115	127	129	118	113	114	771	718
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	151	147	132	143	127	144	153	132	140	1,005	967
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	400	424	368	464	419	474	430	426	455	2,884	3,146
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	284	300	263	350	312	340	305	292	302	2,064	2,346
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	115	124	105	114	107	134	125	134	152	820	799
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	276	271	242	272	260	271	289	309	349	2,033	2,050
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	153	149	137	144	129	139	159	179	228	1,171	1,162
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	123	121	106	129	131	132	130	129	121	862	891
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,136	6,344	5,772	6,178	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680	42,107	41,306
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,372	5,606	5,077	5,321	5,203	5,583	5,513	5,358	5,672	36,858	35,989
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,828	1,941	1,788	1,822	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828	12,770	12,119
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	802	852	797	793	739	803	791	740	768	5,609	5,256
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	614	646	587	612	589	640	609	612	646	4,365	4,130
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	61	56	59	55	59	63	64	71	407	398
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	354	382	348	357	325	370	348	322	344	2,388	2,335
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	410	445	390	424	362	393	383	391	432	2,786	2,777
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	138	121	129	121	143	136	155	160	885	913
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	280	307	269	295	241	249	247	235	272	1,901	1,863
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	614	650	573	603	559	569	584	595	743	3,887	3,774
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	247	268	265	282	261	236	210	188	223	1,544	1,524
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	367	382	308	321	298	333	373	407	520	2,343	2,249
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	391	404	362	383	380	419	410	374	376	2,713	2,690
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	236	245	228	238	235	265	263	243	239	1,696	1,655
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	120	120	99	111	111	120	114	105	113	791	824
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	35	38	35	33	34	35	32	27	25	224	210
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	343	371	346	358	332	343	351	326	380	2,321	2,207
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	494	516	578	541	506	532	465	528	597	627	624	568	509	3,632	3,689
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	185	176	169	190	240	240	231	211	167	1,321	1,344
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	196	196	216	200	199	220	188	235	242	254	256	233	222	1,415	1,487
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	346	310	326	343	366	373	350	358	2,381	2,313
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	299	301	270	288	300	323	322	299	305	2,081	2,032
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	68	61	61	65	73	76	78	86	486	528
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	127	111	112	115	125	107	107	116	1,014	1,003

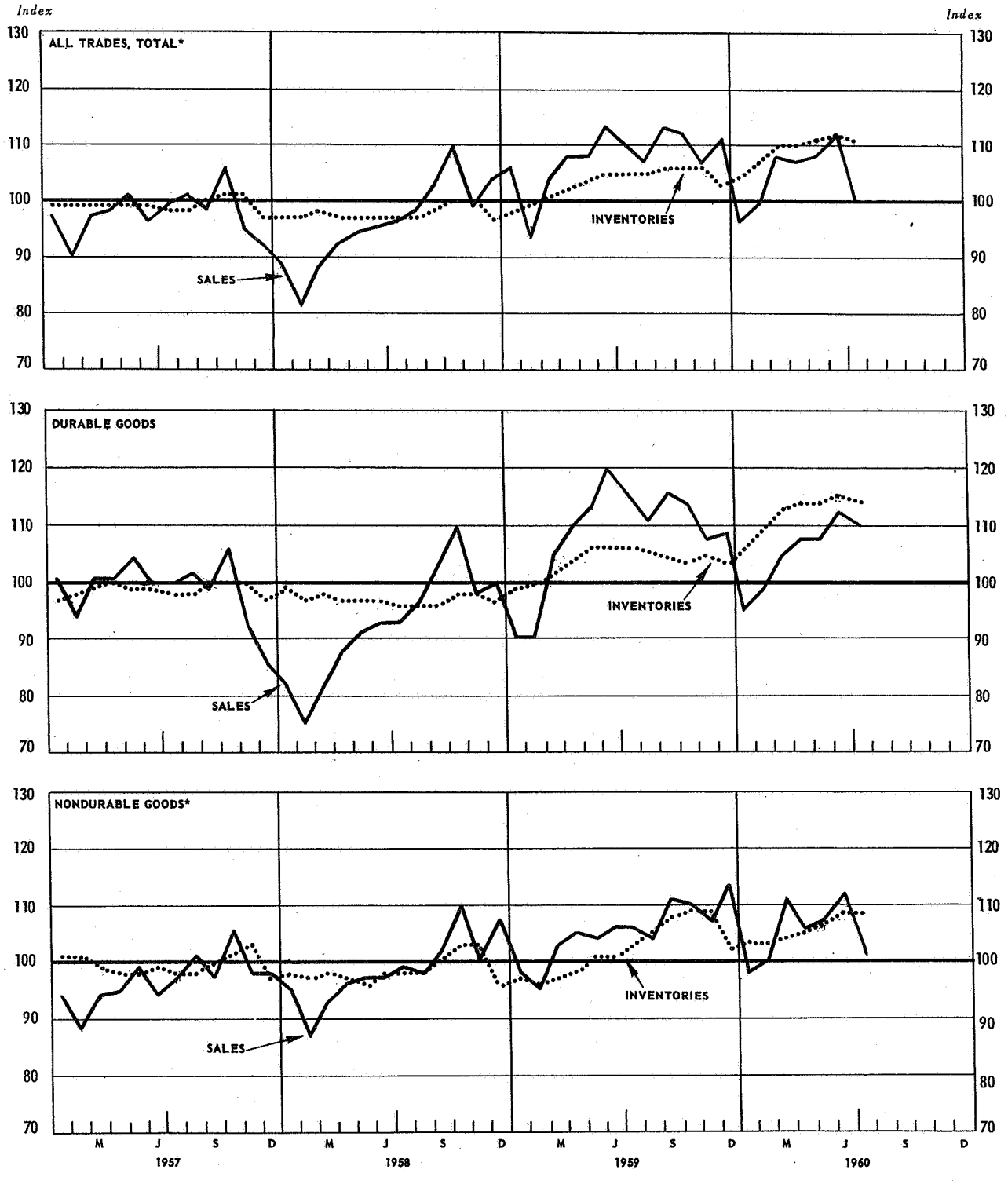
[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate.

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
1957, 1958, 1959 AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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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 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960							1959					
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June[1]	July[1]	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,172	12,267	12,217	11,549	11,535	11,625	11,651	11,666	11,298
Selected Kinds of Business													
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,013	1,032	1,025	928	907	935	921	938	929
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	874	877	875	812	795	822	807	822	804
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,166	1,162	1,131	1,039	1,011	1,024	1,080	1,117	1,044
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	512	496	491	466	454	467	477	492	456
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	600	627	626	625	654	666	641	573	557	557	603	624	587
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	929	912	907	914	909	886	861	854	852
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	440	432	426	448	447	427	411	410	412
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	489	480	481	467	462	459	450	444	440
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,181	2,192	2,205	2,065	2,074	2,062	2,075	2,061	2,096
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	871	850	839	850	858	841	831	809	816
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	852	869	863	794	735	650	585	597	649
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	708	726	723	665	604	521	460	460	515
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,191	1,181	1,198	1,169	1,198	1,220	1,235	1,233	1,185
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	676	657	662	637	651	682	674	660	642
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	631	672	650	588	635	693	732	725	591
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	496	523	504	465	509	565	604	609	494
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	526	539	535	488	507	527	530	520	499
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	379	389	385	353	366	387	386	380	355
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	338	340	336	327	327	330	336	328	326
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	284	285	282	275	275	275	281	274	274

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960							1959					
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June[1]	July[2]	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	118	131	113	116	111	112	117	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	157	177	143	148	140	142	150	148
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	190	180	199	165	174	181	172	182	187
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	197	187	203	194	196	192	184	192	212
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	178	163	173	148	145	131	140	149	133
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	142	155	141	135	125	130	139	125
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	201	184	190	154	155	138	150	157	139
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	202	196	211	190	191	173	167	186	201
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	215	234	222	222	195	190	210	217
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	180	195	167	169	157	150	168	188
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	170	170	203	160	161	166	173	181	180
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	161	159	191	159	166	158	160	161	150
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	213	205	235	171	175	137	136	140	143
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	249	242	275	190	194	153	151	158	171
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	84	93	85	88	84	87	89	78
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	61	67	64	70	65	68	71	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	84	77	83	80	88	85	85	89	84
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	103	103	113	98	114	122	125	122	80
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	135	137	164	145	171	170	162	150	95
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	133	148	127	133	126	129	139	139
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	161	159	169	148	156	146	147	156	149
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	98	108	100	109	90	90	94	91
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	95	95	104	95	92	85	87	92	90

[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate.

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

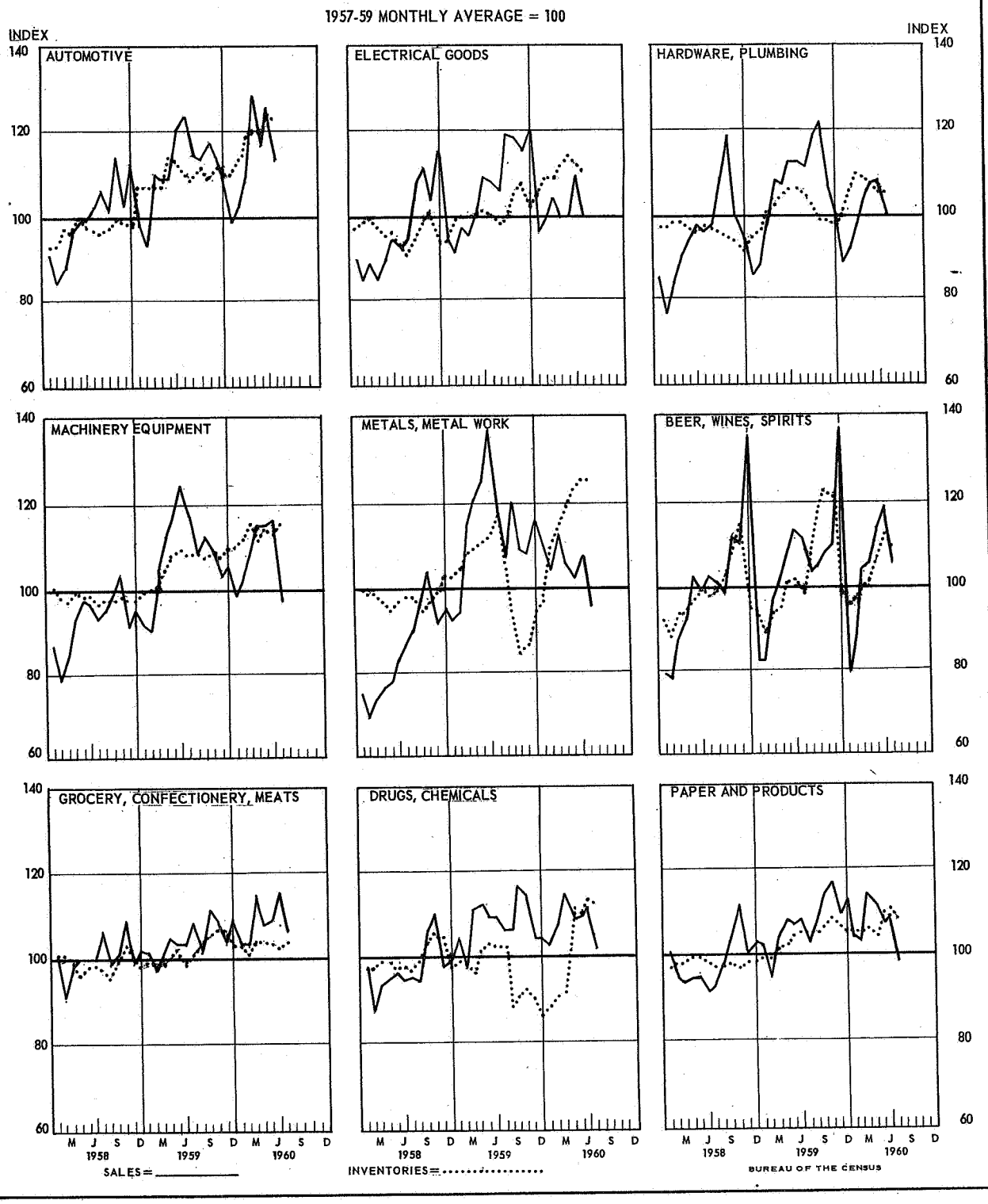


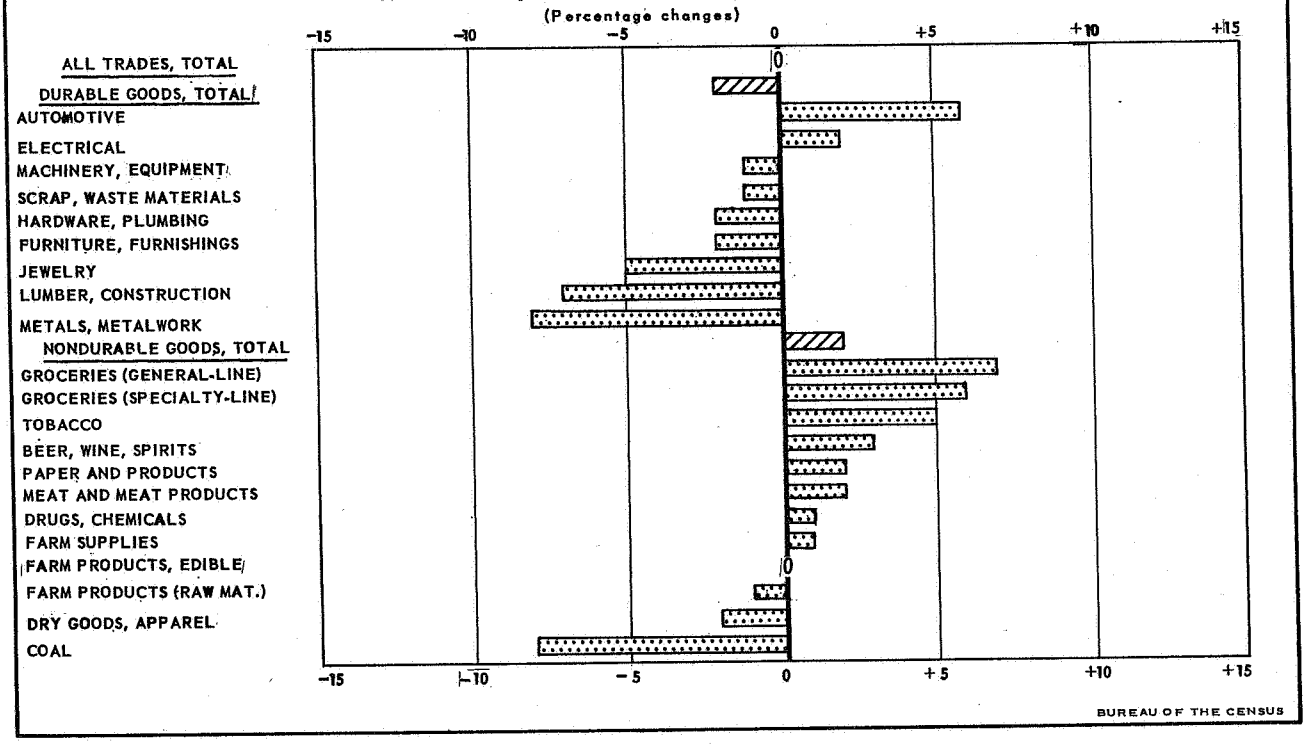
Table 4. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: JULY 1960

Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	July 1960 from--		7 mos. 1960 from 7 mos. 1959	July 1960 from—	
	July 1959	June 1960		July 1959	June 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	-10	-10	0	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	-9	-10	0	+6	0
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-14	-12	-2	+6	-1
Automotive wholesalers	-8	-10	+6	+10	-1
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+3	-8	+10	+8	0
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	-7	-8	+2	+9	-3
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-4	-9	+3	+5	-1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-9	-7	+2	+12	-4
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-8	-14	-2	+3	-2
Furniture wholesalers	-7	-11	+1	-1	-2
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-8	-14	-4	+5	-2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	-11	-8	-2	-1	-1
Hardware wholesalers	-10	-9	-3	-5	-1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-11	-7	-1	+3	0
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-18	-12	-7	+8	-3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-23	-15	-7	+4	-3
Construction materials distributors	-12	-9	-6	+13	-2
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-15	-16	-1	+7	+1
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	+6	-3	+16	+5	-2
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-4	-19	+9	+11	+1
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-18	-17	-4	-1	-1
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	-10	-13	+7	+17	+1
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	-2	-10	+10	+10	-2
Service establishment supply houses	-8	-10	+4	+4	-1
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-21	-13	-8	+9	-1
Iron, steel and products distributors	-25	-12	-12	+9	0
Nonferrous metals distributors	-8	-15	+3	+9	-2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-11	-11	-1	-5	-3
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-5	-8	+1	-3	-3
Waste materials dealers	-18	-12	-3	-7	-4
Jewelry wholesalers	-11	-10	-5	+2	+2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-7	-9	+2	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	-5	-9	+2	+5	0
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-2	-8	+5	+2	+1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+1	-6	+7	+4	+1
Voluntary groups*	+5	-3	+8	+6	+2
Retailer-cooperative*	+1	-15	+12	-6	-3
Nonaffiliated*	-5	-5	+2	+6	0
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-4	-9	+6	-2	+1
Confectionery wholesalers	-5	-8	+2	+8	0
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-3	-9	+2	+16	+11
Farm products (edible) distributors	-8	-12	0	+3	-4
Poultry, poultry products distributors	-6	-12	-3	+10	+3
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-9	-12	+2	-2	-8
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	-5	-12	+3	+11	-3
Beer, ale distributors	-6	-1	+1	+19	-3
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	-4	-19	+4	+8	-4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	-5	-10	+1	+10	-1
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-4	-7	+2	+9	-1
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-11	-17	-4	+16	+1
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+6	-8	+7	-2	-2
Tobacco distributors	-3	-7	+5	0	+1
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-12	-13	-2	+9	+1
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-11	-4	-2	+7	+4
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-20	-15	-5	+13	0
Piece goods converters	+4	-20	+4	+7	0
Paper, allied products wholesalers	-5	-10	+2	+3	-1
Paper wholesalers	-6	-10	+2	+3	-1
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+5	-9	+7	+6	0
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-19	-6	-1	+7	+5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-5	-8	-1	0	+2
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-6	-8	+7	+1	0
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+2	+7	+3	-18	-3
Coal wholesalers	0	-10	-8	+16	+16
Farm supplies wholesalers	-1	-13	+1	+4	0

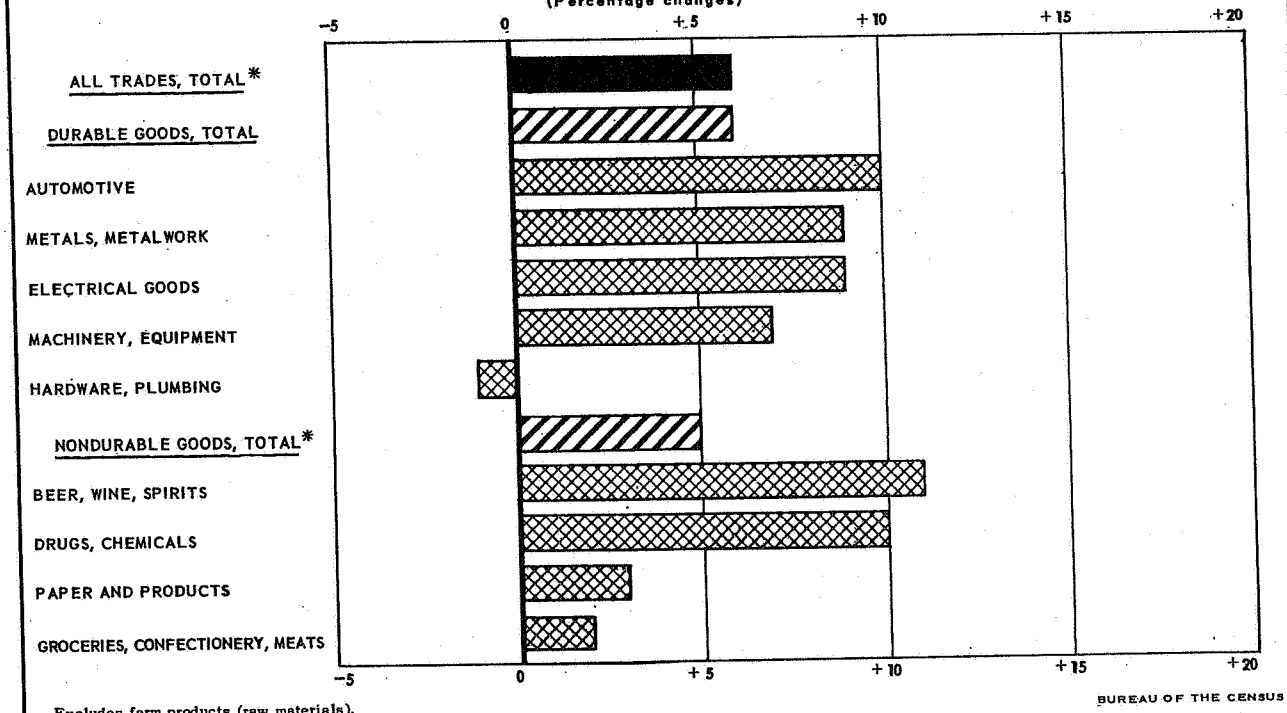
* See text, page 11.

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data See "Inventories", Page 11.

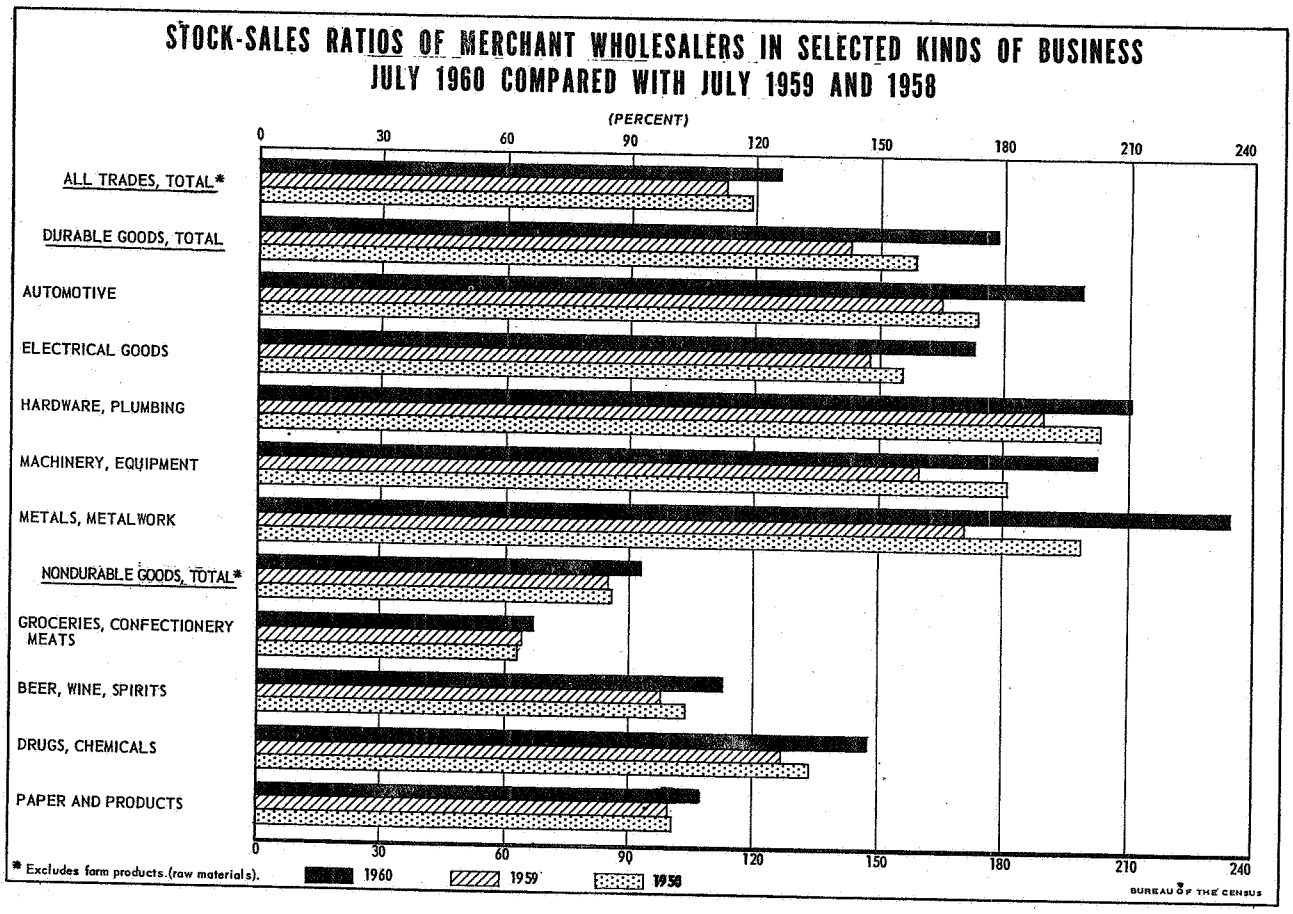
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS– SEVEN MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH SEVEN MONTHS OF 1959



INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS JULY 1960 COMPARED WITH JULY 1959



Excludes farm products (raw materials).


STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
JULY 1960 COMPARED WITH JULY 1959 AND 1958
(PERCENT)
0
30
60
90
120
150
180
210
240
ALL TRADES, TOTAL*
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
AUTOMOTIVE
ELECTRICAL GOODS
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
METALS, METALWORK
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL*
GROCERIES, CONFECTIONERY MEATS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
* Excludes farm products (raw materials).
1960
1959
1958
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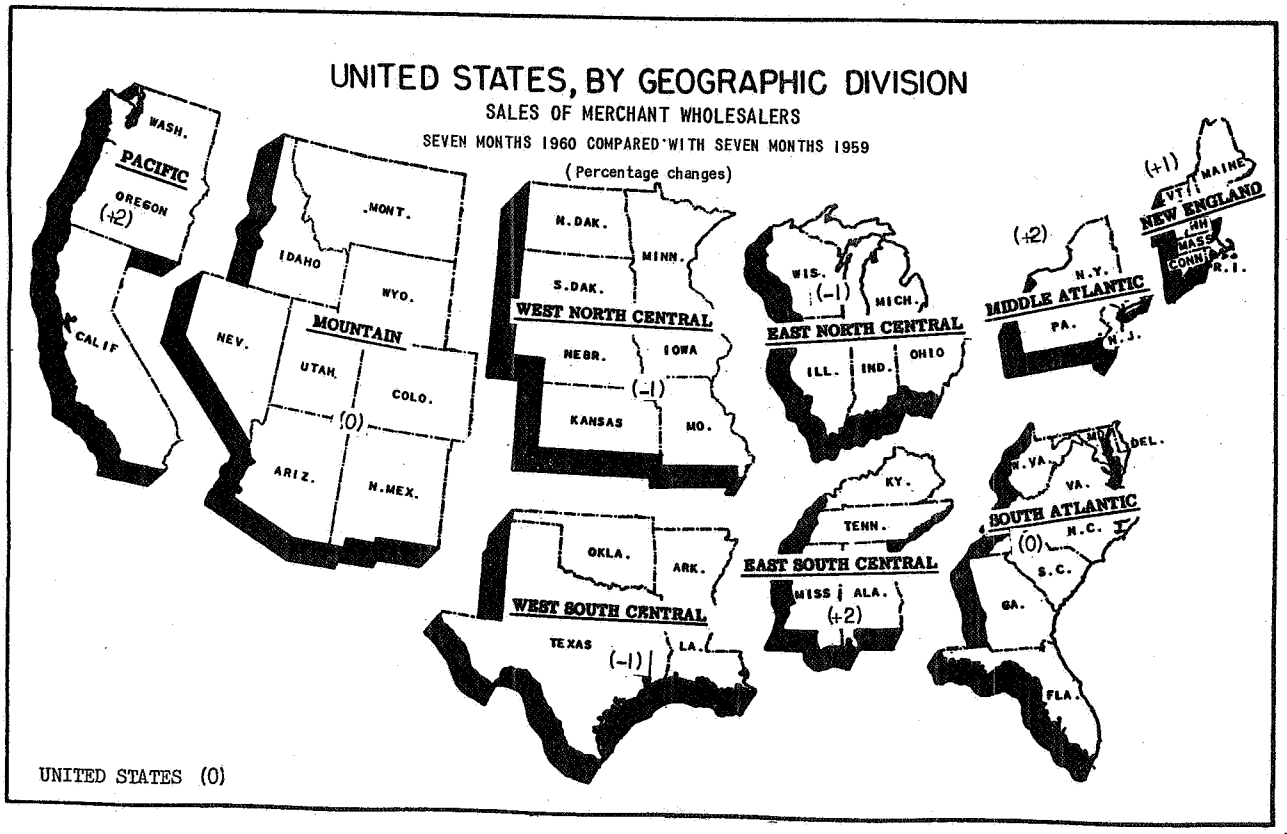

UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
SEVEN MONTHS 1960 COMPARED WITH SEVEN MONTHS 1959
(Percentage changes)
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+2)
CALIF
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH
COLO.
(0)
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(-1)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
(-1)
MICH.
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+2)
N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+1)
MAINE
VT.
NEW ENGLAND
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
MD.
DEL.
W.VA.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
N.C.
(0)
S.C.
GA.
FLA.
KY.
TENN.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MISS.
ALA.
(+2)
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
(-1)
LA.
UNITED STATES (0)

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
JULY 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	July 1960 from--		7 mos. 1960 from 7 mos. 1959	July 1960 from--	
	July 1959	June 1960		July 1959	June 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	-10	-10	0	+6	0
New England	-9	-12	+1	+2	-1
Middle Atlantic	-10	-15	+2	+2	-1
East North Central	-9	-8	-1	+8	0
West North Central	-10	-8	-1	+4	-1
South Atlantic	-6	-6	0	+3	-1
East South Central	-6	-11	+2	+7	+3
West South Central	-9	-4	-1	+1	-1
Mountain	-8	-5	0	+4	+1
Pacific	-7	-9	+2	+3	-2
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+3	-8	+10	+8	0
New England	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	-4	-5	+4	(X)	0
East North Central	+2	-10	+7	+11	+1
West North Central	+2	-7	0	+10	-1
South Atlantic	-4	-6	+1	+6	-1
East South Central	-11	-5	+2	+6	-2
West South Central	-10	-3	-4	+2	0
Mountain	(X)	(X)	-7	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-4	-4	+5	+4	-2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-4	-9	+3	+5	-1
New England	+8	-1	+7	-1	+5
Middle Atlantic	-10	-15	+3	-2	-4
East North Central	-11	-12	+3	+6	+1
West North Central	-16	-7	-11	-8	-2
South Atlantic	-12	-15	-1	+8	-1
East South Central	+6	+11	+1	+14	-3
West South Central	+5	+1	-4	-1	-4
Mountain	-13	-6	+1	-3	+1
Pacific	-22	-12	-6	+11	+3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-9	-7	+2	+12	-4
New England	-15	-23	+1	+2	-3
Middle Atlantic	-12	-11	+3	0	-5
East North Central	-22	-8	-1	+9	-5
West North Central	-15	-5	-7	+2	0
South Atlantic	-21	+6	-4	+3	-5
East South Central	+9	(X)	+12	-5	-4
West South Central	+10	+7	-5	-11	-4
Pacific	-19	-1	-3	+15	-4
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-8	-14	-2	+3	-2
New England	+5	-8	+9	+10	+4
Middle Atlantic	-5	-19	+3	+14	-3
East North Central	-6	-16	+2	-4	-1
West North Central	-11	-13	-3	+7	+1
South Atlantic	+8	+4	+7	+2	-6
West South Central	-19	-6	-11	(X)	-6
Pacific	-12	-6	0	+3	+2
Hardware wholesalers	-10	-9	-3	-5	-1
New England	-9	-17	+3	-1	0
Middle Atlantic	-10	-11	-2	+6	-2
East North Central	-8	-11	-1	-6	-4
West North Central	-10	-8	-4	+2	0
South Atlantic	-14	-8	-5	+5	0
East South Central	-7	0	-5	-1	0
West South Central	-12	-10	-6	+2	-4
Mountain	-13	-3	-8	-16	-2
Pacific	-19	-10	-9	-4	-2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-11	-7	-1	+3	0
New England	-4	-7	0	(X)	+1
Middle Atlantic	-11	-10	-1	+1	-1
East North Central	-18	-4	-4	0	-2
West North Central	-9	0	-7	-4	+6
South Atlantic	-14	-4	-5	-2	-2
West South Central	+10	-6	-6	+5	-2
Pacific	-20	-9	-1	+1	-1
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-18	-12	-7	+8	-3
New England	+2	-3	+1	-9	-6
Middle Atlantic	-19	-16	-7	+11	-3
East North Central	-16	-7	-10	+10	-1
West North Central	-23	-7	-14	+16	-5
South Atlantic	-28	-20	-8	-17	-8
West South Central	(X)	-8	-14	-12	-3
Pacific	-27	-19	-8	+4	-6

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

July 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	July 1960 from--		7 mos. 1960 from 7 mos. 1959	July 1960 from--	
	July 1959	June 1960		July 1959	June 1960
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-18	-17	-4	-1	-1
Middle Atlantic	-2	-21	+7	+4	-5
East North Central	-11	-13	+4	0	-1
West North Central	(X)	-17	-7	(X)	-3
South Atlantic	(X)	-19	+1	+1	0
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-29	-10	-18	-4	-3
Mountain	-39	(X)	-17	-3	-2
Pacific	-20	-9	-5	+7	+1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+1	-6	+7	+4	+1
New England	+14	-11	+7	-5	-8
Middle Atlantic	-6	-9	+9	+3	+1
East North Central	+3	-3	+8	+5	0
West North Central	+7	-2	+8	+3	-2
South Atlantic	0	-7	+5	+4	+1
East South Central	-4	-7	+4	+14	+4
West South Central	+5	-2	+7	-1	+3
Mountain	-1	-3	+8	+5	+3
Pacific	+7	-13	+6	+7	-1
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-4	-9	+6	-2	+1
Middle Atlantic	-10	-12	+5	-10	+1
East North Central	-1	-6	0	0	+8
South Atlantic	-9	-7	+4	(X)	0
West South Central	+11	-6	+11	+1	-5
Pacific	+10	-7	+10	(X)	-4
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-9	-12	+2	-2	-8
New England	-3	-3	+2	(X)	-2
Middle Atlantic	-17	-18	+4	-14	-1
East North Central	-5	-13	+2	(X)	-9
West North Central	+9	(X)	+6	-5	-13
South Atlantic	0	(X)	+8	-4	-8
West South Central	-9	-14	-3	(X)	-14
Pacific	-2	0	+4	-11	-9
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-4	-7	+2	+9	-1
New England	+2	-4	+6	+7	0
Middle Atlantic	-3	-8	+1	+1	-4
East North Central	+1	-7	+4	+6	-1
West North Central	-9	-10	-2	+11	-1
South Atlantic	-5	-6	+4	+7	-1
East South Central	-4	-9	+6	+9	-3
West South Central	-5	-2	+5	+3	-2
Mountain	-6	-7	+5	+13	+5
Pacific	-8	-8	+4	+4	+3
Tobacco distributors	-3	-7	+5	0	+1
New England	0	-6	+4	+11	-2
Middle Atlantic	0	-5	+6	-2	0
East North Central	-8	-6	+3	+5	+5
West North Central	+8	+1	+5	-6	-3
South Atlantic	-8	-14	+3	+6	+5
East South Central	-5	-10	+8	+20	+4
West South Central	-7	-8	+7	+7	+1
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-12	-13	-2	+9	+1
New England	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	-12	-15	+1	+5	+1
East North Central	0	-14	+5	+9	+11
West North Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+4	+10	+10	+5	-2
Pacific	-11	(X)	+9	+13	+5

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

[1] Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants."

Note: Sales and inventory trends by geographic division shown in table 5 may be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes for the United States. The trends by geographic division pertain only to firms that were in business and reported data in the months for which comparisons are shown, and do not necessarily represent trends of all firms because of the omission of firms that started new businesses or went out of business during the months compared. The percentage changes by geographic division, therefore, are not as reliable as the percentage changes for the United States which are based on "composite" estimates and represent all firms in the sample. (See Text, page 11.)

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 14 through 16.

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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

The procedure to develop final "composite" estimates was instituted effective with the data for January 1960. Dollar volume estimates shown prior to January 1960 were obtained in the same manner as the preliminary "composite" estimates.

Percentage changes.--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (2) percentage 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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1960. The published estimate is $4,798 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $4,798 million by .016, we obtain $77 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $4,721 and $4,875 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,644 to $4,952 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1960 to June 1960 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $4,798 million by $4,614 million, is 1.04 (it can also be expressed as a 4% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.04 by .009, we obtain .009 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 1.03 to 1.05 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 3% and 5% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.02 to 1.06.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-	-	0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-5	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958--is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semipreecious 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, Director

AUGUST 1960

BW-60-8

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
OCTOBER 10, 1960[1]

Sales

August 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $11.2 billion, were 11 percent ahead of July 1960 and were 5 percent above August sales a year ago. These gains were partly due to the larger number of trading days in August 1960 as compared with July 1960 and August 1959. Cumulative sales for the first 8 months of 1960, totaling $84.4 billion, were up slightly (1%) over the comparable period of 1959.

The durable goods trades, with sales totaling $4.7 billion in August, were 11 percent above July but remained at about the same level as a year earlier. The nondurable goods trades, with August sales of $6.5 billion, were 12 percent higher than July and 10 percent above August a year ago. For the eight month period, durable goods trades indicated a small decline (2%) from eight months 1959 while the nondurable goods trades showed a 3 percent gain during the same period.

Most trades indicated August sales above July as well as a year ago. Only two trades--air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment distributors and fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers, each with sales off 10 percent, reported declines from the previous month. Substantial increases were noted by clothing furnishings wholesalers (48%), jewelry wholesalers (40%) and piece goods converters (38%). Compared with year-ago sales, the largest gains were registered by piece goods converters (23%) retailer-cooperative grocery wholesalers (22%), and nonferrous metals distributors (20%); the sharpest decline reported by lumber, millwork wholesalers (13%).

All geographic divisions indicated August 1960 sales above July and, with one exception--the West South Central Division (-1%)--also reported gains over year ago. Increases over previous month sales ranged from 5 percent in the East South Central and West South Central Divisions to 15 percent in the Middle Atlantic Division. The largest gain (10%) over year-ago sales was registered in the New England Division.

Inventories

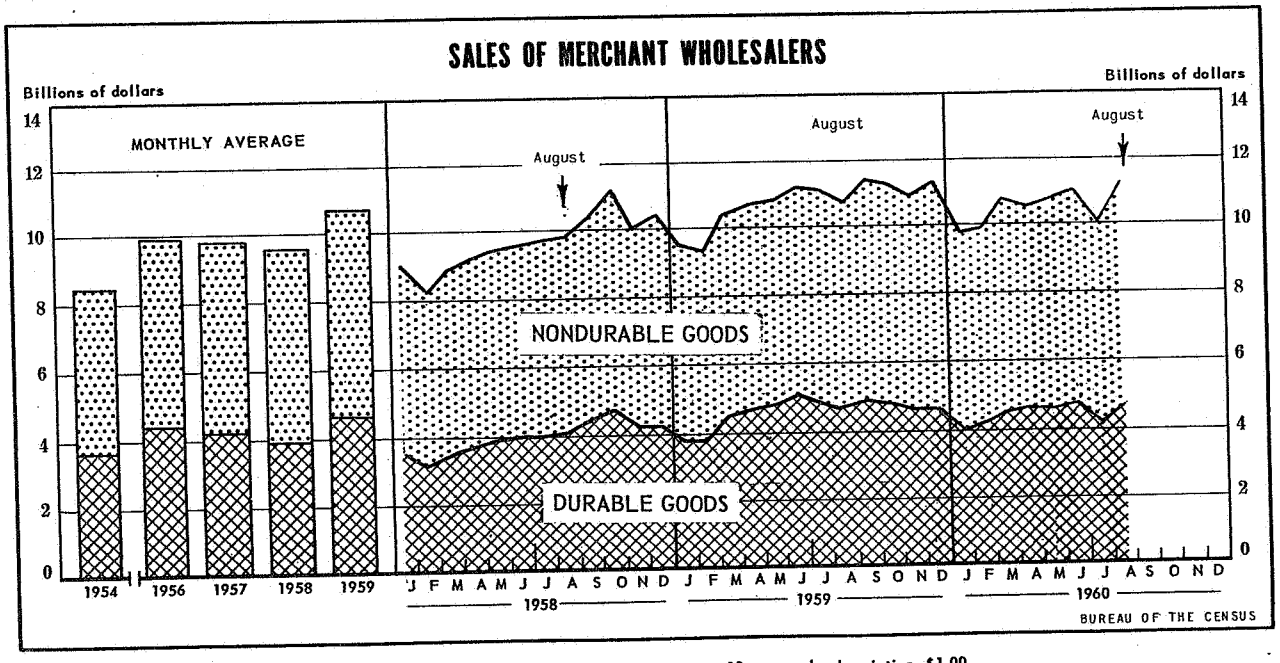
Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw materials) merchants, estimated at $12.2 billion on August 31, were off slightly (1%) from their July 31 level, but were 6 percent higher than a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined slightly (1%) from the July level, but nondurable goods stocks were unchanged. Both trade groups reported larger inventories than a year ago--durable goods, up 7 percent, and nondurable goods, up 4 percent, over August 1959 stocks.

Most trades indicated small changes from previous month inventories and somewhat larger changes, mostly upward, over year-ago levels. Iron, steel and products distributors reported inventories down 5 percent since July, but up 16 percent over last August.

The August 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 117 percent, down 15 points from July but 1 point above the August 1959 ratio. The August 1960 stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 158 percent compared with the nondurable goods ratio of 84 percent.

General

The data in this report are based on a probability sample representative of all merchant wholesalers in the country. A description of the sample and approximate measures of the reliability of the data are included on pages 11-13.



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

[1]An advance release of August 1960 data was issued on September 30, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960								1959					Total 8 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July[1]	Aug.[2]	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,750	11,142	10,072	11,223	10,653	11,366	11,326	10,890	11,312	84,380	83,622
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	9,986	10,404	9,337	10,402	9,910	10,502	10,357	9,952	10,304	78,270	77,562
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,614	4,798	4,238	4,705	4,707	4,919	4,844	4,594	4,632	35,692	36,370
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	532	573	510	562	520	517	536	515	498	4,255	3,994
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	443	469	427	476	405	428	439	429	379	3,439	3,094
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	654	711	654	702	695	779	769	750	787	5,322	5,233
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	349	321	343	336	375	367	353	365	2,574	2,507
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	326	362	333	359	359	404	403	397	421	2,748	2,726
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	215	226	189	232	225	237	248	234	239	1,694	1,727
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	66	72	60	74	72	74	76	71	72	532	530
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	149	154	129	157	153	163	172	163	167	1,162	1,198
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	460	466	430	484	475	511	517	460	424	3,469	3,519
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	198	201	182	206	201	219	216	195	190	1,526	1,566
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	262	266	248	278	274	292	301	265	234	1,945	1,953
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	728	779	692	750	801	797	754	655	612	5,285	5,650
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	385	420	361	385	444	434	399	351	333	2,906	3,165
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	343	359	331	365	357	363	355	304	279	2,377	2,487
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,283	1,288	1,096	1,196	1,200	1,240	1,201	1,138	1,165	9,537	9,584
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	533	450	492	517	533	520	501	545	4,101	4,258
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	112	119	108	121	127	129	118	113	114	896	845
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	151	147	131	145	127	144	153	132	140	1,149	1,094
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	400	424	368	431	419	474	430	426	455	3,315	3,5
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	284	300	263	303	312	340	305	292	302	2,367	2,6
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	115	124	105	128	107	134	125	134	152	948	900
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	276	271	243	273	260	271	289	309	349	2,307	2,310
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	153	149	139	154	129	139	159	179	228	1,327	1,291
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	123	121	104	119	131	132	130	129	121	979	1,022
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,136	6,344	5,834	6,517	5,946	6,447	6,482	6,296	6,680	48,686	47,253
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,372	5,606	5,099	5,696	5,203	5,583	5,513	5,358	5,672	42,576	41,193
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,828	1,941	1,787	1,930	1,709	1,871	1,811	1,737	1,828	14,699	13,828
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	802	852	798	848	739	803	791	740	768	6,458	5,995
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	614	646	590	637	589	640	609	612	646	5,015	4,719
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	61	56	60	55	59	63	64	71	467	453
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	354	382	344	386	325	370	348	322	344	2,770	2,660
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	410	445	399	385	362	393	383	391	432	3,180	3,139
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	138	123	139	121	143	136	155	160	1,026	1,034
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	280	307	275	247	241	249	247	235	272	2,154	2,104
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	614	650	583	628	559	569	584	595	743	4,525	4,333
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	247	268	270	281	261	236	210	188	223	1,830	1,785
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	367	382	313	347	298	333	373	407	520	2,695	2,547
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	391	404	360	422	380	419	410	374	376	3,133	3,070
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	236	245	224	261	235	265	263	243	239	1,953	1,890
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	120	120	101	124	111	120	114	105	113	917	935
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	35	38	35	37	34	35	32	27	25	261	244
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	343	371	344	366	332	343	351	32	380	2,685	2,539
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers[3]	491	512	572	537	501	527	466	632	594	623	621	566	501	4,238	4,310
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	185	176	174	258	240	240	231	211	167	1,584	1,584
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)[3]	193	192	210	196	194	215	187	231	239	250	253	231	214	1,618	1,711
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	346	316	373	343	366	373	350	358	2,760	2,656
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	299	301	275	322	300	323	322	299	305	2,408	2,332
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	68	61	67	65	73	76	78	86	553	593
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	127	106	121	115	125	107	107	116	1,130	1,118

[1] Final estimate

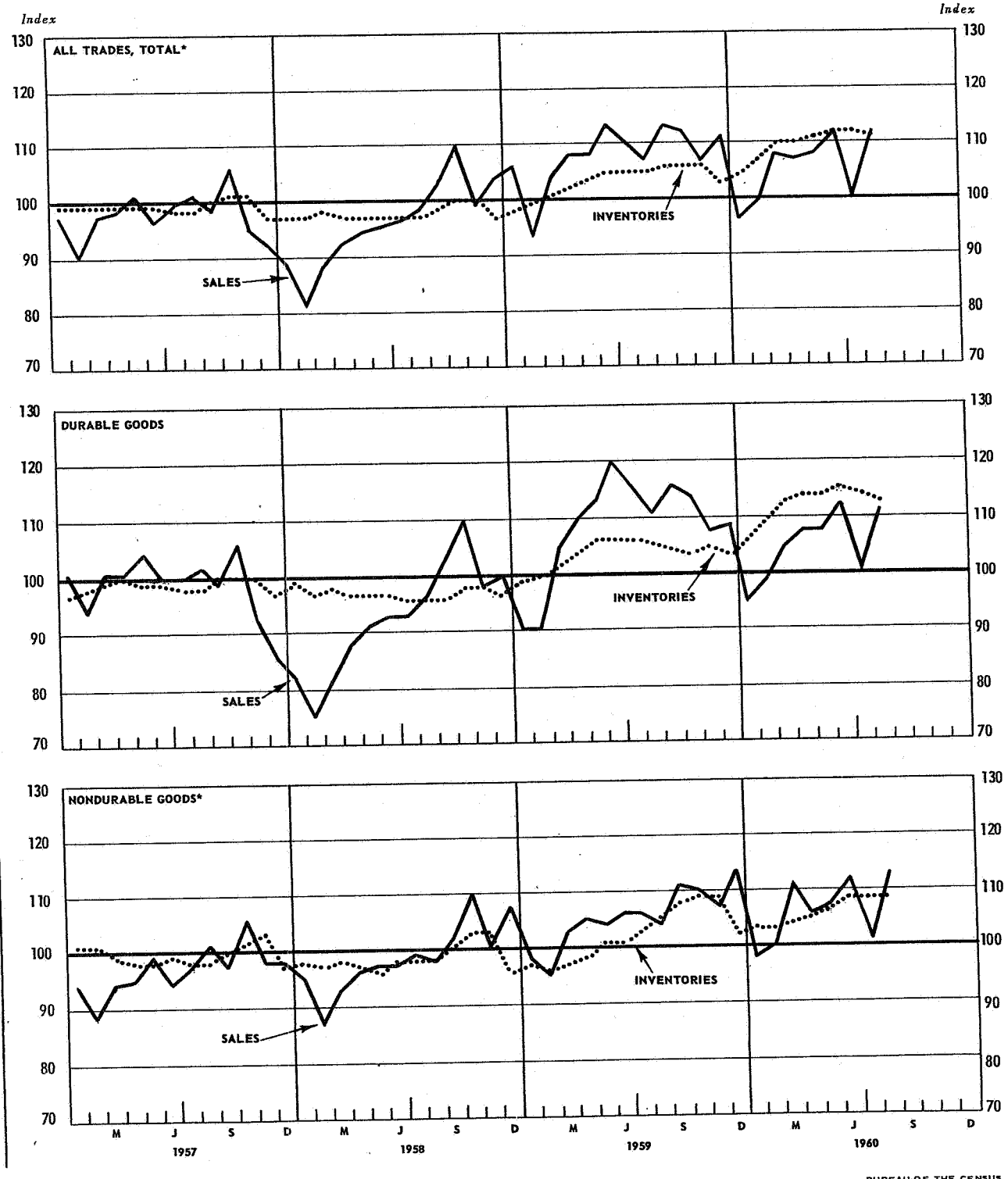
[2] Preliminary estimate See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

[3] The 1959 and 1960 data for these trades are revised.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
1957, 1958, 1959 AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960								1959				
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July[1]	Aug.[2]	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,172	12,267	12,300	12,203	11,535	11,625	11,651	11,666	11,298
Selected Kinds of Business													
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,013	1,032	1,025	1,015	907	935	921	938	929
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	874	877	873	868	795	822	807	822	804
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,166	1,162	1,119	1,106	1,011	1,024	1,080	1,117	1,044
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	512	496	485	480	454	467	477	492	456
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	600	627	626	625	654	666	634	625	557	557	603	624	587
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	929	912	925	917	909	886	861	854	852
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	440	432	434	433	447	427	411	410	412
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	489	480	489	484	462	459	450	444	440
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,181	2,192	2,234	2,198	2,074	2,062	2,075	2,061	2,096
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	871	850	856	835	858	841	831	809	816
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	852	869	869	830	735	650	585	597	649
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	708	726	731	698	604	521	460	460	515
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,191	1,181	1,192	1,204	1,198	1,220	1,235	1,233	1,185
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	676	657	671	664	651	682	674	660	642
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	631	672	654	660	635	693	732	725	591
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	496	523	510	522	509	565	604	609	494
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	526	539	540	543	507	527	530	520	499
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	379	389	385	389	366	387	386	380	355
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	338	340	341	334	327	330	336	328	326
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	284	285	286	279	275	275	281	274	274

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960								1959				
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July[1]	Aug.[2]	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	118	132	117	116	111	112	117	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	157	178	158	148	140	142	150	148
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	190	180	201	181	174	181	172	182	187
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	197	187	204	182	196	192	184	192	212
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	178	163	171	158	145	131	140	149	133
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	142	151	140	135	125	130	139	125
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	201	184	190	174	155	138	150	157	139
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	202	196	215	189	191	173	167	186	201
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	215	238	210	222	195	190	210	217
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	180	197	174	169	157	150	168	188
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	170	170	204	184	161	166	173	181	180
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	161	159	190	169	166	158	160	161	150
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	213	205	236	193	175	137	136	140	143
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	249	242	278	230	194	153	151	158	171
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	84	93	84	88	84	87	89	78
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	61	67	62	70	65	68	71	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	84	77	84	78	88	85	85	89	84
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	103	103	112	105	114	122	125	122	80
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	135	137	163	150	171	170	162	150	95
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	133	150	128	133	126	129	139	139
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	161	159	172	149	156	146	147	156	149
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	98	108	90	109	90	90	94	91
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	95	95	104	87	92	85	87	92	90

[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate.

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

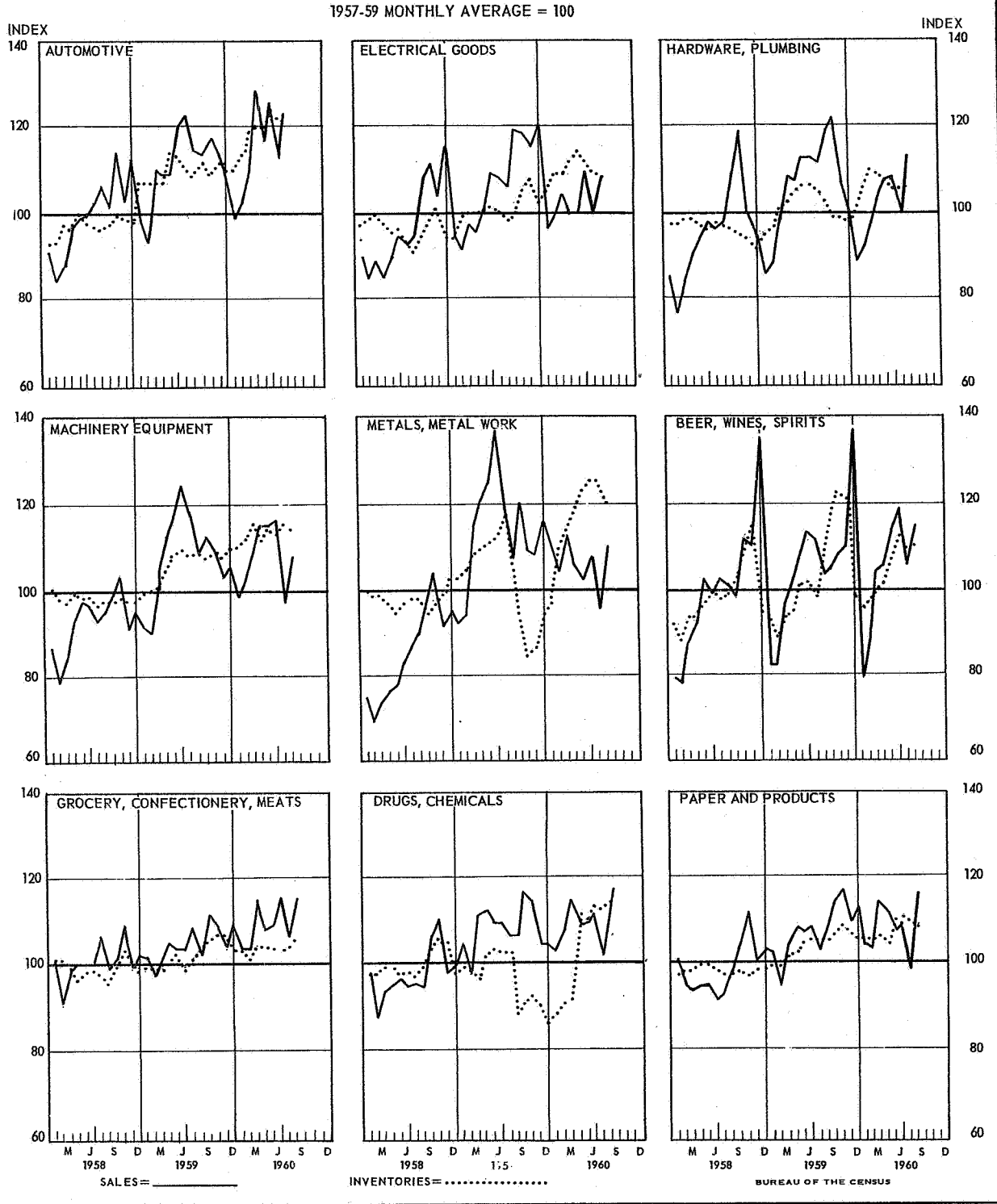
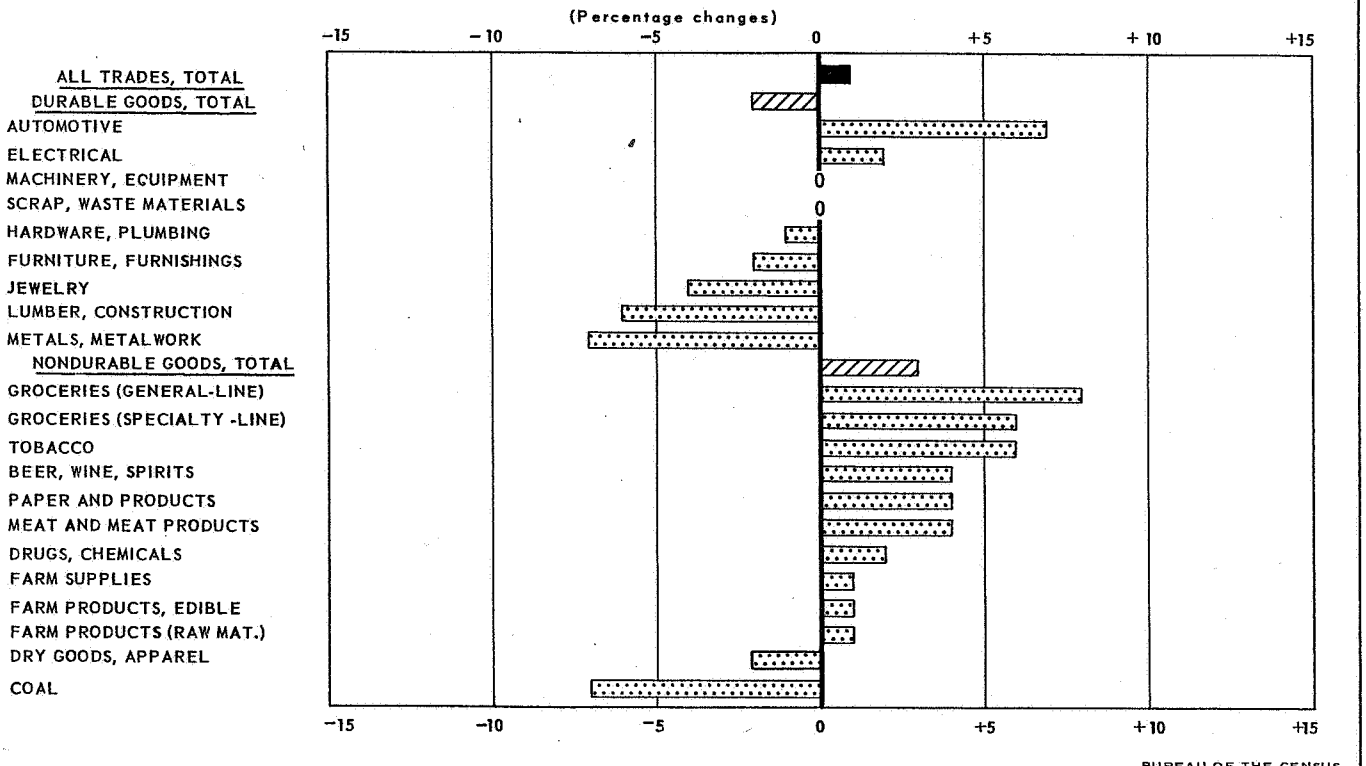


Table 4. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: AUGUST 1960

Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	August 1960 from--		8 mos. 1960 from 8 mos. 1959	August 1960 from--	
	August 1959	July 1960		August 1959	July 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	+5	+11	+1	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	+5	+11	+1	+6	-1
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	0	+11	-2	+7	-1
Automotive wholesalers	+8	+10	+7	+12	-1
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+18	+11	+11	+9	-1
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	+1	+7	+2	+9	-1
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+2	+7	+3	+6	-1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	0	+8	+1	+12	-1
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+3	+23	-2	+4	+3
Furniture wholesalers	+3	+23	0	-3	0
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	+3	+22	-3	+6	+3
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	+2	+13	-1	+1	-1
Hardware wholesalers	+2	+13	-3	-3	0
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+1	+12	0	+5	-1
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-6	+8	-6	+13	-2
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-13	+7	-8	+12	-3
Construction materials distributors	+2	+10	-4	+14	-1
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	0	+9	0	+6	-2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	+7	-10	+14	+9	-1
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+12	+13	+10	+10	+1
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-5	+9	-4	-3	-2
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	-5	+12	+6	+29	+1
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+7	+4	+10	+16	0
Service establishment supply houses	+14	+11	+5	+5	0
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	+3	+17	-7	+13	-4
Iron, steel and products distributors	-3	+15	-11	+16	-5
Nonferrous metals distributors	+20	+22	+5	+1	-4
Scrap, waste materials dealers	+5	+12	0	-4	+1
Iron, steel scrap dealers	+19	+11	+3	-3	+1
Waste materials dealers	-9	+14	-4	-5	+1
Jewelry wholesalers	+3	+40	-4	-1	+4
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+10	+12	+3	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	+9	+12	+3	+4	0
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+13	+8	+6	+1	+1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+15	+6	+8	+2	-1
Voluntary groups*	+11	+2	+8	+1	-1
Retailer-cooperative*	+22	+9	+14	+12	-2
Nonaffiliated*	+13	+8	+4	+5	+1
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+8	+8	+6	-3	+5
Confectionery wholesalers	+9	+7	+3	+3	0
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+19	+12	+4	+9	-4
Farm products (edible) distributors	+6	-4	+1	+4	-1
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+15	+13	-1	+11	0
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+2	-10	+2	0	0
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+12	+8	+4	+4	+1
Beer, ale distributors	+8	+4	+3	+10	-4
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+16	+11	+6	+3	+2
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+11	+17	+2	+7	+1
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+11	+17	+3	+6	+1
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+11	+23	-2	+14	-2
Paint, varnish wholesalers	+9	+6	+7	-5	0
Tobacco distributors	+10	+6	+6	-3	-3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+6	+36	r-2	+9	-2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	+8	+48	0	+8	-2
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-3	+24	-5	+13	0
Piece goods converters	+23	+38	+6	+3	-4
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+9	+18	+4	+2	-2
Paper wholesalers	+7	+17	+3	+1	-2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+13	+24	+9	+4	0
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	+10	+12	+1	(X)	(X)
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	+3	+14	0	+3	+2
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	+3	+11	+6	-4	-4
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+6	+11	+4	-3	-2
Coal wholesalers	+3	+10	-7	+19	+14
Farm supplies wholesalers	+5	+14	+1	+2	+4

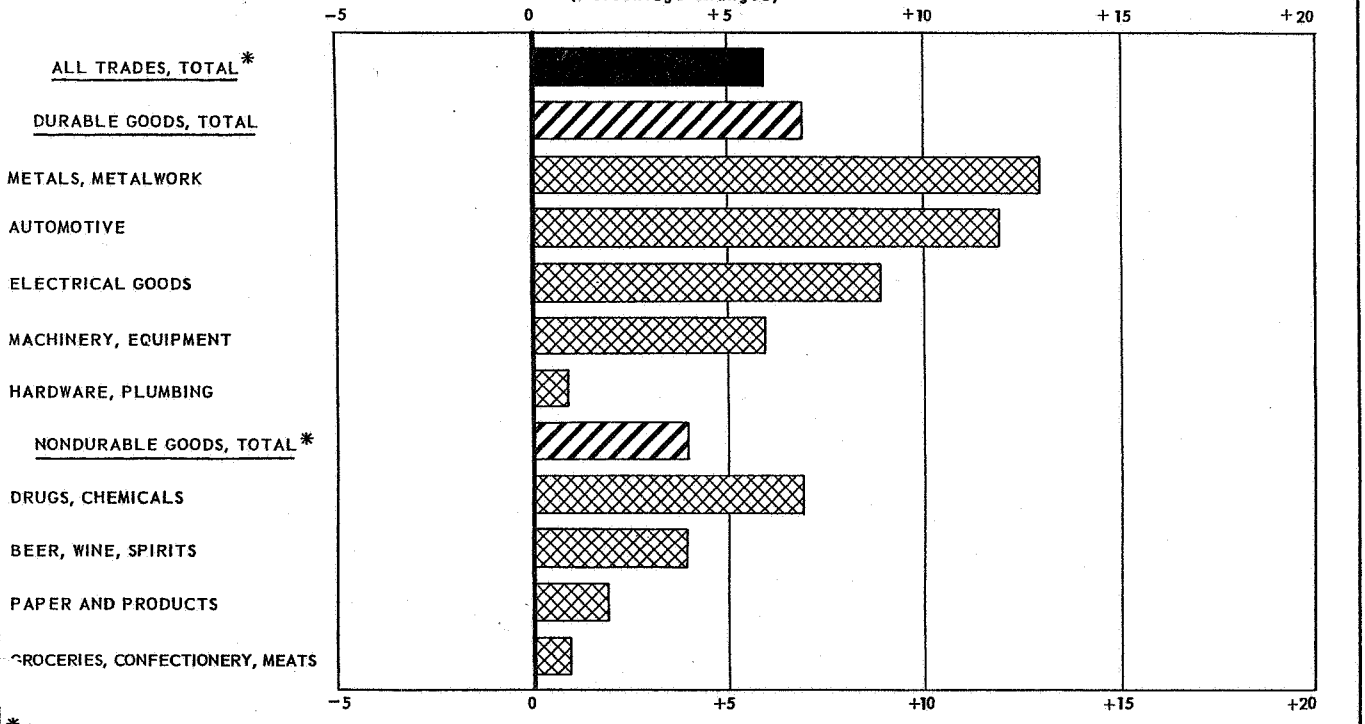
r Revised since Advance Release September 30, 1960.
* See text, page 11.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data . See "Inventories," page 11.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS— EIGHT MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH EIGHT MONTHS OF 1959



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

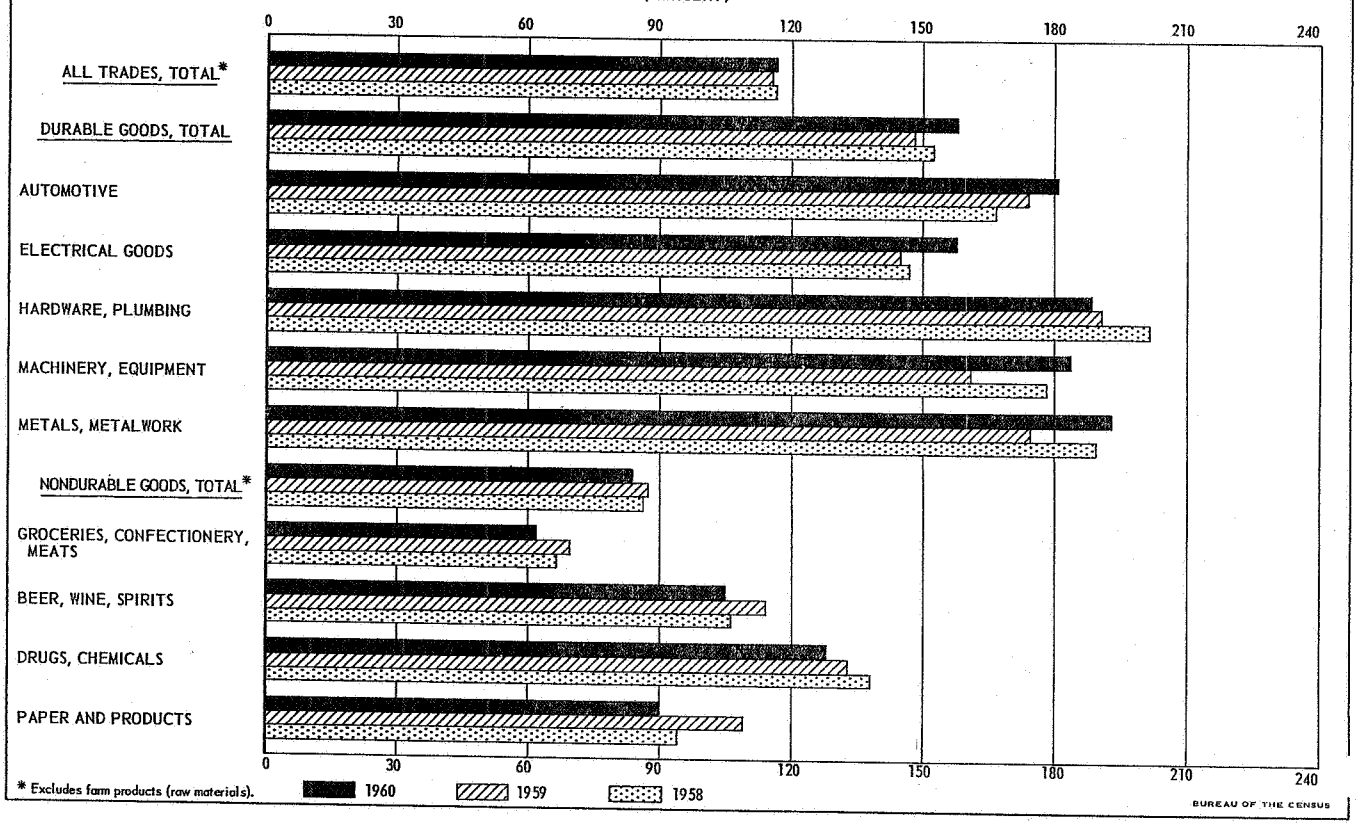
INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS AUGUST 1960 COMPARED WITH AUGUST 1959



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS AUGUST 1960 COMPARED WITH AUGUST 1959 AND 1958



UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
EIGHT MONTHS 1960 COMPARED WITH EIGHT MONTHS 1959
(Percentage changes)



UNITED STATES (+1)

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
AUGUST 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales*			Inventory end-of-month (at cost)	
	August 1960 from--		8 mos 1960 from 8 mos 1959	August 1960 from--	
	August 1959	July 1960		August 1959	July 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	+5	+11	+1	+6	-1
New England	+10	+11	+3	+7	-3
Middle Atlantic	+6	+15	+2	+4	0
East North Central	+6	+12	0	+8	0
West North Central	+7	+11	0	+1	-1
South Atlantic	+5	+6	+1	+11	0
East South Central	+2	+5	+2	+5	-3
West South Central	-1	+5	-1	+2	-2
Mountain	+1	+7	0	+1	+1
Pacific	+4	+11	+2	+4	-1
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+18	+11	+11	+9	-1
New England	+10	+16	+8	(X)	+2
Middle Atlantic	+11	+17	+4	-1	-2
East North Central	+9	+9	+7	+16	-2
West North Central	+9	+16	+1	+7	-4
South Atlantic	+17	+9	+3	+6	0
East South Central	+5	+6	+2	+7	0
West South Central	0	+4	-3	+4	-4
Mountain	+6	+5	-6	+8	-3
Pacific	+5	+7	+5	-2	+2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	+2	+7	+3	+6	-1
New England	+6	+11	+7	+3	-3
Middle Atlantic	+14	+16	+4	+5	0
East North Central	+4	+6	+3	+1	+2
West North Central	-1	+6	-10	0	0
South Atlantic	-6	+9	-2	+3	-3
East South Central	(X)	0	-2	+15	-3
West South Central	-3	+2	-4	-6	-4
Mountain	+3	+10	+1	-2	+1
Pacific	-10	+4	-7	+8	-2
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	0	+8	+1	+12	-1
New England	+5	+19	+2	(X)	+1
Middle Atlantic	-14	+5	+1	+21	+4
East North Central	-9	+22	-3	+22	-1
West North Central	-8	+1	-7	(X)	-5
South Atlantic	0	+7	-3	+17	0
East South Central	-6	-5	+8	(X)	0
West South Central	-9	-14	-5	0	-7
Mountain	-7	+14	-2	+2	-2
Pacific					
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	+3	+23	-2	+4	+3
New England	-1	+10	+7	+1	+3
Middle Atlantic	-1	+27	+3	+25	+4
East North Central	+6	+18	+2	+1	+1
West North Central	-6	+13	-2	-5	0
South Atlantic	-4	+15	+5	+4	+10
East South Central	-8	+24	-10	-7	+3
West South Central	+13	+19	+1	-5	-5
Pacific					
Hardware wholesalers	+2	+13	-3	-3	0
New England	(X)	+12	+5	-2	+2
Middle Atlantic	+5	+13	-1	0	+1
East North Central	+4	+22	0	-7	-2
West North Central	-2	+11	-4	-2	-1
South Atlantic	-2	+9	-4	+5	+3
East South Central	-4	+5	-5	-1	0
West South Central	+1	+14	-5	+3	-1
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-3	+18	-8	-2	-1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+1	+12	0	+5	-1
New England	-3	+3	-0	+7	-3
Middle Atlantic	-1	+9	-1	+5	-1
East North Central	+1	+19	-3	+6	-2
West North Central	-3	+9	-6	+2	-1
South Atlantic	+2	+8	-4	+13	-2
East South Central	(X)	-8	-10	-9	-1
West South Central	+2	+11	-1	-5	+3
Mountain					
Pacific					
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-6	+8	-6	+13	-2
New England	+6	+16	+2	(X)	-6
Middle Atlantic	-13	+4	-8	+8	-3
East North Central	-7	+9	-10	+8	-1
West North Central	+4	+15	-12	+9	+1
South Atlantic	+9	+15	-5	+4	-3
East South Central	-8	+2	-12	+5	-1
West South Central	-15	+5	-9	+7	-3
Pacific					

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued
AUGUST 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales*			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	August 1960 from--		8 mos. 1960 from 8 mos. 1959	August 1960 from--	
	August 1959	July 1960		August 1959	July 1960
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-5	+9	-4	-3	-2
Middle Atlantic	+15	+11	+8	+4	0
East North Central	-11	+10	+2	-11	-4
West North Central	(X)	+14	-10	-11	-2
South Atlantic	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
East South Central	+1	+2	+2	+6	-3
West South Central	-13	+6	-16	-7	-4
Mountain	+1	+13	-15	+2	+2
Pacific	-7	-4	-5	+2	-1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+15	+6	+8	+2	-1
New England	+11	-2	+7	+5	-9
Middle Atlantic	+13	+2	+9	-8	-6
East North Central	+13	+5	+9	+3	-1
West North Central	+15	+8	+9	+12	+5
South Atlantic	+14	+2	+7	+8	+5
East South Central	+7	+3	+4	+6	-3
West South Central	+9	+9	+7	+5	0
Mountain	+5	+8	+9	+12	+1
Pacific	+24	+15	+9	+5	-2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+8	+8	+6	-3	+5
Middle Atlantic	+8	+18	+5	-11	+4
East North Central	+10	+1	+2	-4	+5
South Atlantic	+10	-13	+5	(X)	-13
West South Central	-1	+5	+9	0	+1
Pacific	+8	+5	+10	(X)	+1
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	+2	-10	+2	0	0
New England	-5	-20	+1	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+3	-6	+4	-1	-10
East North Central	+8	-21	+2	(X)	-6
West North Central	+5	-13	+6	-3	+4
South Atlantic	-4	0	+7	(X)	+7
West South Central	-8	+7	-4	-6	+3
Pacific	+6	-4	+4	-11	+5
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+11	+17	+3	+6	+1
New England	+6	+8	+6	0	+2
Middle Atlantic	+12	+25	+3	+7	+3
East North Central	+6	+11	+4	+8	+4
West North Central	+10	+21	+1	+17	+5
South Atlantic	+18	+16	+4	+9	-1
East South Central	+8	+12	+6	+3	+1
West South Central	+14	+17	+7	+7	0
Mountain	+2	+1	+4	-2	-9
Pacific	+3	+12	+4	+3	0
Tobacco distributors	+10	+6	+6	-3	-3
New England	+17	+5	+6	0	0
Middle Atlantic	+7	+6	+6	+2	-2
East North Central	+16	+7	+5	+6	+2
West North Central	(X)	0	+5	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	+5	+5	+4	-1	+2
East South Central	+13	+8	+9	+10	+4
West South Central	-6	-2	+6	+20	+4
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	+6	+36	-2	+9	-2
New England	+5	+1	-3	-6	-9
Middle Atlantic	+2	+30	+1	+15	-2
East North Central	+6	+35	+5	+8	-3
West North Central	+14	+28	-3	-3	-10
South Atlantic	+7	+29	+9	+10	+4
Pacific	+1	+39	+7	-3	+2

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

[1] Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants."

Note: Sales and inventory trends by geographic division shown in table 5 may be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes for the United States. The trends by geographic division pertain only to firms that were in business and reported data in the months for which comparisons are shown, and do not necessarily represent trends of all firms because of the omission of firms that started new businesses or went out of business during the months compared. The percentage changes by geographic division, therefore, are not as reliable as the percentage changes for the United States which are based on "composite" estimates and represent all firms in the sample. (See Text. page 11.)

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 14 through 16.

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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

The procedure to develop final "composite" estimates was instituted effective with the data for January 1960. Dollar volume estimates shown prior to January 1960 were obtained in the same manner as the preliminary "composite" estimates.

Percentage changes--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (2) percentage 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 chance. 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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1960. The published estimate is $4,798 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $4,798 million by .016, we obtain $77 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $4,721 and $4,875 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,644 to $4,952 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1960 to June 1960 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $4,798 million by $4,614 million, is 1.04 (it can also be expressed as a 4% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.04 by .009, we obtain .009 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 1.03 to 1.05 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 3% and 5% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.02 to 1.06.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-		0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-5	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958--is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 no 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

SEPTEMBER 1960

BW-60-9

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
NOVEMBER 7, 1960[1]

Nine-Month Sales

Nine-month 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $95.5, were up slightly (1%) over the comparable period of 1959. Durable goods trades with sales totaling $40.3 billion, showed a small decline (2%) during the nine-month period, but the nondurable goods trades, with sales of $55.2 billion, indicated a 3 percent gain during the same period.

Among the durable goods trades, sales trends were mixed with 9 trades showing declines, 8 trades reporting increases and 2 showing no change from 9 months 1959. However, among the nondurable goods trades, only 3 trades--coal, dry goods and clothing, furnishings, footwear--reported declines.

Most geographic divisions showed little or no change from 9 months 1959 sales. The principal change--an increase of 2 percent--was reported for the New England, East South Central and Pacific Divisions.

September Sales

September 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $11.1 billion, were down 2 percent from August and also 2 percent below September sales a year ago. The durable goods trades, with sales totaling $4.6 billion in September, were 2 percent below August and also down 6 percent from a year ago. The nondurable goods trades, with September sales of $6.5 billion, were down slightly (1%) from August but were 1 percent above September 1959 sales.

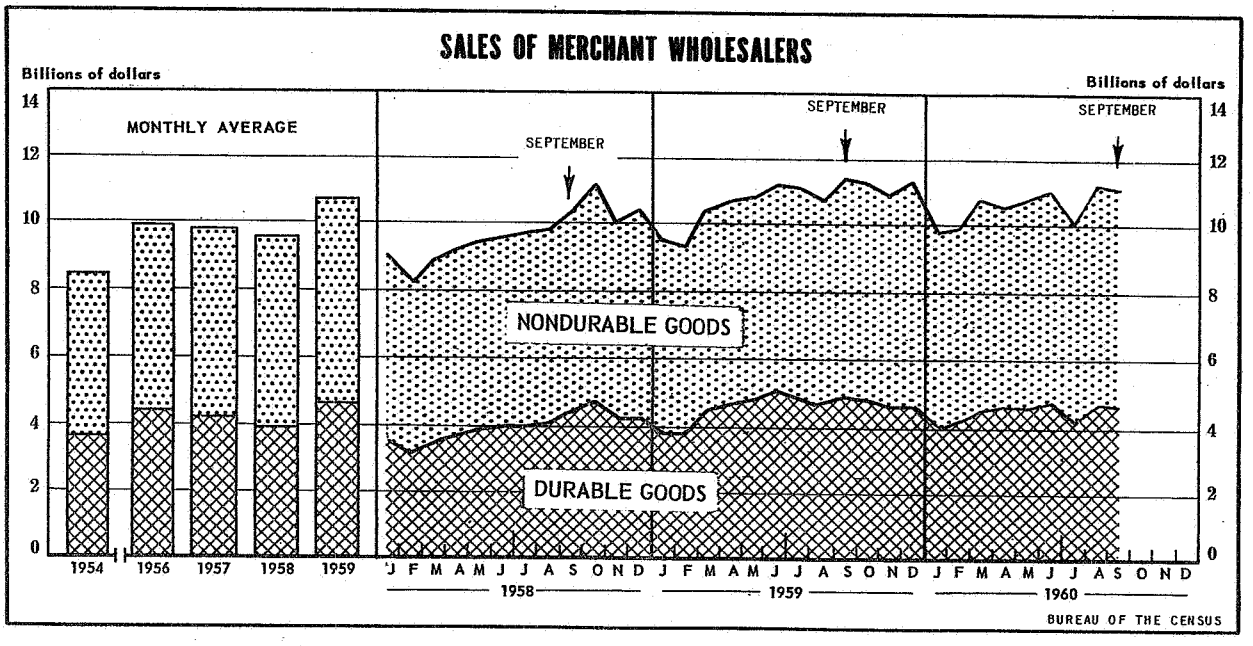
Most trades reported September sales below August levels. Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers, with sales off 14 percent, indicated the largest decrease, while jewelry wholesalers, up 13 percent registered the principal increase over August. Most durable goods trades showed declines from a year ago, while nondurable goods trades reported mixed trends. Sharp declines were indicated by lumber, millwork (19%), iron, steel and products (18%) and waste materials (16%). Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration, up 15 percent, reported the principal gain over year-ago sales.

Inventories

Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw materials) merchants, estimated at $12.2 billion on September 30, were virtually unchanged from their August 31 level, but were 6 percent higher than a year ago. This continues the pattern of successive year-ago gains which have been shown during the past 18 months. Durable goods declined slightly (1%) from the August level, while nondurable goods showed no change. However, both trade groups reported larger inventories than a year ago, durable goods--up 8 percent--indicating a larger increase than nondurable goods (3%).

Most trades indicated small changes from their previous month inventories and somewhat larger changes, mostly upward, over year-ago levels. Iron and steel scrap dealers reported the largest increase over August (7%) but showed a decline (8%) from a year ago. Iron, steel and products distributors, however, reported September inventories slightly (1%) below August levels but up 28 percent over last September.

The September 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 120 percent, up 3 points from August and 9 points above the September 1959 stock-sales ratio. The September stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 161 percent compared to the nondurable goods ratio of 86 percent.



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

[1] An advance release of September 1960 data was issued on October 31, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960									1959[3]				Total 9 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.[1]	Sept.[2]	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959[3]
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,750	11,142	10,072	11,297	11,090	11,311	11,360	10,878	11,383	95,544	94,844
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	9,986	10,404	9,337	10,482	10,185	10,452	10,383	9,933	10,366	88,535	87,804
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,614	4,798	4,238	4,739	4,621	4,913	4,844	4,593	4,655	40,347	41,113
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	532	573	510	557	535	524	542	513	499	4,790	4,595
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	443	469	427	472	467	434	442	426	380	3,902	3,593
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	654	711	654	720	719	777	765	754	791	6,059	6,023
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	349	321	354	347	375	363	351	378	2,932	2,895
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	326	362	333	366	372	402	402	402	413	3,127	3,126
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	215	226	189	232	236	242	252	237	239	1,930	1,962
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	66	72	60	76	72	76	77	69	75	606	607
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	149	154	129	156	163	166	176	168	164	1,324	1,353
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	460	466	430	486	486	510	521	458	423	3,957	4,033
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	198	201	182	205	204	217	217	194	189	1,729	1,784
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	262	266	248	281	281	293	304	264	234	2,229	2,251
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	728	779	692	747	708	800	764	650	605	5,990	6,440
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	385	420	361	381	350	433	404	353	337	3,252	3,586
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	343	359	331	366	357	367	360	297	268	2,735	2,854
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,283	1,288	1,096	1,218	1,194	1,220	1,186	1,141	1,173	10,753	10,826
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	533	450	507	512	518	509	512	538	4,628	4,759
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	112	119	108	123	125	125	120	113	113	1,023	976
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	151	147	131	150	149	147	151	130	145	1,303	1,245
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	400	424	368	428	407	476	431	430	461	3,719	4,021
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	284	300	263	297	284	345	308	302	311	2,645	2,968
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	115	124	105	131	123	131	123	128	150	1,074	1,053
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	276	271	243	274	250	269	288	306	348	2,558	2,584
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	153	149	139	153	142	140	156	177	224	1,468	1,445
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	123	121	104	121	108	129	131	129	123	1,089	1,140
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,136	6,344	5,834	6,557	6,468	6,398	6,516	6,285	6,728	55,194	53,730
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,372	5,606	5,099	5,742	5,563	5,539	5,539	5,340	5,711	48,185	46,690
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,828	1,941	1,787	1,951	1,872	1,846	1,853	1,734	1,844	16,592	15,676
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	802	852	798	865	871	785	790	751	793	7,346	6,758
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	614	646	590	639	602	638	639	599	634	5,609	5,388
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	61	56	60	59	60	63	62	69	526	513
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	354	382	344	386	339	363	361	323	347	3,109	3,017
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	410	445	399	395	374	385	383	396	439	3,564	3,536
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	138	123	141	151	139	134	154	158	1,179	11,178
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	280	307	275	254	223	247	249	242	281	2,384	2,359
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	614	650	583	633	616	568	585	608	755	5,146	4,875
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	247	268	270	282	246	237	208	197	222	2,077	1,998
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	367	382	313	350	370	332	377	412	533	3,068	2,879
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	391	404	360	421	420	410	413	376	384	3,552	3,462
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	236	245	224	262	271	263	264	243	247	2,225	2,162
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	120	120	101	122	115	113	115	107	113	1,030	1,019
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	35	38	35	36	34	34	34	27	24	294	282
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	343	371	344	365	361	343	360	324	383	3,045	2,886
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	491	512	572	537	501	527	466	625	577	612	613	571	500	4,808	4,835
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	185	176	174	259	224	237	232	217	169	1,809	1,827
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	193	192	210	196	194	215	187	230	223	245	243	230	208	1,840	1,900
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	346	316	377	358	362	367	349	361	3,122	3,008
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	299	301	275	328	312	317	317	297	307	2,726	2,641
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	68	61	68	70	71	76	77	86	624	666
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	127	106	121	128	122	108	108	119	1,258	1,241

[1] Final estimate.

[2] Preliminary estimate.

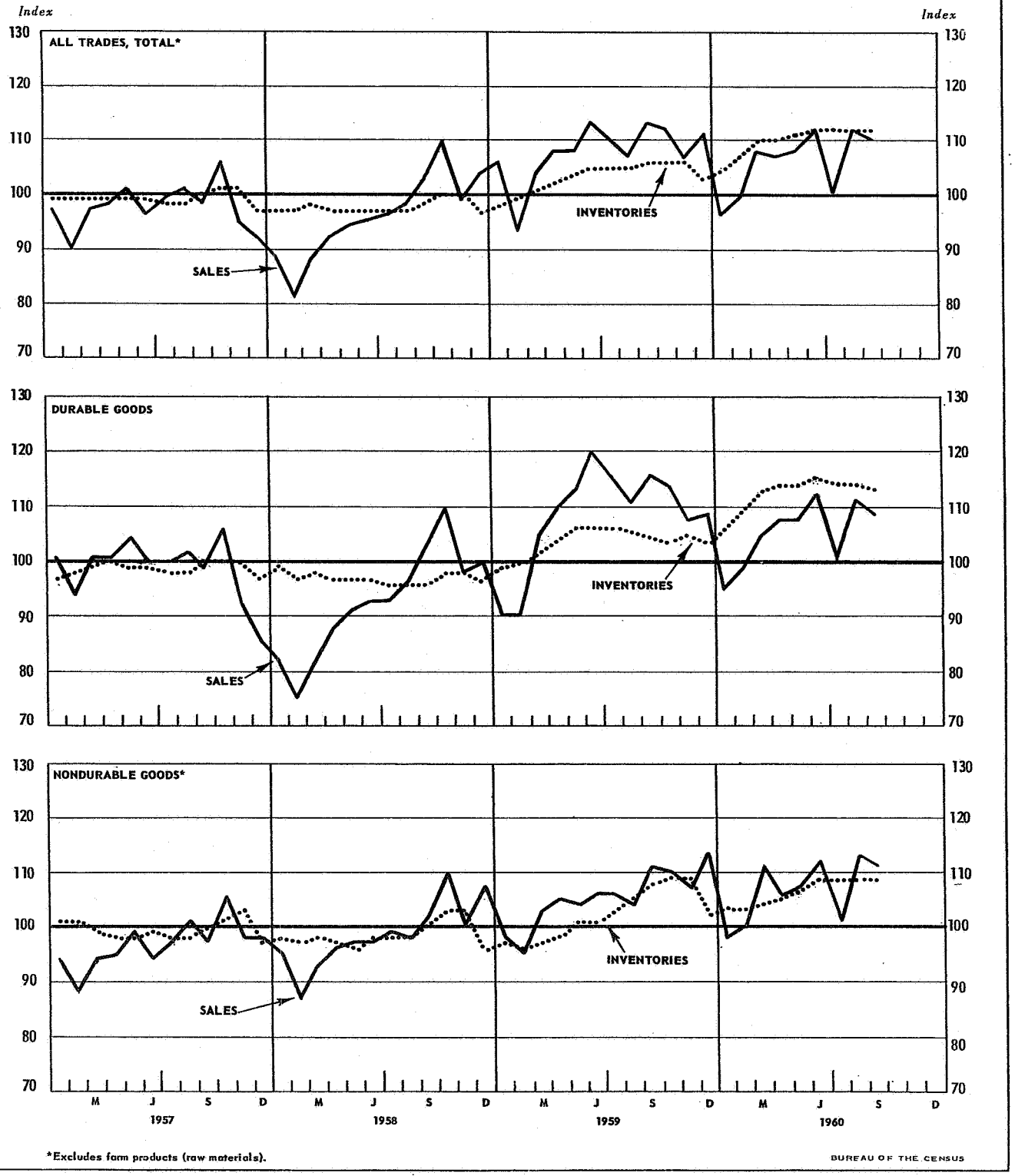
See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

[3] Effective with this report, the 1959 estimates shown are final composite estimates. Final estimates for prior months of 1959 are available upon request. The entire series for 1959 will be included in the December 1960 report.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
1957, 1958, 1959 AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960									1959[3]			
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.[1]	Sept.[2]	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,172	12,267	12,300	12,296	12,249	11,582	11,705	11,773	11,427
Selected Kinds of Business													
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,013	1,032	1,025	1,040	1,042	924	933	932	959
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	874	877	873	895	906	810	819	815	835
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,166	1,162	1,119	1,118	1,113	1,049	1,091	1,105	1,041
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	512	496	485	492	486	472	478	483	462
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	600	627	626	625	654	666	634	625	627	578	613	622	579
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	929	912	925	911	895	883	878	865	850
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	440	432	434	429	415	423	420	417	406
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	489	480	489	482	481	460	458	448	444
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,181	2,192	2,234	2,229	2,189	2,061	2,070	2,108	2,109
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	871	850	856	863	853	836	816	818	833
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	852	869	869	821	814	661	589	603	647
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	708	726	731	682	677	530	460	469	505
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,191	1,181	1,192	1,226	1,230	1,202	1,228	1,243	1,206
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	676	657	671	685	701	660	671	676	660
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	631	672	654	662	666	676	736	738	598
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	496	523	510	527	541	545	609	617	502
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	526	539	540	551	551	521	529	519	504
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	379	389	385	399	403	381	388	376	362
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	338	340	341	331	320	330	336	329	321
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	284	285	286	276	265	277	280	274	268

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960									1959[3]			
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.[1]	Sept.[2]	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	118	132	117	120	111	113	119	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	157	178	158	161	141	143	152	148
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	190	180	201	187	195	176	172	182	192
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	197	187	204	190	194	187	185	191	220
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	178	163	171	155	155	135	143	147	132
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	142	151	139	140	126	132	138	122
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	201	184	190	171	169	144	152	155	140
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	202	196	215	187	184	173	169	189	201
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	215	238	209	203	195	194	215	215
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	180	197	172	171	157	151	170	190
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	170	170	204	183	183	169	175	185	180
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	161	159	190	170	167	161	160	160	155
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	213	205	236	192	200	139	137	140	140
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	249	242	278	230	238	154	149	155	162
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	84	93	84	86	84	87	90	79
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	61	67	63	66	65	66	72	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	84	77	84	79	80	84	85	90	83
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	103	103	112	105	108	119	126	121	79
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	135	137	163	151	146	164	162	150	94
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	133	150	131	131	127	128	138	131
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	161	159	172	152	149	145	147	155	147
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	98	108	88	89	91	92	94	89
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	95	95	104	84	85	87	88	92	87

[1] Final estimate.
[2] Preliminary estimate.
[3] See footnote [3] in table 1.

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

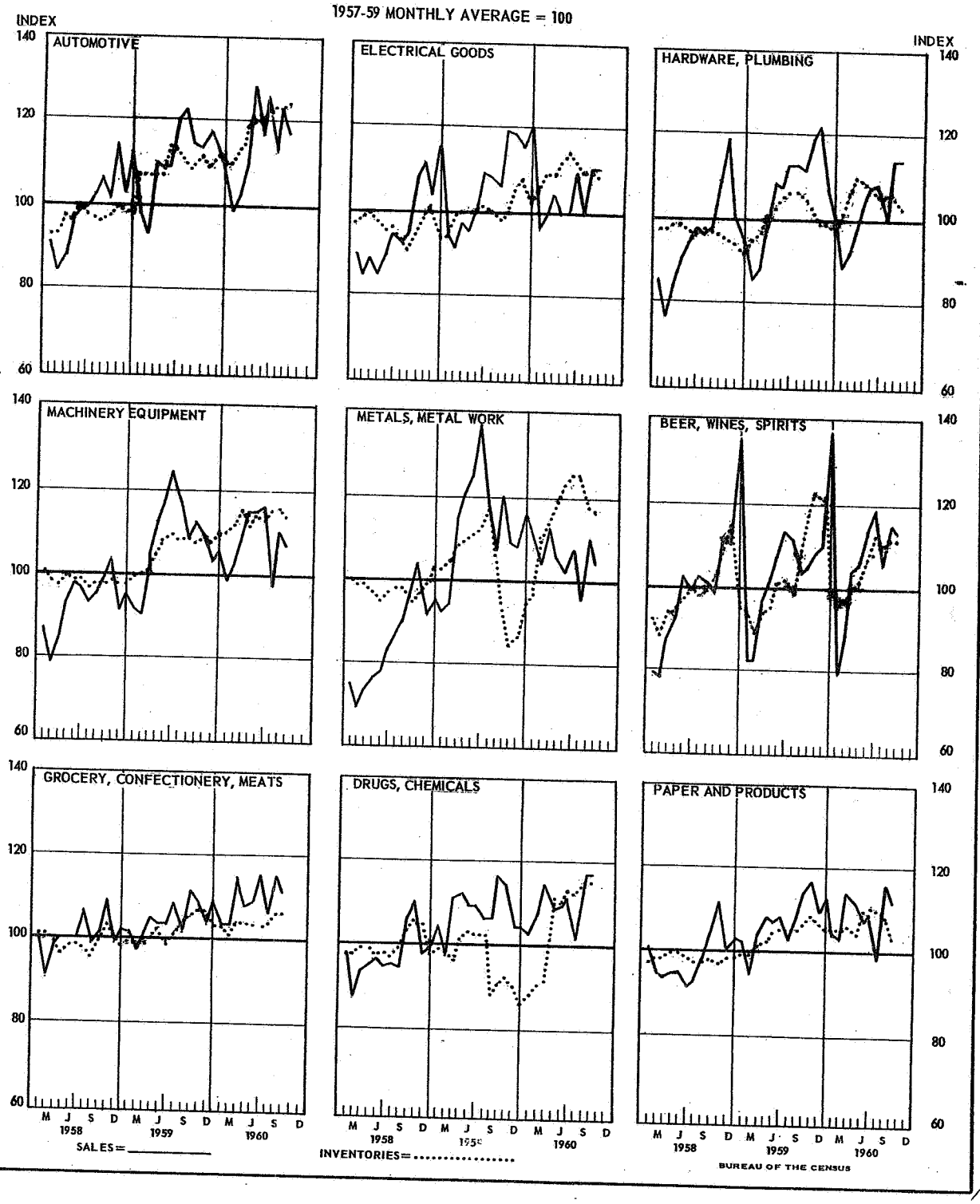


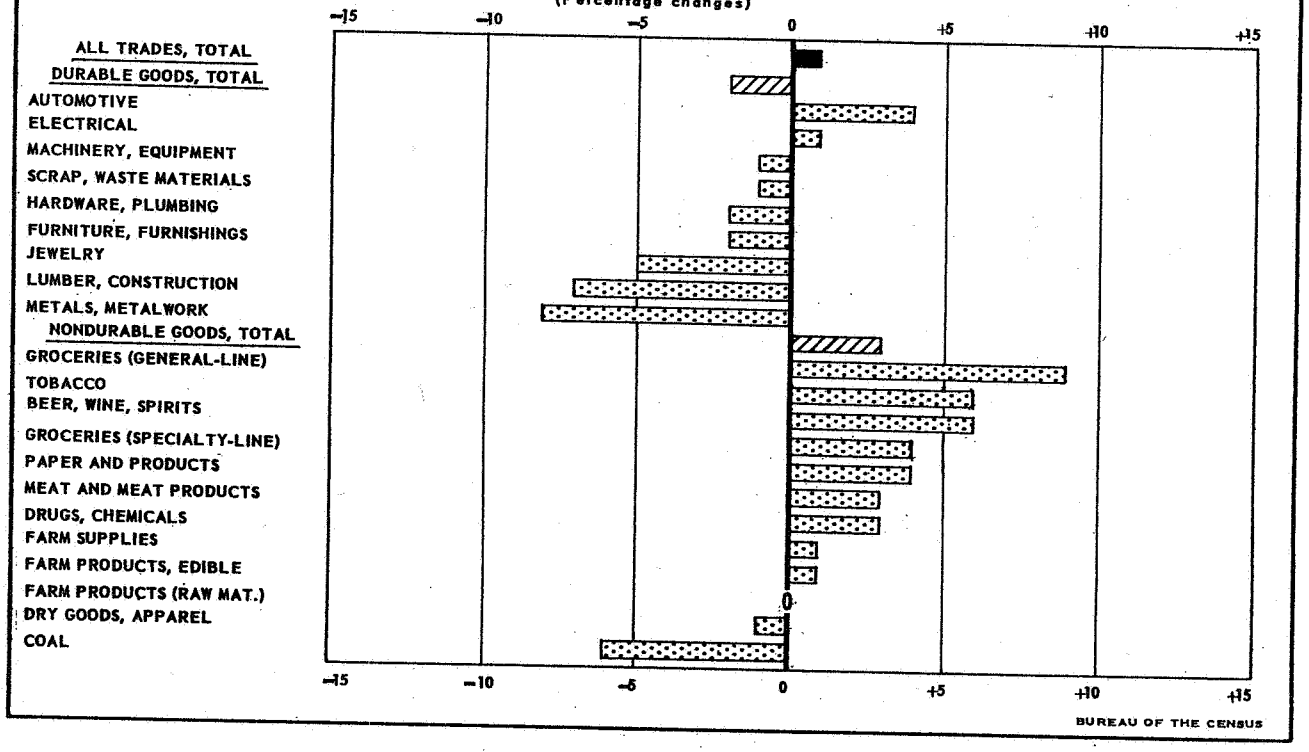
Table 4. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: SEPTEMBER 1960

Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	September 1960 from—		9 mos. 1960 from 9 mos. 1959	September 1960 from—	
	September 1959	August 1960		September 1959	August 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	-2	-2	+1	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	-3	-3	+1	+6	0
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-6	-2	-2	+8	-1
Automotive wholesalers	+2	-4	+4	+13	0
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+8	-1	+9	+12	+1
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	-7	0	+1	+6	0
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-7	-2	+1	+3	-1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-7	+2	0	+8	0
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-2	+2	-2	+5	0
Furniture wholesalers	-5	-5	0	+3	+1
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-2	+4	-2	+6	0
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	-5	0	-2	+1	-2
Hardware wholesalers	-6	0	-3	-2	-3
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-4	0	-1	+5	0
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-12	-5	-7	+9	+1
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-19	-8	-9	+6	+1
Construction materials distributors	-3	-2	-4	+13	0
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-2	-2	-1	+6	-2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	+15	-12	+15	+15	-2
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	0	-3	+7	+10	-5
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-1	+1	-3	+2	-1
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	0	+2	+5	+21	-2
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+8	+11	+10	+12	-2
Service establishment supply houses	+1	-1	+5	+4	+1
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-14	-5	-8	+23	-1
Iron, steel and products distributors	-18	-4	-11	+28	-1
Nonferrous metals distributors	-6	-6	+2	+5	-1
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-7	-9	-1	-6	+7
Iron, steel scrap dealers	+1	-7	+2	-8	+
Waste materials dealers	-16	-11	-4	-3	+4
Jewelry wholesalers	-7	+13	-5	+2	+2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+1	-1	+3	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0	-3	+3	+3	0
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+1	-4	+6	+2	0
General-line grocery wholesalers	+11	+1	+9	+6	+2
Voluntary groups*	+3	-4	+8	+5	+2
Retailer-cooperative*	+12	+2	+15	+3	+3
Nonaffiliated*	+6	+4	+4	+1	+2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-6	-6	+4	-4	-2
Confectionery wholesalers	-2	-2	+3	0	+3
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-7	-12	+3	+3	-5
Farm products (edible) distributors	-3	-5	+1	-3	-3
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+9	+7	0	+14	0
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-10	-12	+1	-12	-4
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+8	-3	+6	-1	+1
Beer, ale distributors	+4	-13	+4	-5	-7
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+11	+6	+7	-1	+3
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+2	0	+3	+6	0
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+3	+3	+3	+6	+1
General-line drug wholesalers*	+1	+5	+3	+2	+1
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	+2	-6	+1	+10	-3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	0	-6	+4	-5	-2
Tobacco distributors	+5	-1	+6	-4	0
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-6	-8	-1	+9	-2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-5	-14	-1	+8	-6
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-9	-3	-3	+12	-2
Piece goods converters	+1	-4	+5	+4	+2
Paper, allied products wholesalers	-1	-5	+4	-3	-3
Paper wholesalers	-2	-5	+3	-4	-4
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+5	-6	+9	+2	0
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	+5	+11	0	(X)	(X)
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-3	+1	-1	+4	+2
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-1	+4	+5	+4	+2
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+2	-10	+2	+3	+2
Coal wholesalers	-1	+3	-6	+8	+4
Farm supplies wholesalers	+5	+6	+1	+4	+3

* See text, page 11.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data. See "Inventories," page 11.

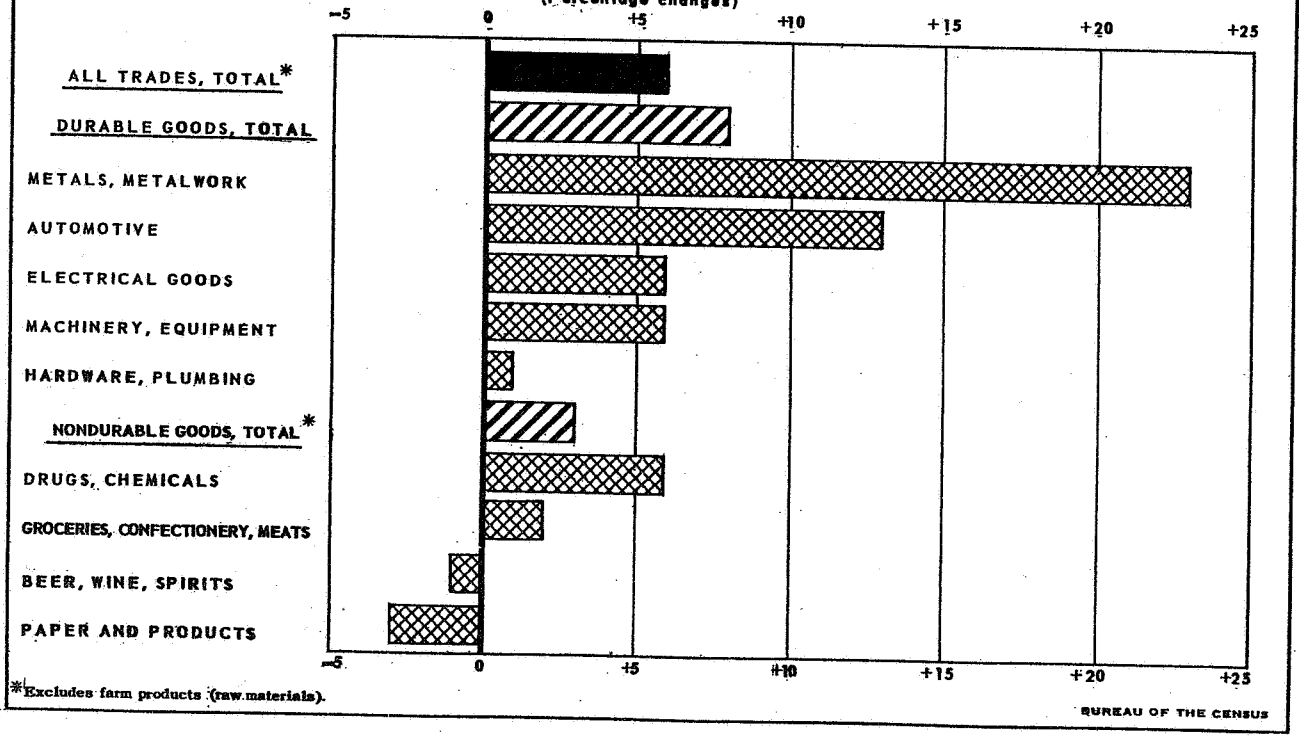
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS— NINE MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH NINE MONTHS OF 1959

(Percentage changes)

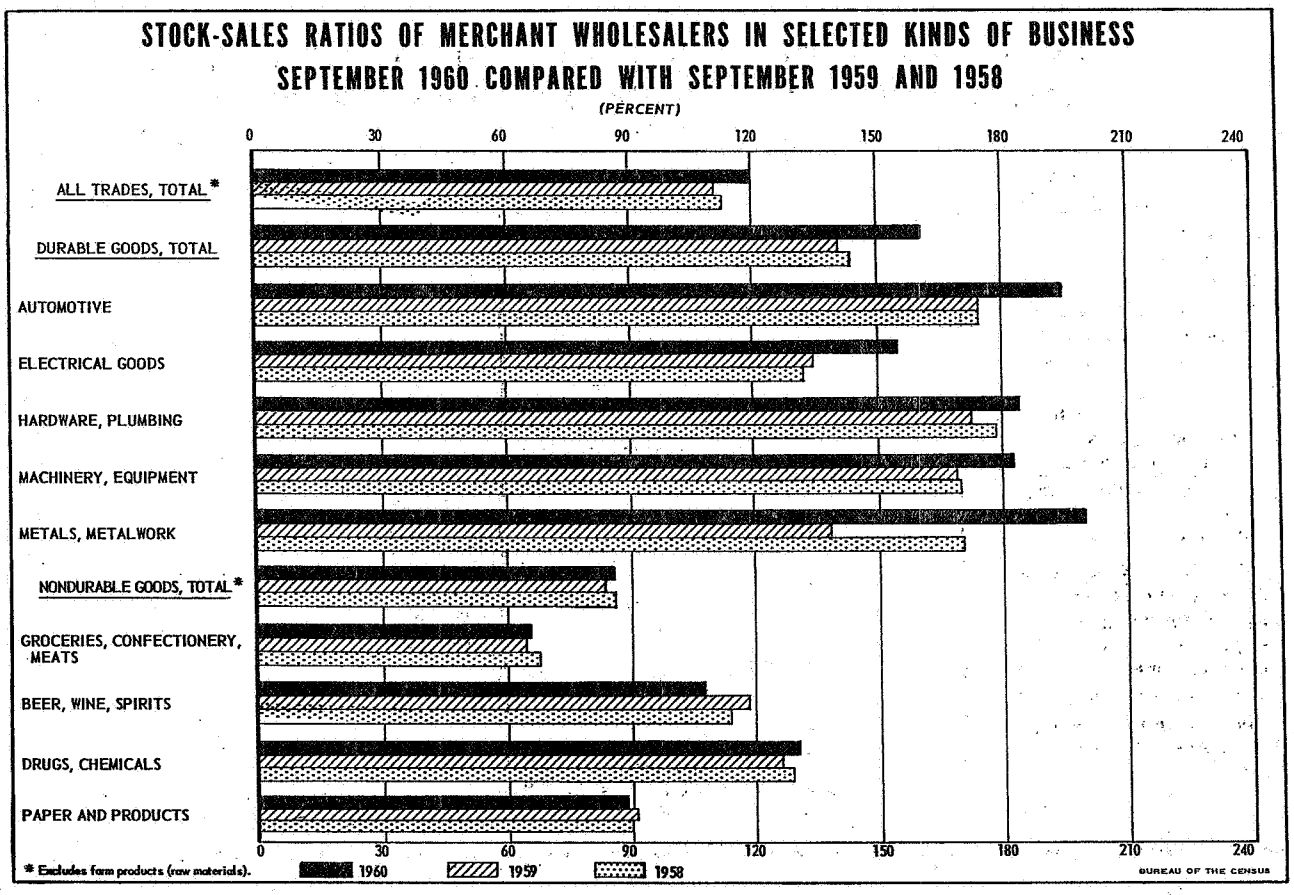


INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS SEPTEMBER 1960 COMPARED WITH SEPTEMBER 1959

(Percentage changes)



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).


STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
SEPTEMBER 1960 COMPARED WITH SEPTEMBER 1959 AND 1958
(PERCENT)
0
30
60
90
120
150
180
210
240
ALL TRADES, TOTAL *
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
AUTOMOTIVE
ELECTRICAL GOODS
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
METALS, METALWORK
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL *
GROCERIES, CONFECTIONERY, MEATS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
* Excludes farm products (raw materials).
1960
1959
1958
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

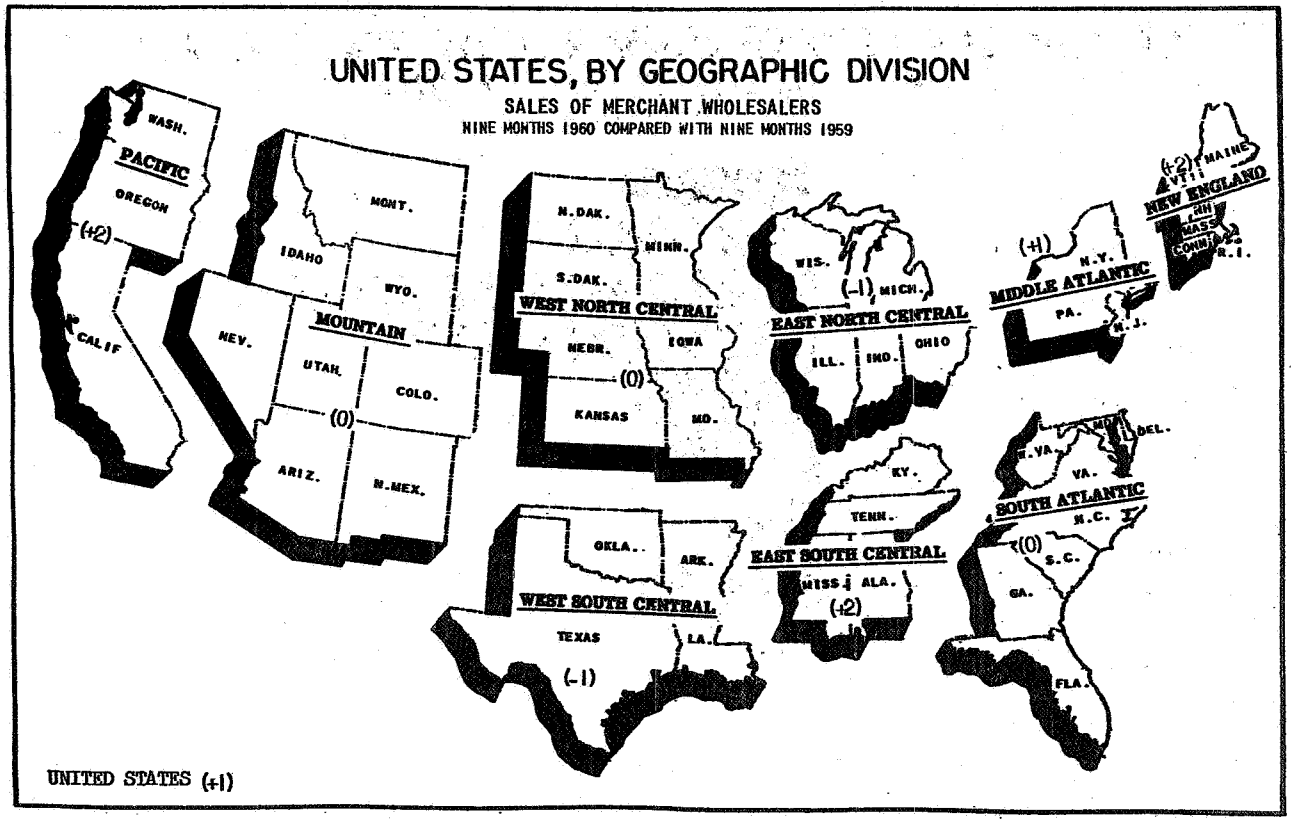

UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
NINE MONTHS 1960 COMPARED WITH NINE MONTHS 1959
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+2)
CALIF.
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH
COLO.
(0)
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(0)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
(-1)
MICH.
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+1)
N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+2)
VT.
MAINE
NEW ENGLAND
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
KY.
TENN.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MISS.
ALA.
(+2)
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
LA.
(-1)
W.VA.
MD.
DEL.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
N.C.
(0)
S.C.
GA.
FLA.
UNITED STATES (+1)

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
SEPTEMBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory end-of-month (at cost)	
	September 1960 from—		9 mos. 1960 from 9 mos. 1959	September 1960 from—	
	September 1959	August 1960		September 1959	August 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	-2	-2	+1	+6	0
New England	-5	-3	+2	+4	-1
Middle Atlantic	-4	-2	+1	+4	-1
East North Central	-3	-4	-1	+10	+1
West North Central	+2	0	0	0	-1
South Atlantic	-3	-1	0	+2	-6
East South Central	-4	+1	+2	+9	-1
West South Central	-4	-2	-1	+1	-1
Mountain	+2	-1	0	+4	+1
Pacific	-2	-4	+2	+10	0
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers					
New England	+8	-1	+9	+12	+1
Middle Atlantic	-2	-3	+6	+10	0
East North Central	-7	+2	+3	+8	-1
West North Central	-8	-9	+6	+18	+1
South Atlantic	-1	-5	0	0	0
East South Central	+2	-1	+3	-1	+2
West South Central	+4	+2	+2	+14	+2
Mountain	-4	-3	-3	+1	+1
Pacific	(X)	+3	-5	0	+1
	-11	-5	+3	+5	+2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors					
New England	-7	-2	+1	+3	-1
Middle Atlantic	-5	(X)	+5	(X)	-4
East North Central	0	-6	+3	0	+1
West North Central	-10	-3	+1	+11	-4
South Atlantic	-10	+5	-10	-3	-5
East South Central	-16	-1	-4	+2	+2
West South Central	(X)	-2	0	+38	+7
Mountain	-3	-3	-4	+4	-1
Pacific	(X)	+2	-2	0	-8
	-4	0	-6	-4	-1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors					
New England	-7	+2	0	+8	0
Middle Atlantic	-7	+18	+1	(X)	+8
East North Central	-16	+5	-1	+19	-2
West North Central	-11	+1	-4	+18	+2
South Atlantic	-18	-4	-9	+9	-1
East South Central	-1	+12	-3	+4	+8
West South Central	-5	+1	+7	+11	+5
Mountain	-8	+1	-6	-1	-1
Pacific	-13	+1	-5	+5	-3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers					
New England	-2	+2	-2	+5	0
Middle Atlantic	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
East North Central	-6	+4	+2	+21	+2
West North Central	+1	+9	+2	-1	-1
South Atlantic	-4	-2	-2	(X)	+3
East South Central	-5	-3	+4	+8	+1
West South Central	(X)	-7	-9	-7	+1
Pacific	-8	-2	0	+18	-3
Hardware wholesalers					
New England	-6	0	-3	-2	-3
Middle Atlantic	+1	+2	+4	+8	-1
East North Central	-15	+1	-3	+4	+1
West North Central	-7	-2	-1	-7	-4
South Atlantic	-2	+6	-4	-6	-5
East South Central	-6	+3	-4	-1	-3
West South Central	-7	+2	-5	-5	-8
Mountain	-6	-10	-5	+1	-1
Pacific	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
	-10	-3	-8	-2	-3
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors					
New England	-4	0	-1	+5	0
Middle Atlantic	-14	+3	-3	+11	-1
East North Central	-12	+1	-2	-5	0
West North Central	0	+10	-3	+8	-1
South Atlantic	-8	-5	-6	-8	-1
West South Central	-7	-4	-4	0	0
Pacific	+1	0	-9	0	-1
	+5	-10	0	-1	+3
Lumber, construction materials distributors					
New England	-12	-5	-7	+9	+1
Middle Atlantic	(X)	+3	+2	-8	+4
East North Central	-10	-8	-8	-1	-2
West North Central	-4	-8	-9	+8	0
South Atlantic	-15	-9	-13	-7	+3
West South Central	-6	0	-5	-8	0
Pacific	+2	+1	-10	+2	-1
	-15	-5	-9	+16	+2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

SEPTEMBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	September 1960 from--		9 mos. 1960 from 9 mos. 1959	September 1960 from--	
	September 1959	August 1960		September 1959	August 1960
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-1	+1	-3	+2	-1
Middle Atlantic	+9	-3	+8	+10	-1
East North Central	-2	-11	+2	+4	+2
West North Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
South Atlantic	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
East South Central	+2	+6	+2	+13	+1
West South Central	-15	-12	-17	-8	-3
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	+4	+1	-5	+9	-1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+11	+1	+9	+6	+2
New England	+3	-2	+7	+14	+7
Middle Atlantic	(X)	+7	+12	+4	+3
East North Central	+4	-4	+8	+1	+7
West North Central	+6	-4	+9	+10	+1
South Atlantic	+4	+1	+6	-2	+3
East South Central	+6	+4	+4	-1	+2
West South Central	+15	+8	+8	-5	+3
Mountain	+3	-1	+9	+4	0
Pacific	+16	-2	+9	0	+1
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-6	-6	+4	-4	-2
Middle Atlantic	-5	+2	+4	+3	-6
East North Central	+3	0	+2	-2	-2
South Atlantic	-3	+5	+4	+4	-4
West South Central	-3	-5	+8	(X)	-4
Pacific	+17	+3	+11	+9	-11
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-10	-12	+1	-12	-4
New England	-6	-15	0	+17	+12
Middle Atlantic	-13	-17	+2	+4	+19
East North Central	-5	-13	+2	-8	+8
West North Central	+7	-4	+6	0	+2
South Atlantic	-13	+2	+5	-20	+1
West South Central	+3	0	-3	+4	+7
Pacific	-4	0	+3	-16	+9
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+3	+3	+3	+6	+1
New England	-5	+1	+5	-2	+4
Middle Atlantic	-10	+5	+1	+5	-1
East North Central	+3	+6	+4	+1	+2
West North Central	0	+9	+1	+6	+2
South Atlantic	0	+1	+4	+2	+5
East South Central	+2	+5	+6	+9	+1
West South Central	+1	+1	+6	+5	-1
Mountain	+1	+1	+4	-4	+2
Pacific	+10	+2	+5	+8	+1
Tobacco distributors	+5	-1	+6	-4	0
New England	+7	-7	+6	-3	-6
Middle Atlantic	+9	0	+6	+7	-5
East North Central	0	0	+4	+5	-1
West North Central	+7	0	+5	-6	+1
South Atlantic	+5	0	+4	+3	+6
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	+14	0	+7	+9	+6
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-6	-8	-1	+9	-2
New England	0	-9	-3	+2	-10
Middle Atlantic	-11	-7	-1	+2	-2
East North Central	+5	+9	+5	+16	-3
West North Central	-11	-13	-4	+4	-9
South Atlantic	-6	-16	+8	(X)	-6
Pacific	-12	-23	+5	+14	+2

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

1 Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants."

Note: Sales and inventory trends by geographic division shown in table 5 may be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes for the United States. The trends by geographic division pertain only to firms that were in business and reported data in the months for which comparisons are shown, and do not necessarily represent trends of all firms because of the omission of firms that started new businesses or went out of business during the months compared. The percentage changes by geographic division, therefore, are not as reliable as the percentage changes for the United States which are based on "composite" estimates and represent all firms in the sample. (See Text, page 11.)

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 14 through 16.

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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

Percentage changes--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (2) percentage 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 chance. 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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1960. The published estimate is $4,798 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $4,798 million by .016, we obtain $77 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $4,721 and $4,875 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,644 to $4,952 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1960 to June 1960 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $4,798 million by $4,614 million, is 1.04 (it can also be expressed as a 4% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.04 by .009, we obtain .009 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 1.03 to 1.05 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 3% and 5% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.02 to 1.06.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-	-	0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-5	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958--is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 no 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, *Secretary*

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

OCTOBER 1960

BW-60-10

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
DECEMBER 9, 1960[1]

Sales

October 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $11.0 billion, were at the same level as September sales but 3 percent below October sales a year ago. However, cumulative sales for the first 10 months of 1960, totaling $106.6 billion, were approximately the same as sales in the comparable period of 1959.

Sales in the durable goods trades, totaling $4.5 billion in October, were 3 percent below September and down 7 percent from a year ago. In contrast, sales in the nondurable goods trades, at $6.5 billion, were up slightly (1%) over September and virtually the same as October 1959 sales. Ten month 1960 sales were down 2 percent from last year in the durable goods trades, but up 2 percent in the nondurable goods trades.

Most trades showed only small changes from September sales. Among the more substantial changes were the increases reported by stationery, wallpaper wholesalers (17%), jewelry wholesalers (14%), and farm products (raw materials) merchants (12%), and the declines indicated by beer, ale distributors (12%) and air conditioning, refrigeration equipment distributors (10%). Most trades reported declines from year-ago sales, the largest decreases being shown by waste materials dealers (18%), and lumber, millwork wholesalers (17%). The principal gain over a year ago was registered by poultry products distributors (19%).

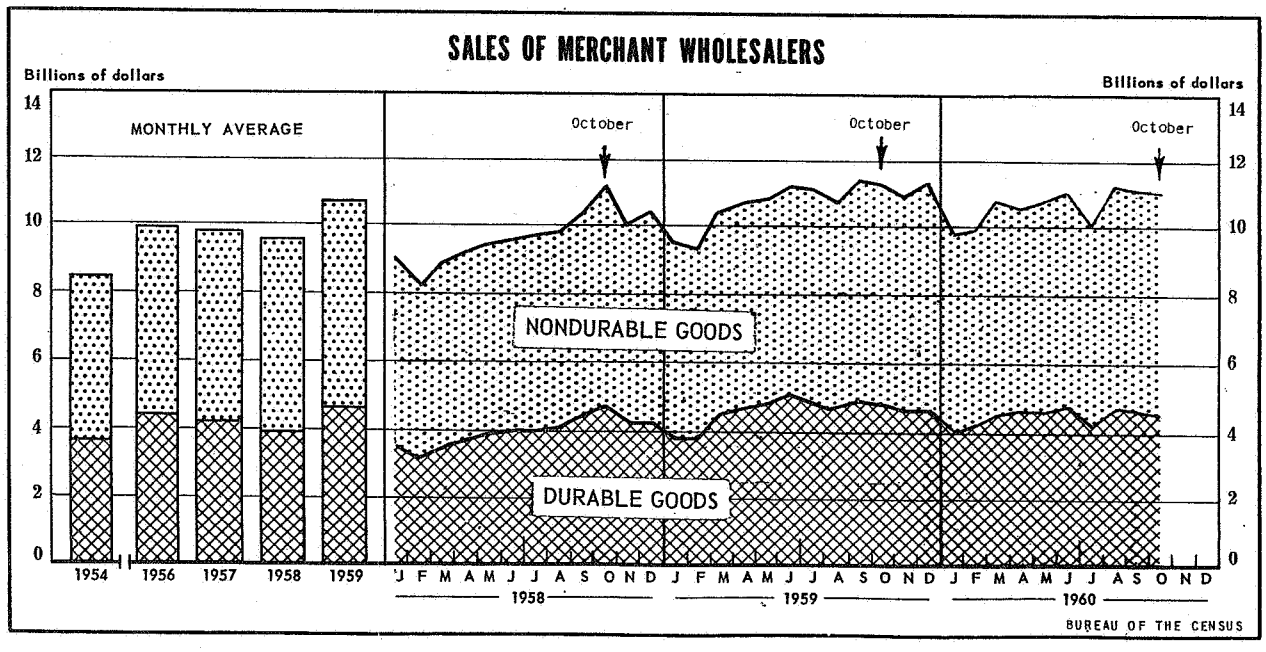
Seven geographic divisions reported declines from September sales, the largest being shown in the Mountain Division (8%). The West South Central showed no changes from previous month sales while the Middle Atlantic Division indicated a 4 percent gain. Compared with a year ago, the Middle Atlantic and West North Central Divisions reported no change in sales. However, all other geographic divisions experienced declines of 2 to 6 percent.

Inventories

Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw materials) merchants, estimated at $12.3 billion on October 31, rose slightly (1%) over their September 30 level and were 5 percent higher than a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined slightly (1%) from the September level, while nondurable goods rose 3 percent. However, both trade groups reported larger inventories than a year ago--the durable goods, up 7 percent, indicating a larger increase than the nondurable goods (2%).

Most trades indicated moderate changes from their previous month as well as their year-ago inventory levels. However, substantial increases over October stocks were shown by wholesalers of fresh fruit, vegetables (28%), wine, distilled spirits (14%), poultry products (13%), and coal (11%). Compared with stocks a year ago, iron, steel products distributors reported the largest increase (44%), while iron, steel scrap dealers indicated the sharpest decline (11%).

The October 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 122 percent, up 2 points from September and 9 points above the October 1959 stock-sales ratio. The October 1960 stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 163 percent compared with the nondurable goods ratio of 89 percent.



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

[1] An advance release of October 1960 data was issued on December 1, 1960.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960										1959			Total 10 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug	Sept.[1]	Oct.[2]	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,750	11,142	10,072	11,297	11,091	11,047	11,360	10,878	11,383	106,581	106,204
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	9,986	10,404	9,337	10,482	10,180	10,030	11,383	9,933	10,366	98,549	98,187
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,614	4,798	4,238	4,739	4,625	4,508	4,844	4,593	4,655	44,850	45,957
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	532	573	510	557	537	534	542	513	499	5,326	5,137
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	443	469	427	472	467	469	442	426	380	4,371	4,035
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	654	711	654	720	721	688	765	754	791	6,749	6,788
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	349	321	354	350	335	363	351	378	3,270	3,258
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	326	362	333	366	371	354	402	402	413	3,480	3,528
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	215	226	189	232	239	239	252	237	239	2,172	2,214
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	66	72	60	76	73	71	77	69	75	678	683
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	149	154	129	156	166	168	176	168	164	1,495	1,529
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	460	466	430	486	487	487	521	458	423	4,445	4,554
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	198	201	182	205	204	199	217	194	189	1,928	2,001
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	262	266	248	281	283	288	304	264	234	2,519	2,555
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	728	779	692	747	710	687	764	650	605	6,669	7,204
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	385	420	361	381	352	336	404	353	337	3,580	3,990
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	343	359	331	366	358	351	360	297	268	3,087	3,214
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,283	1,288	1,096	1,218	1,188	1,118	1,186	1,141	1,173	11,865	12,012
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	533	450	507	500	475	509	512	538	5,091	5,268
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	112	119	108	123	121	118	120	113	113	1,137	1,096
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	151	147	131	150	151	155	151	130	145	1,460	1,396
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	400	424	368	428	411	405	431	430	461	4,128	4,452
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	284	300	263	297	289	287	308	302	311	2,937	3,276
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	115	124	105	131	122	118	123	128	150	1,191	1,176
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	276	271	243	274	245	253	288	306	348	2,806	2,872
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	153	149	139	153	137	144	156	177	224	1,607	1,601
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	123	121	104	121	108	108	131	129	123	1,197	1,271
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,136	6,344	5,834	6,557	6,465	6,539	6,516	6,285	6,728	61,730	60,246
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,372	5,606	5,099	5,742	5,554	5,522	5,539	5,340	5,711	53,698	52,229
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,828	1,941	1,787	1,951	1,857	1,835	1,853	1,734	1,844	18,412	17,529
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	802	852	798	865	841	830	790	751	793	8,146	7,548
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	614	646	590	639	618	599	639	599	634	6,224	6,027
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	61	56	60	60	63	63	62	69	590	576
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	354	382	344	386	338	344	361	323	347	3,452	3,378
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	410	445	399	395	371	382	383	396	439	3,943	3,919
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	138	123	141	150	160	134	154	158	1,338	1,312
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	280	307	275	254	222	222	249	242	281	2,605	2,608
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	614	650	583	633	615	602	585	608	755	5,747	5,460
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	247	268	270	282	246	216	208	197	222	2,293	2,206
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	367	382	313	350	369	385	377	412	533	3,452	3,256
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	391	404	360	421	415	407	413	376	384	3,954	3,875
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	236	245	224	262	271	270	264	243	247	2,495	2,426
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	120	120	101	122	111	107	115	107	113	1,133	1,134
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	35	38	35	36	33	31	34	27	24	324	316
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	343	371	344	365	365	347	360	324	383	3,396	3,246
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	491	512	572	537	501	527	466	625	566	584	613	571	500	5,381	5,448
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	185	176	174	259	222	229	232	217	169	2,036	2,059
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	193	192	210	196	194	215	187	230	225	230	243	230	208	2,072	2,143
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	346	316	377	354	369	367	349	361	3,487	3,375
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	299	301	275	328	308	315	317	297	307	3,037	2,958
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	68	61	68	70	74	76	77	86	698	742
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	127	106	121	125	114	108	108	119	1,369	1,349

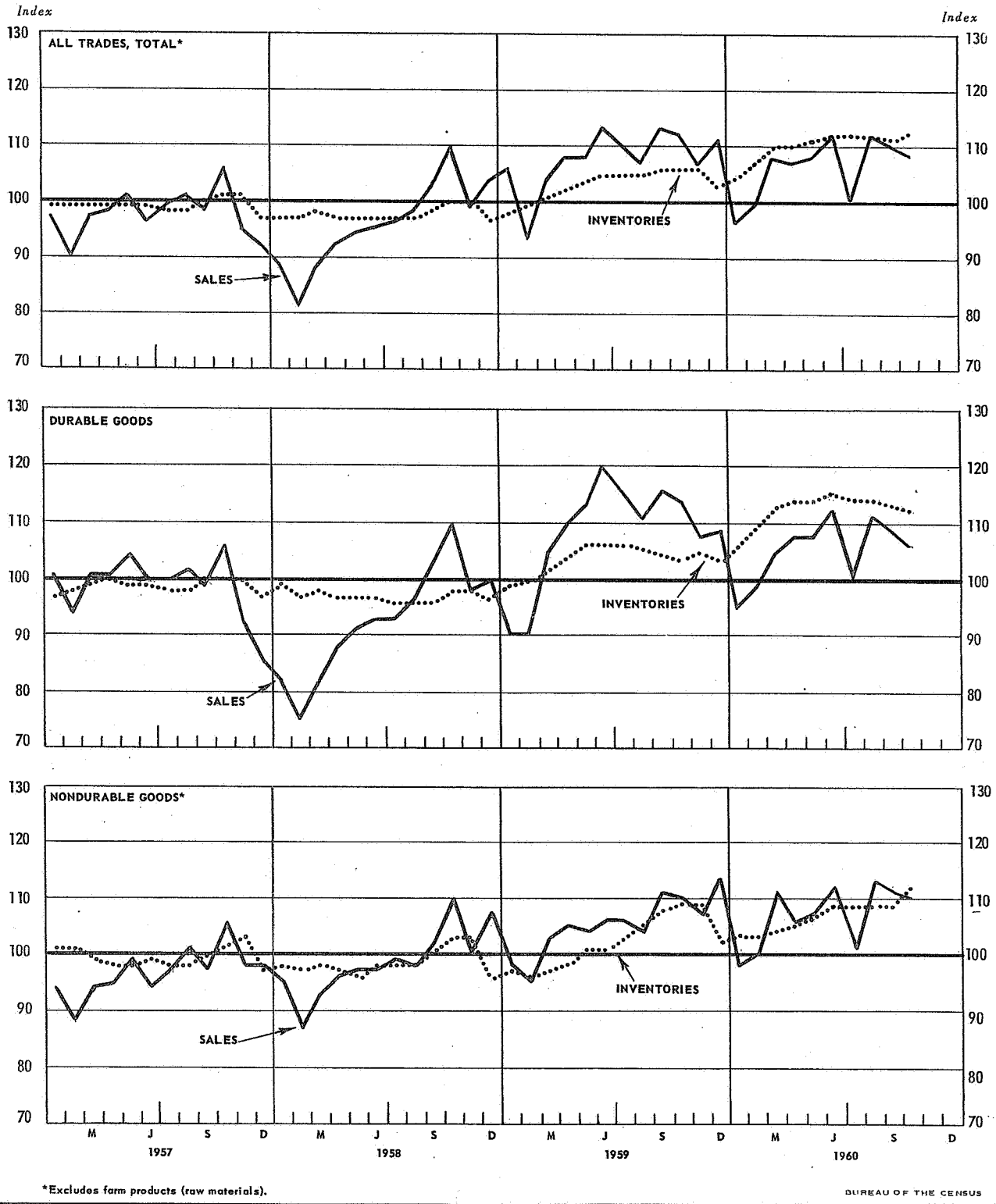
[1] Final estimate
[2] Preliminary estimate

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
1957, 1958, 1959 AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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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 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960										1959		
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.[1]	Oct.[2]	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,172	12,267	12,300	12,296	12,195	12,274	11,705	11,773	11,427
Selected Kinds of Business													
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,013	1,032	1,025	1,040	1,028	1,014	933	932	959
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	874	877	873	895	891	884	819	815	835
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,166	1,162	1,119	1,118	1,133	1,142	1,091	1,105	1,041
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	512	496	485	492	487	500	478	483	462
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	630	627	626	625	654	666	634	625	646	643	613	622	579
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	929	912	925	911	891	872	878	865	850
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	440	432	434	429	410	402	420	417	406
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	489	480	489	482	482	470	458	448	444
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,181	2,192	2,234	2,229	2,175	2,174	2,070	2,108	2,109
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	871	850	856	863	844	847	816	818	833
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	852	869	869	821	812	792	589	603	647
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	708	726	731	682	679	661	460	469	505
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,191	1,181	1,192	1,226	1,213	1,264	1,228	1,243	1,206
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	676	657	671	685	674	710	671	676	660
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	631	672	654	662	652	722	736	738	598
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	496	523	510	527	524	595	609	617	502
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	526	539	540	551	549	556	529	519	504
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	379	389	385	399	399	409	388	376	362
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	338	340	341	331	324	326	336	329	321
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	284	285	286	276	268	269	280	274	268

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960										1959		
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.[1]	Oct.[2]	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	118	132	117	120	122	113	119	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	157	178	158	160	163	143	152	148
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	190	180	201	187	191	190	172	182	192
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	197	187	204	190	191	188	185	191	220
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	178	163	171	155	157	166	143	147	132
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	142	151	139	139	149	132	138	122
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	201	184	190	171	174	182	152	155	140
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	202	196	215	187	183	179	169	189	201
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	215	238	209	201	202	194	215	215
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	180	197	172	170	163	151	170	190
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	170	170	204	183	183	194	175	185	180
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	161	159	190	170	169	178	160	160	155
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	213	205	236	192	198	196	137	140	140
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	249	242	278	230	235	230	149	155	162
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	84	93	84	86	89	87	90	79
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	61	67	63	65	69	66	72	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	84	77	84	79	80	86	85	90	83
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	103	103	112	105	106	120	126	121	79
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	135	137	163	151	142	155	162	150	94
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	133	150	131	132	137	128	138	131
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	161	159	172	152	147	151	147	155	147
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	98	108	88	92	88	92	94	89
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	95	95	104	84	87	85	88	92	87

[1] Final estimate
[2] Preliminary estimate

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

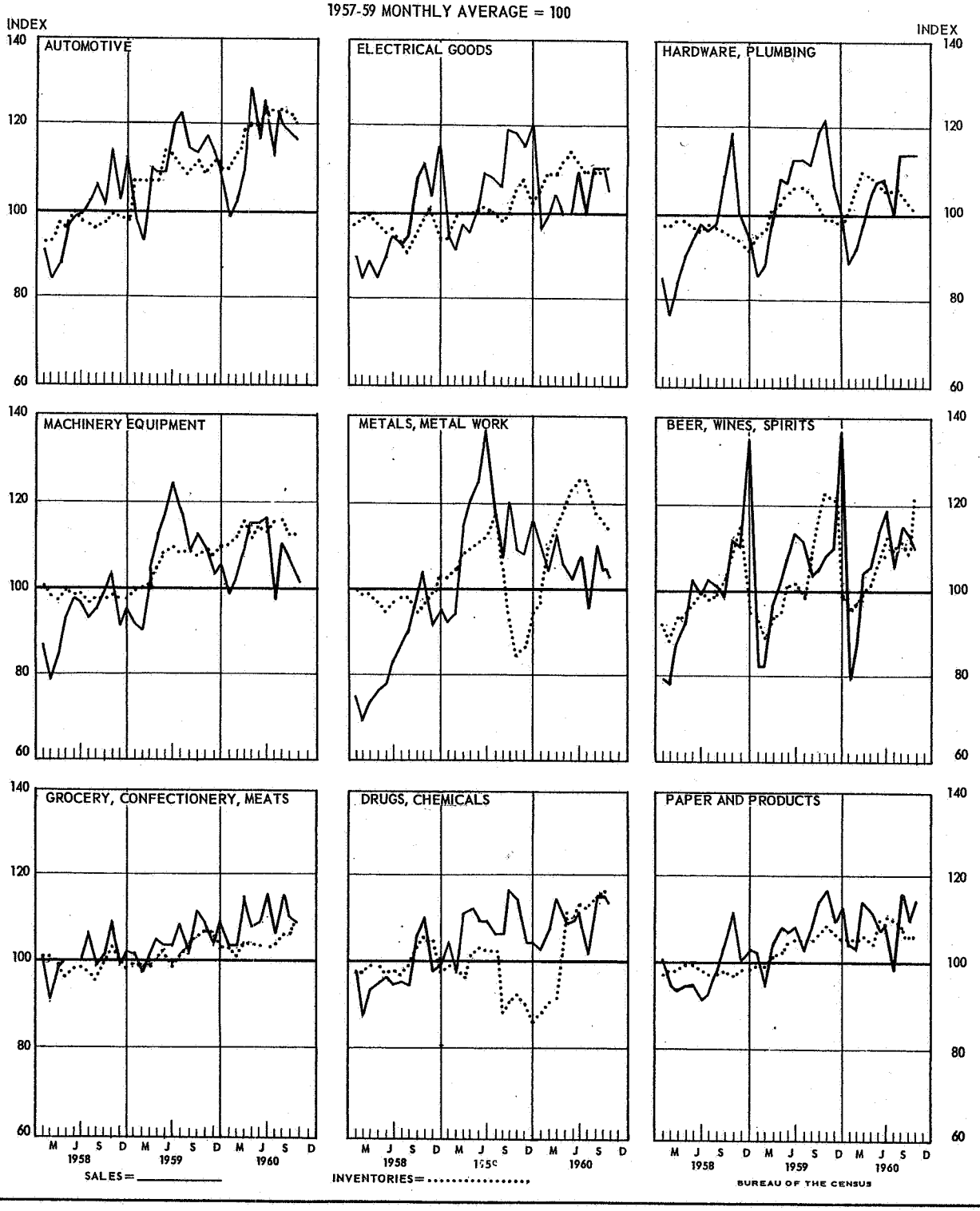


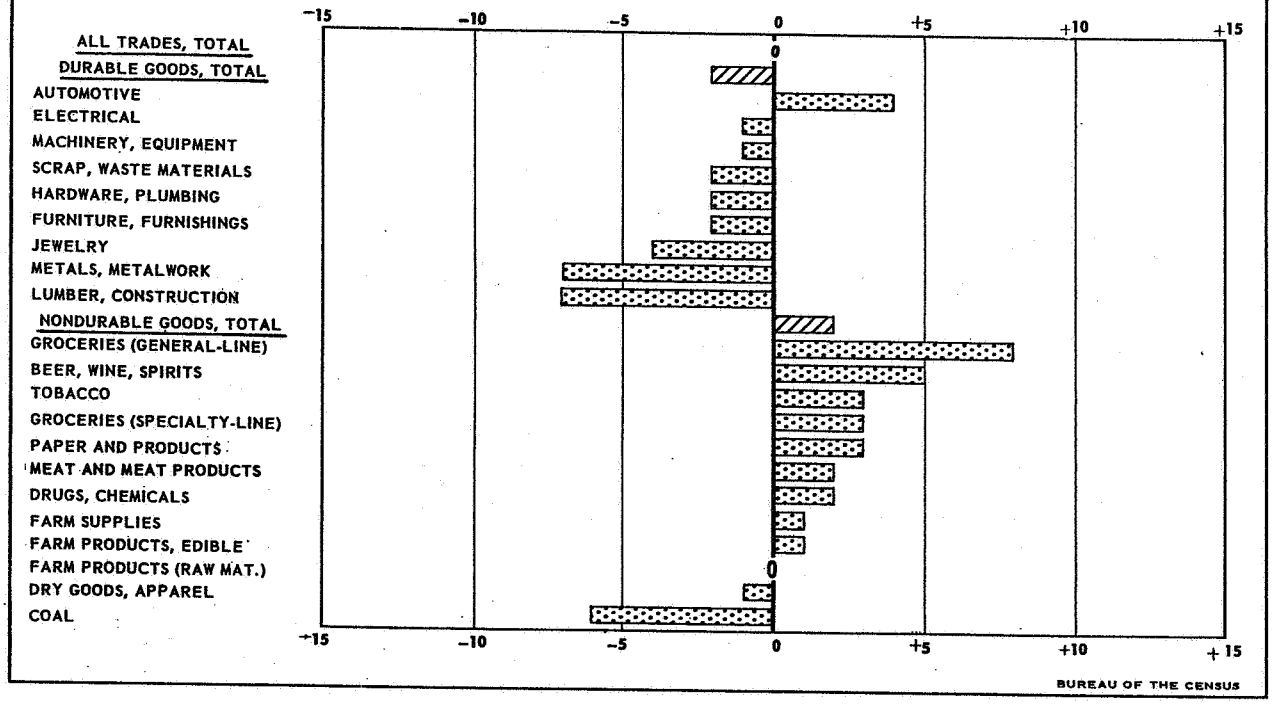
Table 4. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: OCTOBER 1960

Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	October 1960 from--		10 mos. 1960 from 10 mos. 1959	October 1960 from--	
	October 1959	September 1960		October 1959	September 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	-3	0	0	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	-3	-1	0	+5	+1
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-7	-3	-2	+7	-1
Automotive wholesalers	-1	-1	+4	+9	-1
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+6	0	+8	+8	-1
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	-10	-5	-1	+5	+1
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-8	-4	0	+5	+3
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-12	-5	-1	+5	0
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-5	0	-2	+7	-1
Furniture wholesalers	-8	-3	-1	-6	-1
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-5	+1	-2	+12	0
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	-7	0	-2	-1	-2
Hardware wholesalers	-8	-2	-4	-4	-2
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-5	+2	-1	+3	-2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	r-10	-3	r-7	+1	-3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-17	-5	-10	-5	-4
Construction materials distributors	-2	-2	-4	+9	-3
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-6	r-6	-1	+5	0
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	+8	-10	+14	+14	-3
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	+1	-3	+7	-3	-2
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-7	-5	-3	+4	0
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	-2	-2	+4	+8	-2
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	0	-2	+9	+10	-3
Service establishment supply houses	+3	+3	+5	+15	0
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-6	-1	-7	+34	-2
Iron, steel and products distributors	-7	-1	-10	+44	-3
Nonferrous metals distributors	-4	-3	+1	+2	-2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-12	+3	-2	-9	
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-8	+5	0	-11	
Waste materials dealers	-18	0	-6	-7	+1
Jewelry wholesalers	+3	+14	-4	+4	+2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	0	+1	+2	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0	-1	+3	+2	+3
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	-1	-1	+5	+3	+4
General-line grocery wholesalers	+5	-1	+8	+6	+5
Voluntary groups*	+3	+1	+7	+5	+6
Retailer-cooperative*	+5	-3	+14	+14	+4
Nonaffiliated*	+2	-1	+4	+2	+6
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-6	-3	+3	-2	+3
Confectionery wholesalers	0	+5	+2	0	+2
Meat, meat products wholesalers	-5	+2	+2	+6	+3
Farm products (edible) distributors	0	+3	+1	+2	+21
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+19	+7	+2	+17	+13
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-11	0	0	-5	+28
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+3	-2	+5	-2	+11
Beer, ale distributors	+4	-12	+4	0	-2
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+2	+4	+6	-2	+14
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	-1	-2	+2	+5	+1
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+2	0	+3	+5	+3
General-line drug wholesalers*	-1	-4	+3	+4	+2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-7	-4	0	+5	-3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	-9	-6	+3	+3	-2
Tobacco distributors	-4	-5	+5	-1	+1
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-5	+3	-1	+4	-3
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-1	+3	-1	0	-3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-5	+2	-3	+7	-5
Piece goods converters	-9	+6	+2	+8	+2
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+1	+4	+3	-3	+1
Paper wholesalers	-1	+2	+3	-4	0
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+8	+17	+9	+2	+2
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	+4	+12	0	(X)	(X)
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	+3	-2	0	+5	+2
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-6	-5	+4	+7	-3
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+2	-2	+2	+2	+3
Coal wholesalers	-3	+6	-6	+15	+11
Farm supplies wholesalers	+6	-9	+1	-8	

* See text, page 11.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data. See "Inventories," page 11.
r Revised since Advance Release dated December 1, 1960.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS– TEN MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH TEN MONTHS OF 1959

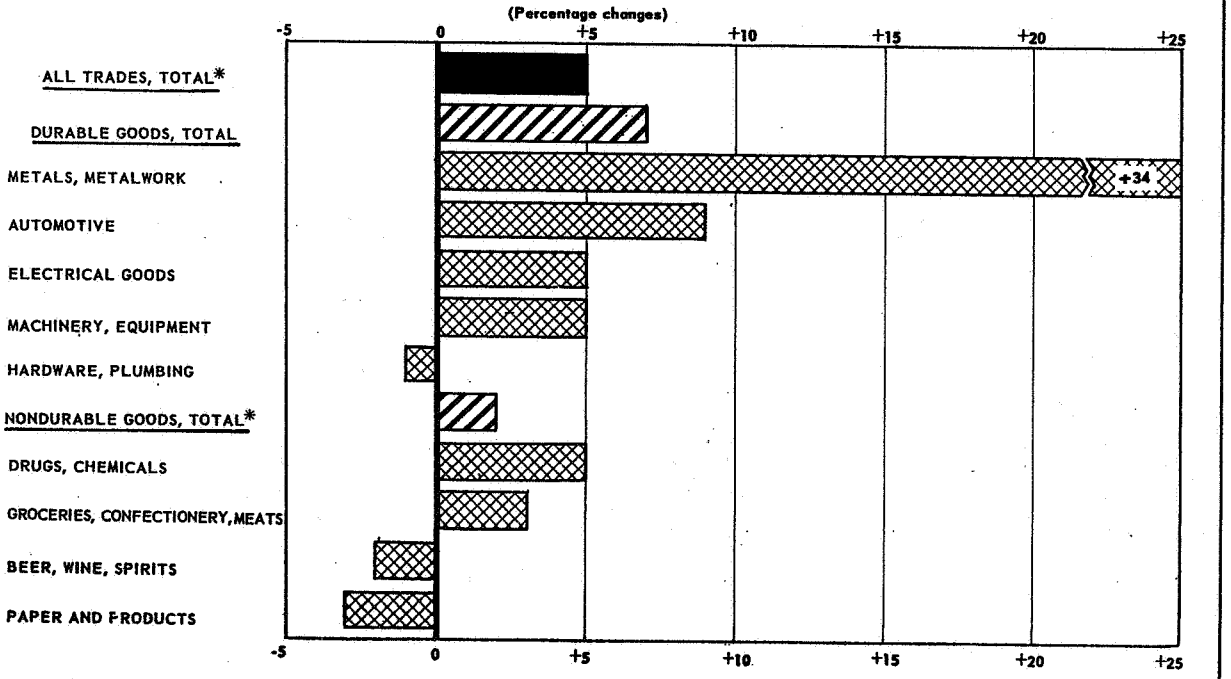
(Percentage changes)



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INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS OCTOBER 1960 COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1959

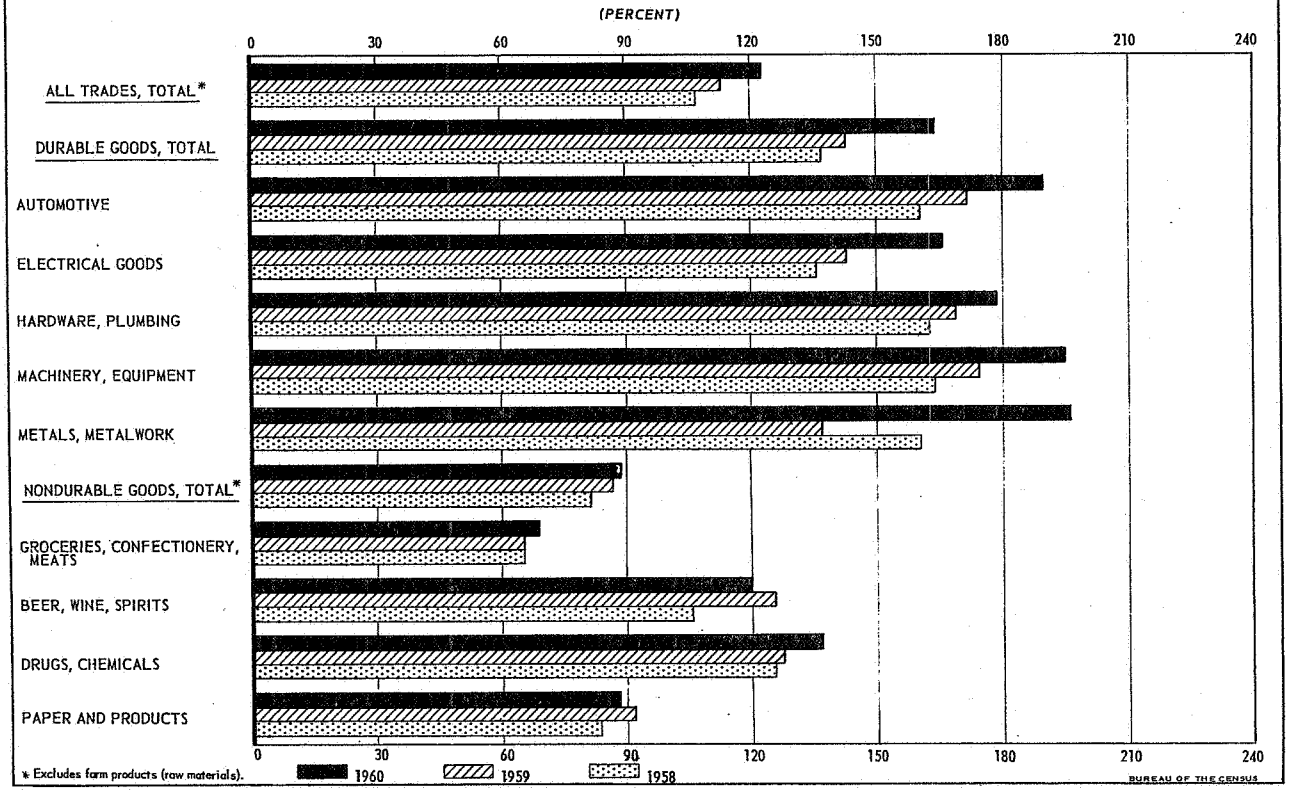
(Percentage changes)



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS OCTOBER 1960 COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1959 AND 1958

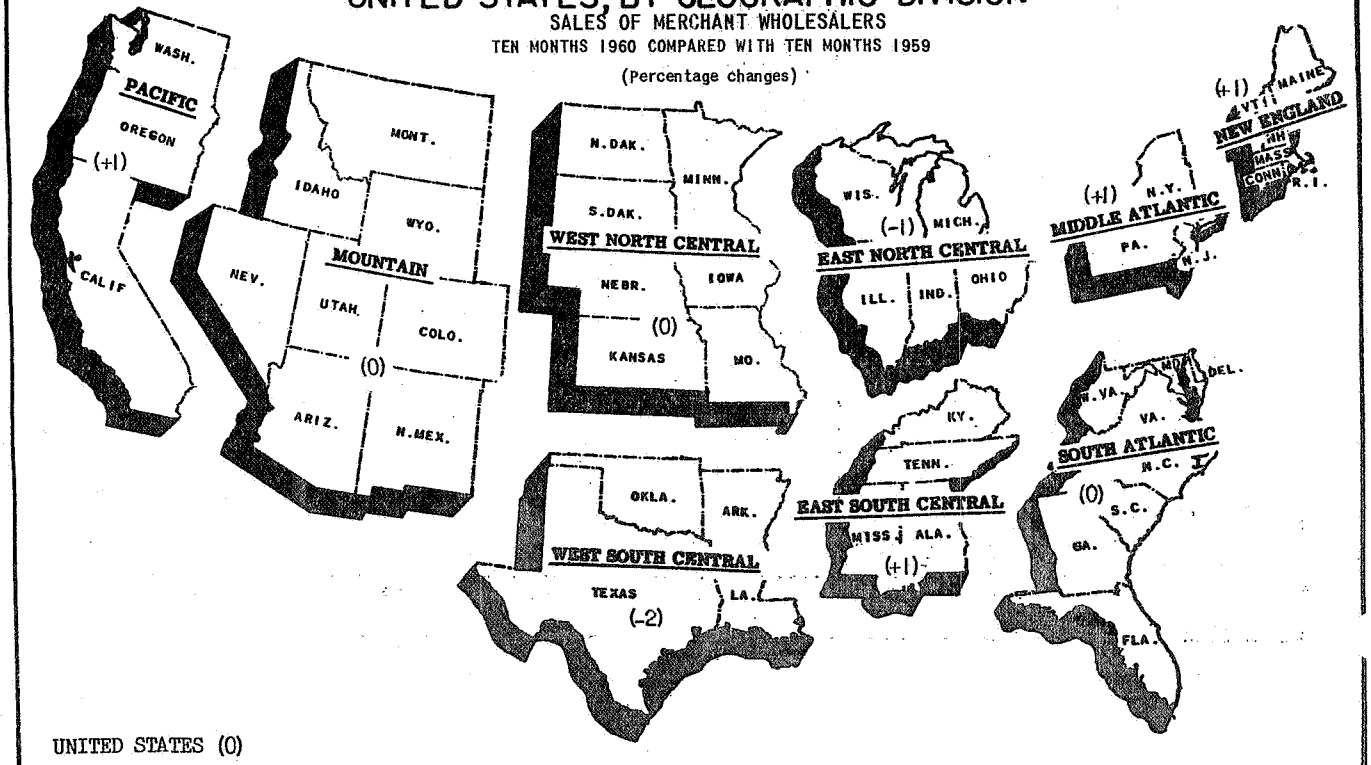


UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS

TEN MONTHS 1960 COMPARED WITH TEN MONTHS 1959

(Percentage changes)



UNITED STATES (0)

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
OCTOBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory end-of-month (at cost)	
	October 1960 from--		10 mos. 1960 from 10 mos. 1959	October 1960 from--	
	October 1959	September 1960		October 1959	September 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	-3	0	0	+5	+1
New England	-5	-2	+1	+8	+1
Middle Atlantic	0	+4	+1	+3	+2
East North Central	-6	-1	-1	+9	0
West North Central	0	-5	0	+5	+1
South Atlantic	-2	-1	0	+4	+1
East South Central	-3	-2	+1	+3	+1
West South Central	-6	0	-2	+4	+1
Mountain	-6	-8	0	-3	+2
Pacific	-4	-4	+1	+1	0
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+6	0	+8	+8	-1
New England	-9	+26	+4	+12	-1
Middle Atlantic	0	+15	+3	+4	-1
East North Central	-9	+2	+4	+10	-2
West North Central	+8	+5	+1	+2	0
South Atlantic	-9	+3	+2	-3	+2
East South Central	-13	+5	+1	0	0
West South Central	-11	-6	-4	-3	-7
Mountain	(X)	-3	-5	+14	+3
Pacific	+6	0	+3	+15	0
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-8	-4	0	+5	+3
New England	-17	-17	+2	+2	+8
Middle Atlantic	-5	+6	+3	0	+3
East North Central	-11	-8	-1	+5	+2
West North Central	-4	-3	-9	-6	0
South Atlantic	-6	-7	-4	+8	+1
East South Central	-7	-14	-1	+25	-2
West South Central	-17	-11	-6	0	+3
Mountain	-3	-21	-2	-2	+2
Pacific	-18	-5	-8	+12	+4
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-12	-5	-1	+5	0
New England	-5	-22	0	+32	0
Middle Atlantic	-14	-4	-3	+6	0
East North Central	-16	-7	-5	+3	-2
West North Central	+1	+14	-8	-3	+1
South Atlantic	-3	0	-3	+2	+1
East South Central	-20	-15	+3	(X)	-4
West South Central	(X)	-4	-6	(X)	-3
Pacific	-2	-2	-5	+19	-3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-5	0	-2	+7	-1
New England	+6	+5	+6	+12	+2
Middle Atlantic	-8	-1	0	+19	-1
East North Central	-8	+3	+1	-1	-2
West North Central	0	-1	-3	-11	+2
South Atlantic	-6	-2	+3	+9	+3
West South Central	-13	-6	-9	-3	-3
Pacific	-6	+8	0	-3	-5
Hardware wholesalers	-8	-2	-4	-4	-2
New England	(X)	+3	+4	(X)	+1
Middle Atlantic	-14	+3	-5	+2	-5
East North Central	-2	+2	-1	+1	0
West North Central	-4	-5	-4	-5	+2
South Atlantic	-4	-4	-4	-1	-3
East South Central	-10	-9	-6	-9	-4
West South Central	-18	-7	-7	+7	0
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-16	-10	-9	-10	-3
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-5	+2	-1	+3	-2
New England	-2	+12	-3	+3	0
Middle Atlantic	-1	+6	-2	0	-1
East North Central	-10	+2	-4	-2	-3
West North Central	-11	+9	-7	-8	-3
South Atlantic	-17	-4	-6	+7	-4
West South Central	(X)	-9	-8	+2	-3
Pacific	+2	+3	0	-7	-2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-10	-3	-7	+1	-3
New England	+6	-5	+2	-16	-4
Middle Atlantic	-3	+3	-8	-4	-5
East North Central	-11	-1	-10	+7	-2
West North Central	(X)	-5	-12	0	-2
South Atlantic	-3	+1	-5	-6	-2
West South Central	0	-5	-9	-14	-3
Pacific	-8	-10	-9	0	-5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

OCTOBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	October 1960 from--		10 mos. 1960 from 10 mos. 1959	October 1960 from--	
	October 1959	September 1960		October 1959	September 1960
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-7	-5	-3	+4	0
Middle Atlantic	-3	+1	+7	-6	0
East North Central	-8	-9	+1	-2	+1
West North Central	-1	+6	-7	(X)	+11
South Atlantic	-8	(X)	+5	0	0
East South Central	-5	+2	+2	+11	+4
West South Central	-10	+12	-16	+3	-1
Mountain	(X)	+10	-8	(X)	+4
Pacific	-12	-2	-6	+12	+1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+5	-1	+8	+6	+5
New England	-7	+4	+6	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+2	+5	+9	+4	+5
East North Central	+4	+4	+8	+2	+5
West North Central	+6	-2	+8	+9	+7
South Atlantic	+5	-3	+6	-4	+11
East South Central	-5	-3	+3	+5	+9
West South Central	-1	-1	+7	+6	-1
Mountain	-2	-1	+8	+5	+4
Pacific	-3	-7	+8	+8	+4
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-6	-3	+3	-2	+3
Middle Atlantic	+10	+6	+5	0	+7
East North Central	+7	-3	+2	0	-4
South Atlantic	+2	-12	+4	-3	+2
West South Central	-11	-17	+5	(X)	+10
Pacific	+4	-7	+10	+11	+3
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-11	0	0	-5	+28
New England	-23	(X)	-1	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	-7	+9	+1	(X)	+9
East North Central	-5	-5	+1	+11	+20
West North Central	-13	-10	+4	-1	+3
South Atlantic	-20	+3	+2	-11	+10
West South Central	-6	+5	-3	+3	+16
Pacific	-3	-2	+3	+4	(X)
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+2	0	+3	+5	+3
New England	-3	-7	+4	-9	-1
Middle Atlantic	+1	+11	+1	+4	+2
East North Central	-3	-4	+3	+11	+3
West North Central	-1	-6	+1	+2	+2
South Atlantic	+6	-4	+4	+4	+1
East South Central	-3	-5	+5	+14	0
West South Central	-1	-12	+5	+5	+3
Mountain	+1	-3	+4	+2	+3
Pacific	+4	-1	+5	-2	+3
Tobacco distributors	-4	-5	+5	-1	+1
New England	+2	0	+5	-1	+18
Middle Atlantic	0	-5	+5	-2	0
East North Central	-3	-4	+4	-3	-3
West North Central	+1	-4	+5	+10	+2
South Atlantic	-3	-6	+3	-1	0
East South Central	(X)	-13	+6	+2	+4
West South Central	+6	0	+7	-8	-2
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-5	+3	-1	+4	-3
New England	-2	-4	-3	+12	-2
Middle Atlantic	-7	+6	-1	+6	0
East North Central	-6	0	+3	+17	-3
West North Central	-1	-13	-4	+10	+8
South Atlantic	-1	-1	+6	+13	-10
Pacific	0	(X)	+4	+14	-1

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

[1] Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants.)

Note: Sales and inventory trends by geographic division shown in table 5 may be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes for the United States. The trends by geographic division pertain only to firms that were in business and reported data in the months for which comparisons are shown, and do not necessarily represent trends of all firms because of the omission of firms that started new businesses or went out of business during the months compared. The percentage changes by geographic division, therefore, are not as reliable as the percentage changes for the United States which are based on "composite" estimates and represent all firms in the sample. (See Text, page 11.)

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 14 through 16.

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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

Percentage changes--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (2) percentage 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 chance. 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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1960. The published estimate is $4,798 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $4,798 million by .016, we obtain $77 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $4,721 and $4,875 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,644 to $4,952 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1960 to June 1960 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $4,798 million by $4,614 million, is 1.04 (it can also be expressed as a 4% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.04 by .009, we obtain .009 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 1.03 to 1.05 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 3% and 5% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.02 to 1.06.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-	-	0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-5	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958--is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 no 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Frederick H. Mueller, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, Director

NOVEMBER 1960

BW-60-11

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
JANUARY 10, 1961[1]

SALES

November 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $11.2 billion, were up slightly (1%) over October and also showed a 3 percent increase over November sales a year ago. Cumulative sales for the first 11 months of 1960, totaling $117.8 billion, were 1 percent above sales in the comparable period of 1959.

November sales gains were due mainly to the nondurable goods trades, which reported total sales of $6.8 billion, up 4 percent over October and 9 percent over November 1959 sales. In contrast, sales in the durable goods trades, totaling $4.4 billion in November, declined 4 percent below October and were also down 5 percent from a year ago. Eleven month 1960 sales were down 3 percent in the durable goods trades, but up 3 percent in the nondurable goods trades.

Most nondurable goods trades reported gains over previous month sales, large increases being indicated by wine, distilled spirits wholesalers (20%) and poultry distributors (18%). Only four durable goods trades--jewelry (7%), nonferrous metals (5%), industrial machinery (1%), and waste materials (1%)--indicated increases. Notable declines from October sales were shown by air conditioning, refrigeration equipment distributors (15%) and lumber wholesalers (11%) among the durable goods trades, and by paint, varnish wholesalers (19%), and clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers (10%) among the nondurables. Compared with a year ago, farm products (raw materials) merchants, with sales up 21 percent, reported the principal increase, while iron, steel scrap dealers registered the sharpest decline (23%).

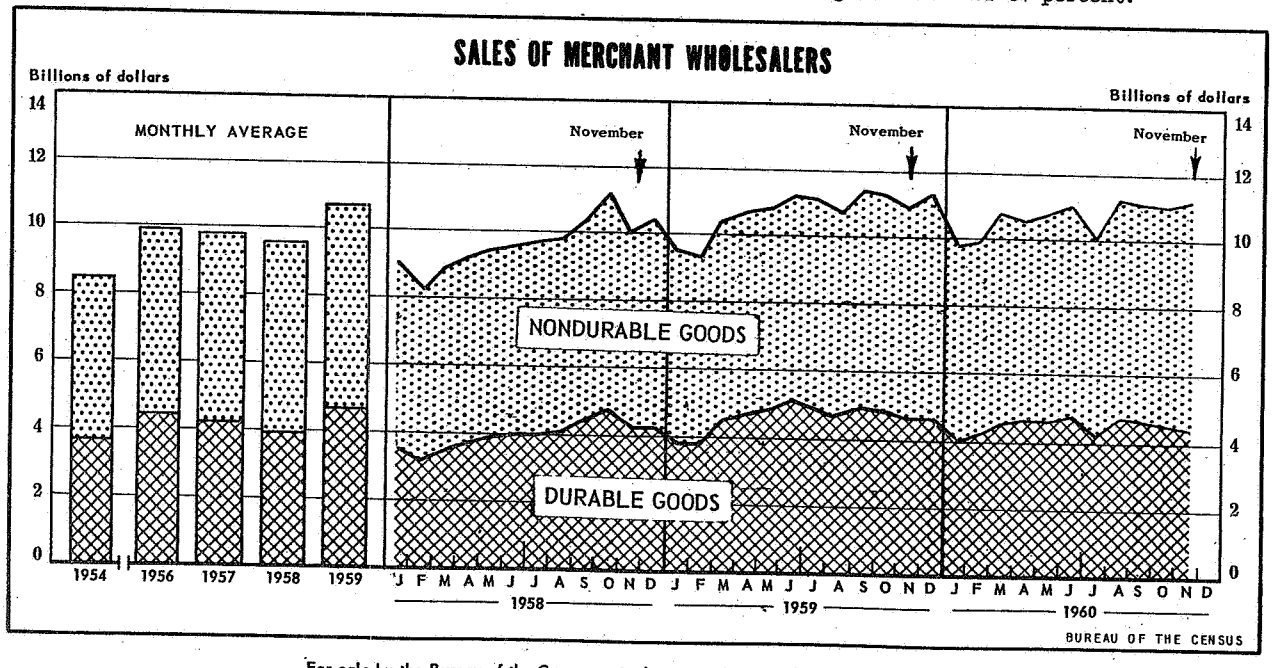
Four geographic divisions reported sales up over October, the largest gain being shown by the West South Central Division (6%). One division, New England, showed no change; the remaining four indicated declines down to 4 percent in the West North Central and East South Central Divisions. Compared with a year ago, sales trends ranged from an increase of 10 percent in the West North Central Division to a decline of 4 percent in the East South Central Division.

INVENTORIES

Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw materials) merchants, estimated at $12.2 billion on November 30, declined slightly (1%) from their October 31 level, but were 4 percent above a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined 2 percent from their October level, while nondurable goods remained unchanged. However, both trade groups reported larger inventories than a year ago, the durable goods, up 5 percent, indicating a larger increase than the nondurable goods (2%).

Most trades indicated relatively small changes from their October 31 inventory levels, mostly downward. However, the largest change was an increase shown by fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers (10%). Compared with November a year ago, stocks were higher in most trades. For the third successive month, iron, steel products distributors, up 39 percent, registered the principal gain over their year-ago inventory level.

The November 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 122 percent, unchanged from October, but up 3 points over the November 1959 stock-sales ratio. The November 1960 stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 167 percent compared with the nondurable goods ratio of 87 percent.



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

[1]An advance release of November 1960 data was issued on January 3, 1961.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960											1959		Total 11 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.[1]	Nov.[2]	Nov.	Dec.	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,750	11,142	10,072	11,297	11,091	11,104	11,162	r10,859	r11,370	117,810	117,074
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	9,986	10,404	9,337	10,482	10,180	10,100	10,044	9,933	10,366	108,674	108,120
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,614	4,798	4,238	4,739	4,625	4,547	4,354	4,593	4,655	49,252	50,550
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	532	573	510	557	537	540	519	513	499	5,851	5,650
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	443	469	427	472	467	469	450	426	380	4,821	4,461
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	654	711	654	720	721	698	697	754	791	7,456	7,542
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	349	321	354	350	340	337	351	378	3,612	3,609
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	326	362	333	366	371	359	360	402	413	3,845	3,930
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	215	226	189	232	239	242	235	237	239	2,410	2,451
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	66	72	60	76	73	72	69	69	75	748	752
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	149	154	129	156	166	170	166	168	164	1,663	1,697
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	460	466	430	486	487	489	454	458	423	4,901	5,012
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	198	201	182	205	204	200	188	194	189	2,117	2,195
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	262	266	248	281	283	289	266	264	234	2,786	2,819
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	728	779	692	747	710	688	617	650	605	7,297	7,854
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	385	420	361	381	352	340	304	353	337	3,898	4,343
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	343	359	331	366	358	347	313	297	268	3,396	3,511
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,283	1,288	1,096	1,218	1,188	1,127	1,072	1,141	1,173	12,946	13,153
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	533	450	507	500	474	477	512	538	5,567	5,780
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	112	119	108	123	121	121	115	113	113	1,255	1,209
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	151	147	131	150	151	148	142	130	145	1,596	1,526
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	400	424	368	428	411	407	406	430	461	4,536	4,882
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	284	300	263	297	289	289	283	302	311	3,222	3,5[illegible]
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	115	124	105	131	122	118	124	128	150	1,315	1,[illegible]
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	276	271	243	274	245	260	251	306	348	3,064	3,178
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	153	149	139	153	137	147	136	177	224	1,746	1,778
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	123	121	104	121	108	114	115	129	123	1,318	1,400
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,136	6,344	5,834	6,557	6,465	6,558	6,807	r6,266	r6,715	68,556	66,523
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,372	5,606	5,099	5,742	5,554	5,554	5,689	5,340	5,711	59,409	57,569
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,828	1,941	1,787	1,951	1,857	1,882	1,909	1,734	1,844	20,368	19,263
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	802	852	798	865	841	828	851	751	793	8,995	8,299
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	614	646	590	639	618	636	626	599	634	6,887	6,626
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	61	56	60	60	64	68	62	69	659	638
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	354	382	344	386	338	354	364	323	347	3,826	3,701
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	410	445	399	395	371	383	423	396	439	4,367	4,315
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	138	123	141	150	156	184	154	158	1,518	1,466
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	280	307	275	254	222	227	239	242	281	2,849	2,850
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	614	650	583	633	615	607	689	608	755	6,441	6,068
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	247	268	270	282	246	213	216	197	222	2,506	2,403
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	367	382	313	350	369	395	473	412	533	3,935	3,668
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	391	404	360	421	415	409	392	376	384	4,348	4,251
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	236	245	224	262	271	269	260	243	247	2,754	2,669
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	120	120	101	122	111	109	105	107	113	1,240	1,241
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	35	38	35	36	33	32	26	27	24	351	343
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	343	371	344	365	365	345	354	324	383	3,748	3,570
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	491	512	572	537	501	527	466	625	566	582	555	571	500	5,934	6,019
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	185	176	174	259	222	229	207	217	169	2,243	2,276
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	193	192	210	196	194	215	187	230	225	228	229	230	208	2,290	2,373
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	346	316	377	354	364	366	349	361	3,848	3,724
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	299	301	275	328	308	312	308	297	307	3,342	3,255
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	68	61	68	70	73	69	77	86	766	819
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	127	106	121	125	118	101	108	119	1,474	1,457

[1] Final estimate
[2] Preliminary estimate

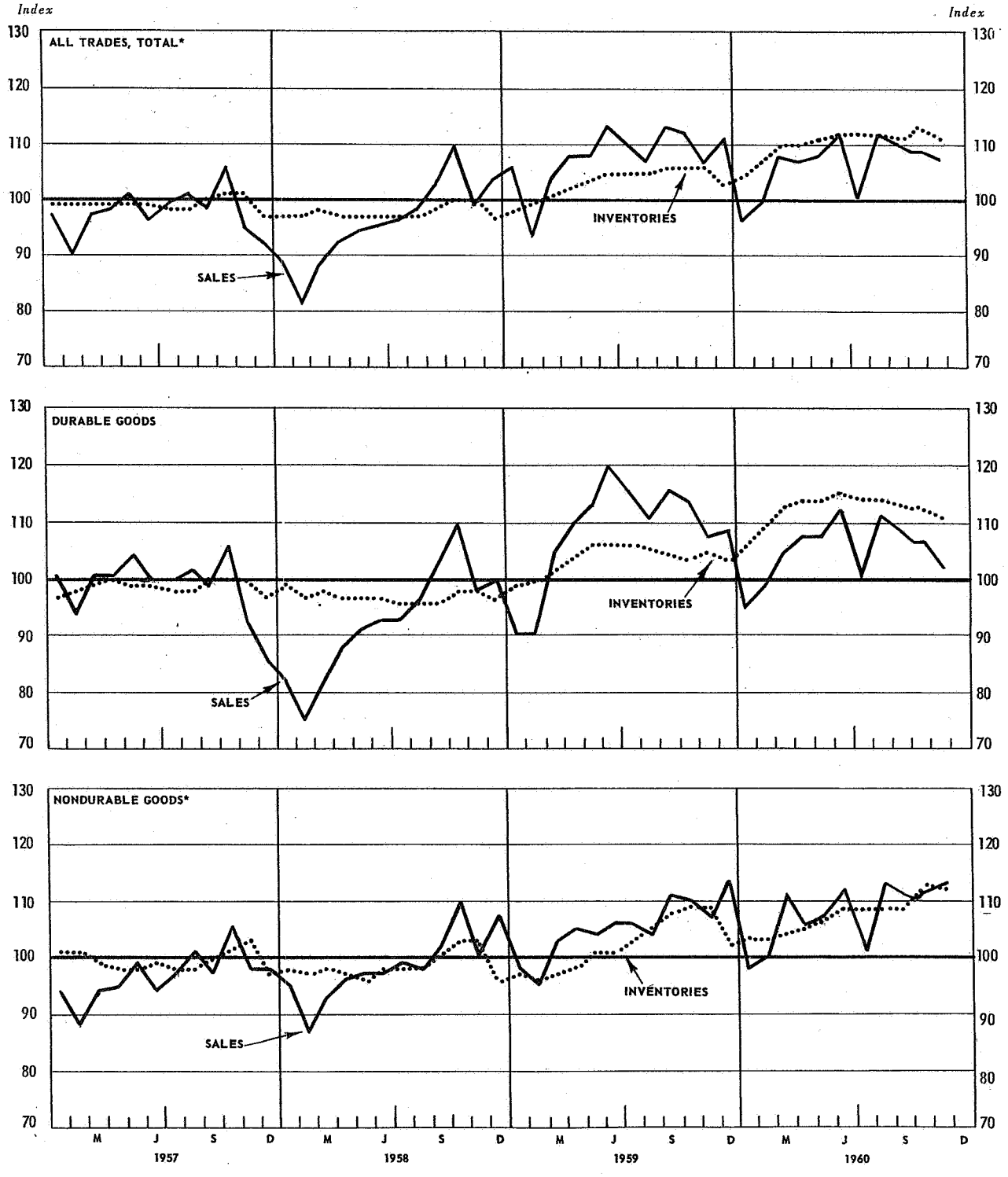
See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

r Revised

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. 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.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
1957, 1958, 1959 AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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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 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960											1959	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.[1]	Nov.[2]	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,172	12,267	12,300	12,296	12,195	12,346	12,213	11,773	11,427
Selected Kinds of Business													
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,013	1,032	1,025	1,040	1,028	1,017	1,000	932	959
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	874	877	873	895	891	885	873	815	835
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,166	1,162	1,119	1,118	1,133	1,150	1,148	1,105	1,041
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	512	496	485	492	487	495	488	483	462
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	600	627	626	625	654	666	634	625	646	654	660	622	579
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	929	912	925	911	891	882	857	865	850
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	440	432	434	429	410	410	397	417	406
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	489	480	489	482	482	472	460	448	444
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,181	2,192	2,234	2,229	2,175	2,186	2,153	2,108	2,109
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	871	850	856	863	844	831	811	818	833
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	852	869	869	821	812	803	785	603	647
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	708	726	731	682	679	670	654	469	505
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,191	1,181	1,192	1,226	1,213	1,270	1,262	1,243	1,206
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	676	657	671	685	674	707	703	676	660
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	631	672	654	662	652	731	771	738	598
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	496	523	510	527	524	606	654	617	502
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	526	539	540	551	549	559	542	519	504
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	379	389	385	399	399	411	396	376	362
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	338	340	341	331	324	329	327	329	321
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	284	285	286	276	268	272	270	274	268

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960											1959	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.[1]	Nov.[2]	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	118	132	117	120	122	122	119	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	157	178	158	160	163	167	152	148
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	190	180	201	187	191	188	193	182	192
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	197	187	204	190	191	189	194	191	220
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	178	163	171	155	157	165	165	147	132
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	142	151	139	139	145	145	138	122
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	201	184	190	171	174	182	183	155	140
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	202	196	215	187	183	180	189	189	201
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	215	238	209	201	205	211	215	215
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	180	197	172	170	163	173	170	190
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	170	170	204	183	183	194	201	185	180
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	161	159	190	170	169	175	170	160	155
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	213	205	236	192	198	197	192	140	140
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	249	242	278	230	235	231	230	155	162
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	84	93	84	86	89	87	90	79
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	61	67	63	65	67	66	72	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	84	77	84	79	80	85	82	90	83
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	103	103	112	105	106	120	112	121	79
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	135	137	163	151	142	153	138	150	94
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	133	150	131	132	137	138	138	131
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	161	159	172	152	147	153	152	155	147
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	98	108	88	92	90	90	94	89
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	95	95	104	84	87	87	88	92	87

[1] Final estimate
[2] Preliminary estimate

See page 12, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

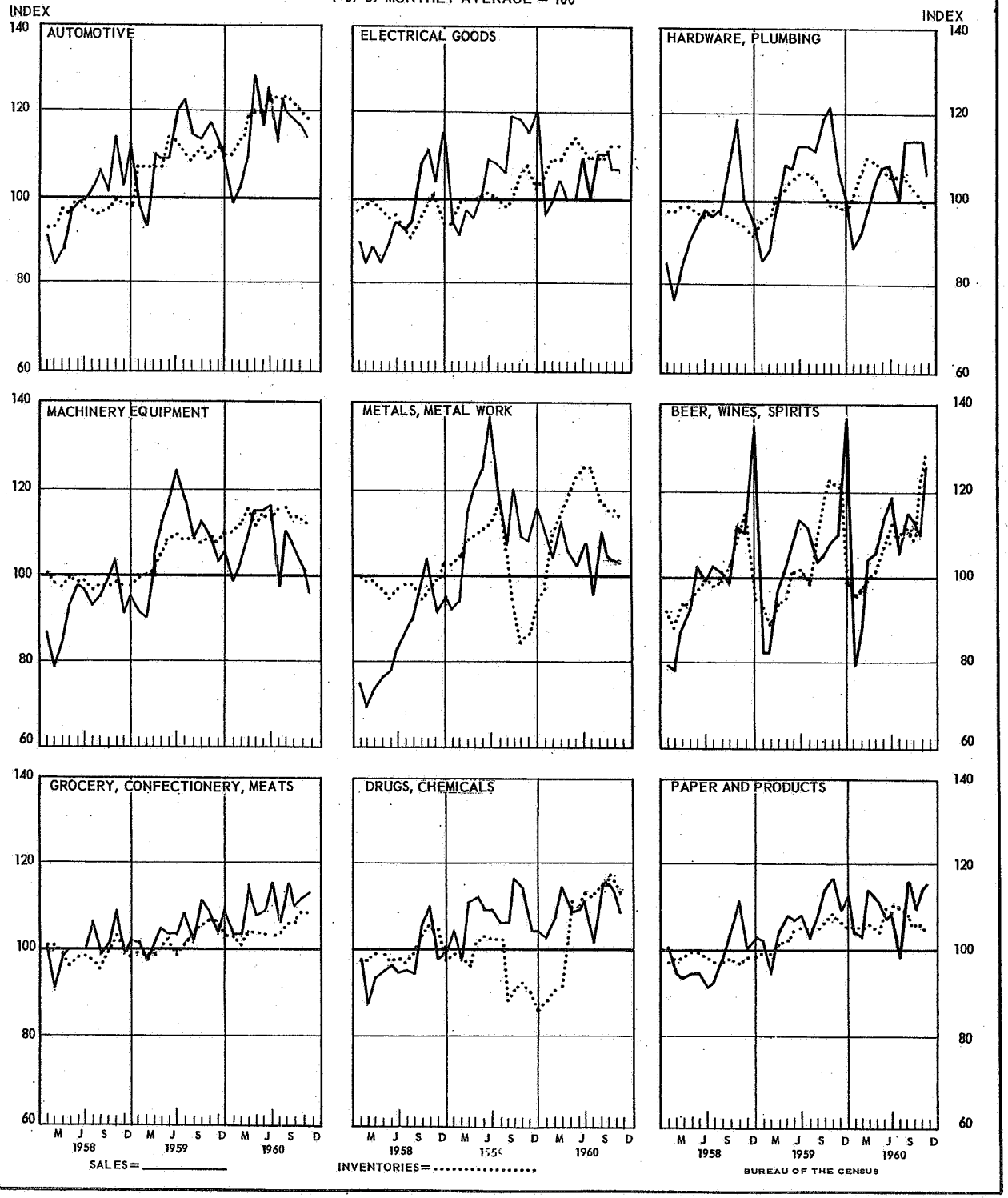
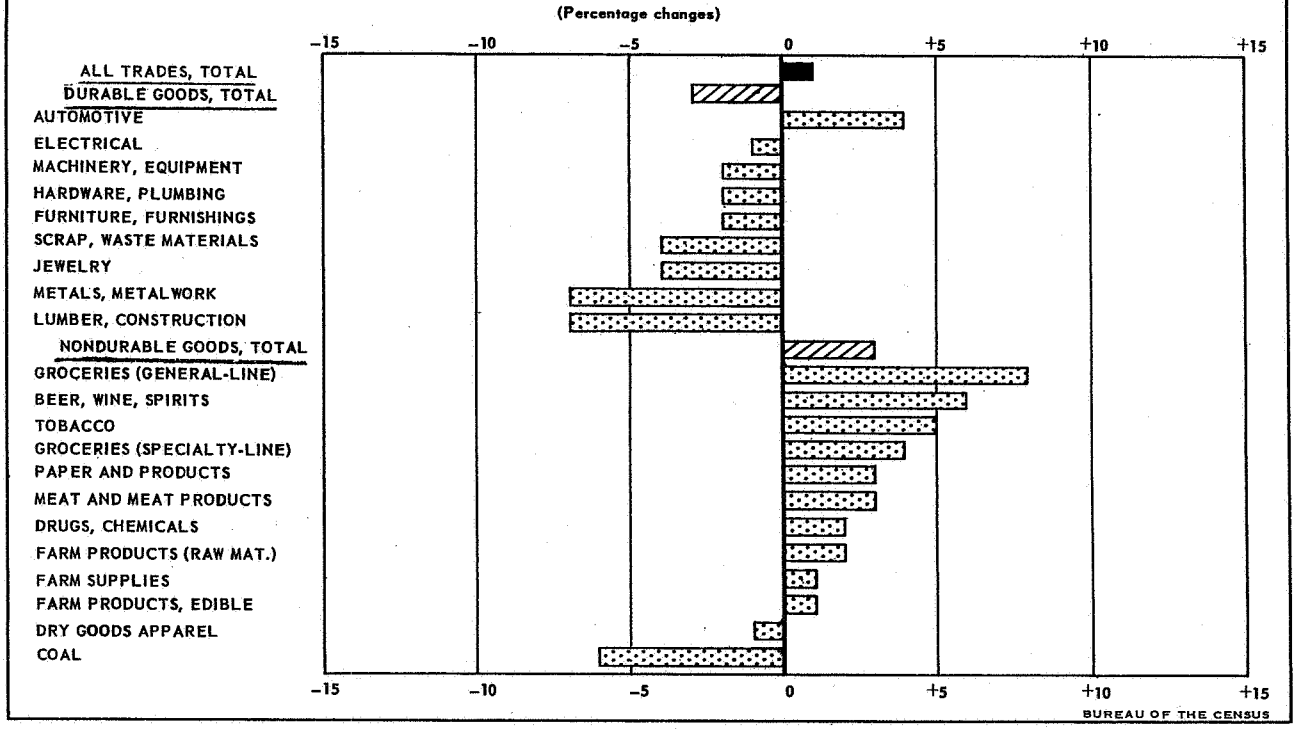


Table 4. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: NOVEMBER 1960

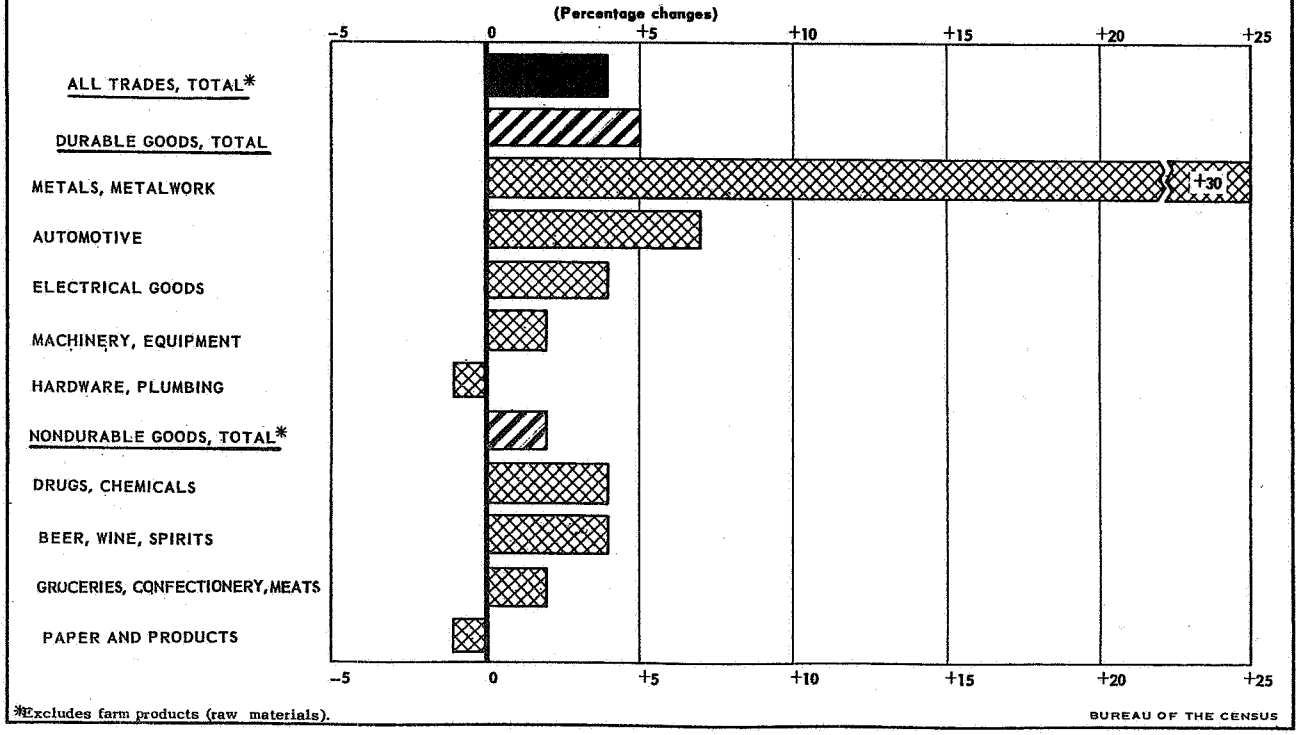
Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	November 1960 from--		11 mos. 1960 from 11 mos. 1959	November 1960 from--	
	November 1959	October 1960		November 1959	October 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	+3	+1	+1	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	+1	-1	+1	+4	-1
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-5	-4	-3	+5	-2
Automotive wholesalers	+1	-4	+4	+7	-2
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+6	-4	+8	+7	-2
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	-8	0	-1	+4	0
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-4	-1	0	+1	-1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-10	0	-2	+6	+1
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-1	-3	-2	+7	-2
Furniture wholesalers	0	-4	-1	-3	-1
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-1	-2	-2	+10	-2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	-1	-7	-2	-1	-3
Hardware wholesalers	-3	-6	-4	-5	-3
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+1	-8	-1	+3	-3
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-5	-10	-7	+2	-1
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-14	-11	-10	-4	-1
Construction materials distributors	+5	-10	-3	+10	-2
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-6	-5	-2	+2	-2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-8	-15	+12	+13	+4
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	0	-6	+6	-1	-2
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-7	+1	-4	-1	-2
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	+2	-5	+4	+11	0
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	+5	-4	+8	+10	-5
Service establishment supply houses	+9	-4	+5	+7	+4
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-6	0	-7	+30	-2
Iron, steel and products distributors	-6	-2	-10	+39	-2
Nonferrous metals distributors	-3	+5	+1	-2	-2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-18	-3	-4	-9	0
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-23	-7	-2	-11	+1
Waste materials dealers	-11	+1	-6	-4	0
Jewelry wholesalers	-2	+7	-4	(X)	(X)
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	+9	+4	+3	+3	+3
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	+7	+2	+3	+2	0
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+10	+1	+6	+2	-1
General-line grocery wholesalers	+13	+3	+8	+4	-1
Voluntary groups*	+10	+1	+7	+5	0
Retailer-cooperative*	+14	+7	+14	+7	+1
Nonaffiliated*	+13	+3	+5	+3	-2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+5	-2	+4	-4	-1
Confectionery wholesalers	+10	+6	+3	+10	+2
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+13	+3	+3	+7	0
Farm products (edible) distributors	+7	+10	+1	+8	+5
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+19	+18	+4	+13	-3
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-1	+5	0	+5	+10
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+13	+14	+6	+4	+5
Beer, ale distributors	+10	+1	+4	-2	-6
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	+15	+20	+7	+6	+8
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	+4	-4	+2	+4	-3
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+7	-3	+3	+5	-4
General-line drug wholesalers*	+4	-4	+3	+3	-4
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-2	-4	0	+5	-2
Paint, varnish wholesalers	-4	-19	+2	-5	0
Tobacco distributors	+9	+3	+5	-3	+3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-3	-5	-1	+2	-4
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-5	-10	-1	-2	-9
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	0	0	-3	+6	-1
Piece goods converters	-5	0	+2	+1	0
Paper, allied products wholesalers	+5	+1	+3	-1	-1
Paper wholesalers	+4	-1	+3	-1	-1
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+12	+12	+9	+4	0
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	+21	+11	+2	(X)	(X)
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	+2	+2	0	+2	-1
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	+3	+4	+4	+6	-3
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+6	-1	+3	-2	0
Coal wholesalers	-10	-6	-6	+11	+3
Farm supplies wholesalers	-6	-14	+1	-10	+9

* See text, page 11.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data. See "Inventories," page 11.

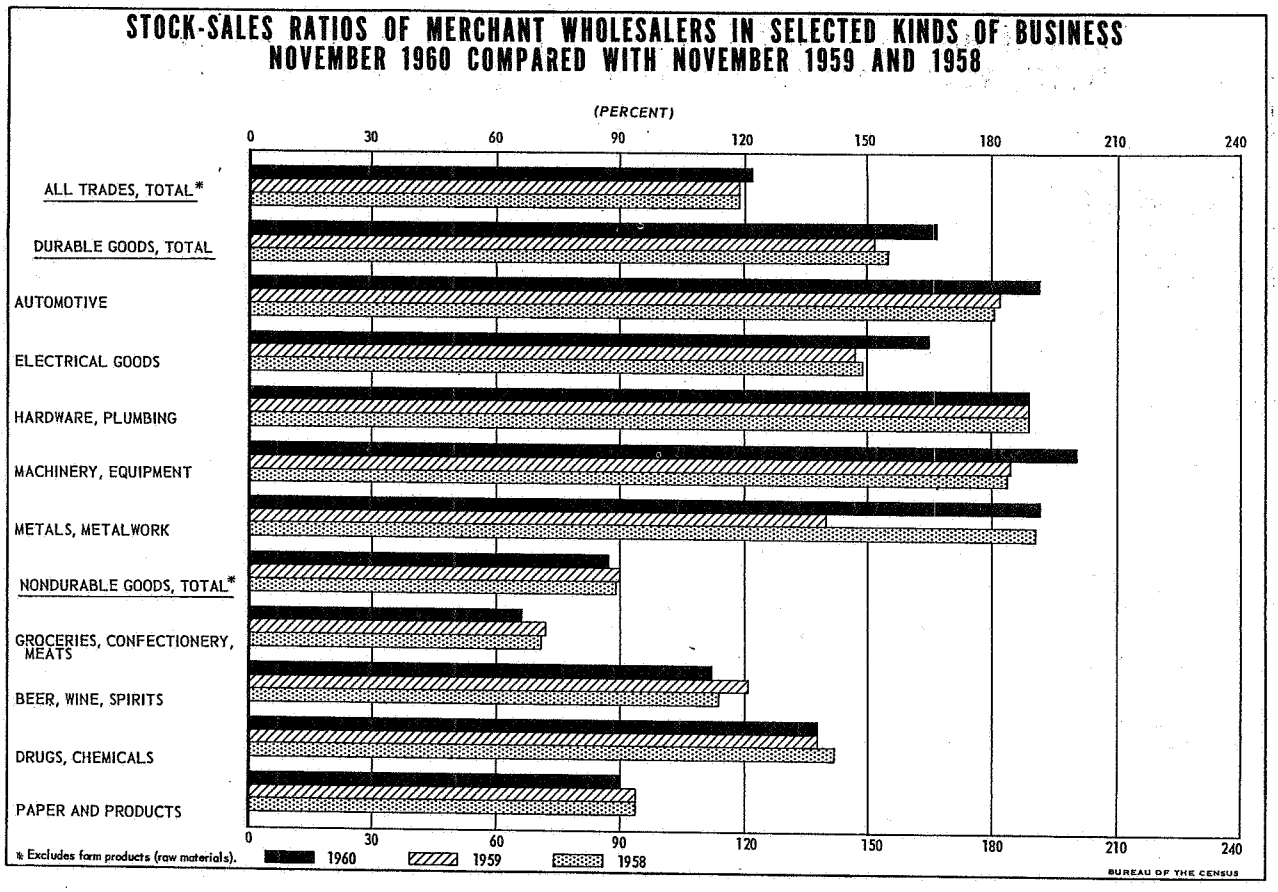
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS— ELEVEN MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH ELEVEN MONTHS OF 1959



INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS NOVEMBER 1960 COMPARED WITH NOVEMBER 1959



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).


STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
NOVEMBER 1960 COMPARED WITH NOVEMBER 1959 AND 1958
(PERCENT)
0
30
60
90
120
150
180
210
240
ALL TRADES, TOTAL*
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL
AUTOMOTIVE
ELECTRICAL GOODS
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
METALS, METALWORK
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL*
GROCERIES, CONFECTIONERY, MEATS
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
* Excludes farm products (raw materials).
1960
1959
1958
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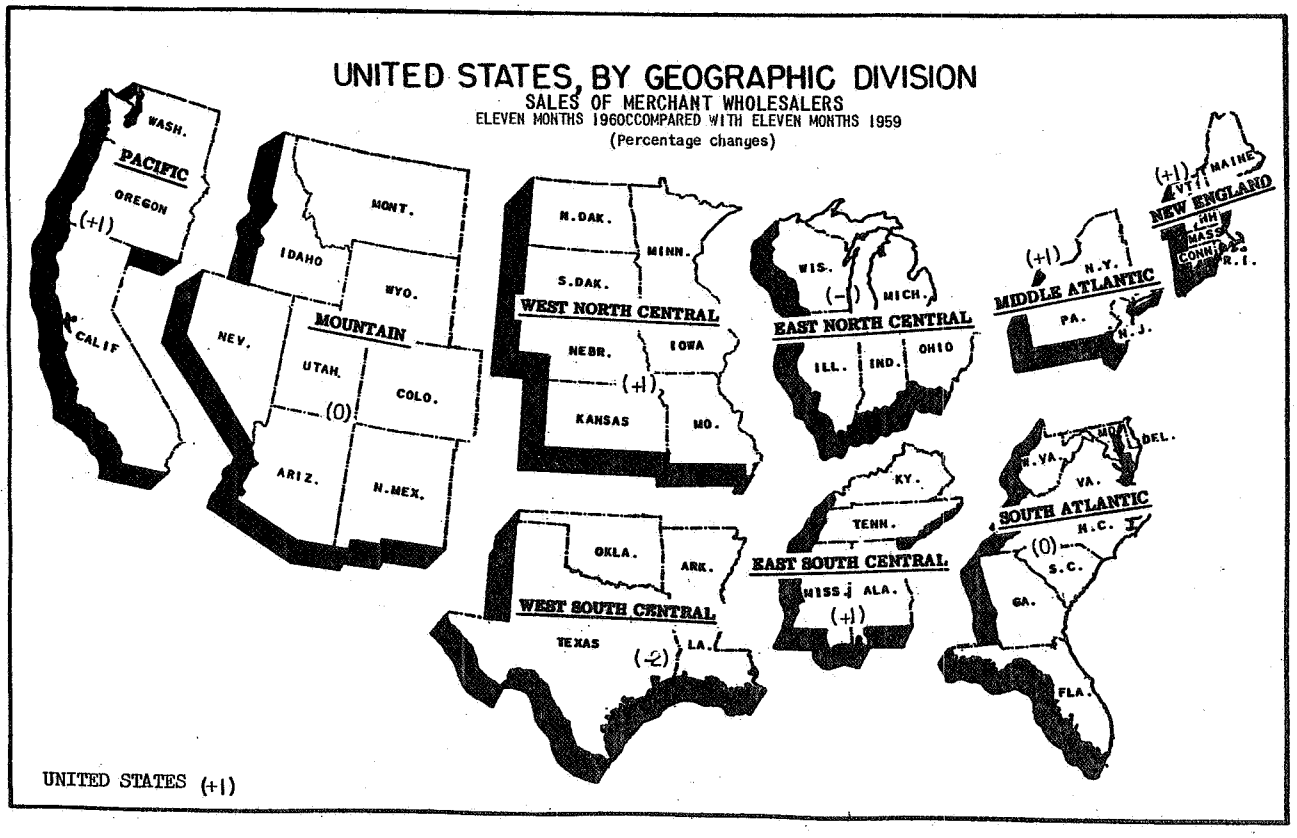

UNITED STATES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
ELEVEN MONTHS 1960COMPARED WITH ELEVEN MONTHS 1959
(Percentage changes)
WASH.
PACIFIC
OREGON
(+1)
CALIF
MONT.
IDAHO
WYO.
NEV.
MOUNTAIN
UTAH
(0)
COLO.
ARIZ.
N.MEX.
N.DAK.
MINN.
S.DAK.
WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEBR.
IOWA
(+1)
KANSAS
MO.
WIS.
(-1)
MICH.
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
(+1)
N.Y.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
PA.
N.J.
(+1)
MAINE
NEW ENGLAND
VT.
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
MD.
DEL.
W.VA.
VA.
SOUTH ATLANTIC
N.C.
(0)
S.C.
GA.
FLA.
KY.
TENN.
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MISS.
ALA.
(+1)
OKLA.
ARK.
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
TEXAS
(-2)
LA.
UNITED STATES (+1)

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
NOVEMBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory end-of-month (at cost)	
	November 1960 from--		11 mos. 1960 from 11 mos. 1959	November 1960 from--	
	November 1959	October 1960		November 1959	October 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	+3	+1	+1	+4	-1
New England	0	0	+1	+7	+1
Middle Atlantic	+3	+1	+1	+1	-1
East North Central	0	-4	-1	+5	-1
West North Central	+10	+3	+1	+3	-1
South Atlantic	-3	+2	0	-1	0
East South Central	-4	-4	+1	+1	-2
West South Central	+1	+6	-2	+1	-1
Mountain	0	-1	0	-2	-7
Pacific	+1	-2	+1	0	-2
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+6	-4	+8	+7	-2
New England	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	0	+6	+2	(X)	-7
East North Central	-6	-10	+3	+5	0
West North Central	-3	-11	+1	-1	0
South Atlantic	+1	-2	+2	+2	0
East South Central	-4	-6	+1	-1	-1
West South Central	-4	-3	-4	+5	+2
Mountain	(X)	+2	-8	(X)	-2
Pacific	+9	-4	+4	+5	-4
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-4	-1	0	+1	-1
New England	-13	-4	0	-7	0
Middle Atlantic	+1	-7	+2	-2	-3
East North Central	+6	+3	0	-1	-2
West North Central	-2	-2	-9	-7	-1
South Atlantic	-4	+7	-4	+1	-2
East South Central	-1	-7	-1	+8	+1
West South Central	-11	0	-6	+1	+2
Mountain	-1	+3	-2	-2	+3
Pacific	-8	+2	-8	-3	-4
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-10	0	-2	+6	+1
New England	-5	+3	-1	-2	-1
Middle Atlantic	+2	+4	-2	+2	-2
East North Central	-14	-3	-6	+5	-1
West North Central	-12	-1	-8	-1	+1
South Atlantic	-22	-10	-5	(X)	+6
East South Central	(X)	-10	+1	+15	+3
West South Central	-13	+1	-6	-13	+2
Pacific	-15	+8	-6	+6	+4
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-1	-3	-2	+7	-2
New England	(X)	-10	+4	(X)	+1
Middle Atlantic	0	-1	0	+34	+1
East North Central	+1	-8	+1	-5	-2
West North Central	+4	+9	-1	-5	-2
South Atlantic	+3	-4	+3	-4	-5
East South Central	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
West South Central	-12	-7	-1	-11	-4
Pacific					
Hardware wholesalers	-3	-6	-4	-5	-3
New England	-3	-3	+4	-9	-4
Middle Atlantic	+5	-6	-4	+2	+2
East North Central	+7	-6	0	-1	-4
West North Central	+1	-10	-4	+1	-5
South Atlantic	-9	-6	-5	+3	-3
East South Central	-10	-6	-6	-7	-5
West South Central	-9	-6	-7	-4	-2
Mountain	-11	-23	-10	-14	-4
Pacific	-9	-1	-9	-2	-3
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	+1	-8	-1	+3	-3
New England	-2	-14	-3	(X)	-5
Middle Atlantic	-3	-2	-2	0	-4
East North Central	-1	-16	-3	+1	-4
West North Central	+1	-4	-7	+3	-5
South Atlantic	-8	-10	-6	+3	-2
East South Central	-3	+2	-8	+3	0
West South Central	-12	-10	-1	-5	0
Pacific					
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-5	-10	-7	+2	-1
New England	(X)	+1	+2	-16	0
Middle Atlantic	-2	-4	-7	+13	-4
East North Central	-4	-16	-9	+5	-1
West North Central	-15	-17	-12	-3	0
South Atlantic	(X)	-4	-7	(X)	+1
West South Central	-14	-2	-9	-8	-1
Pacific	-20	-16	-10	-1	-2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued
NOVEMBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page 8)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	November 1960 from--		11 mos. 1960 from 11 mos. 1959	November 1960 from--	
	November 1959	October 1960		November 1959	October 1960
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-7	+1	-4	-1	-2
Middle Atlantic	(X)	(X)	+8	+5	0
East North Central	-4	-3	0	-8	-1
West North Central	-13	(X)	-9	-14	-2
South Atlantic	+1	-1	+5	+4	-2
East South Central	-13	+3	0	(X)	-2
West South Central	-7	+2	-16	+4	-4
Mountain	-8	-14	-8	+5	-4
Pacific	-6	-6	-6	0	-3
General-line grocery wholesalers	+13	+3	+8	+4	-1
New England	+19	-2	+8	+5	+3
Middle Atlantic	+9	-2	+9	+1	+1
East North Central	+6	+2	+7	+2	-1
West North Central	+17	+4	+9	+5	+3
South Atlantic	+9	+2	+6	+5	-1
East South Central	+8	+1	+4	+8	-3
West South Central	+23	+8	+8	-4	-2
Mountain	+14	0	+8	+4	-3
Pacific	+12	+6	+8	+3	-3
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	+5	-2	+4	-4	-1
Middle Atlantic	+2	-2	+4	-5	+2
East North Central	+12	-9	+3	0	-4
South Atlantic	+24	+17	+5	(X)	-2
West South Central	+13	+6	+6	-10	-3
Pacific	+21	-8	+12	+4	(X)
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-1	+5	0	+5	+10
New England	-3	0	-2	(X)	+4
Middle Atlantic	+3	+17	+1	-6	+15
East North Central	+2	+9	+1	+22	+8
West North Central	+12	+4	+4	(X)	+10
South Atlantic	-3	+2	+2	+12	+8
West South Central	+1	0	-3	-4	+14
Pacific	+7	+6	+3	(X)	+15
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	+7	-3	+3	+5	
New England	+7	-4	+4	+3	+6
Middle Atlantic	+3	-8	+1	-1	-2
East North Central	+3	0	+3	+3	-3
West North Central	+8	-2	+1	+4	-8
South Atlantic	+1	+1	+4	-1	-3
East South Central	+3	+4	+5	+8	-3
West South Central	+4	+1	+5	+2	-3
Mountain	+9	-1	+4	0	-10
Pacific	+3	-5	+5	+1	-4
Tobacco distributors	+9	+3	+5	-3	+3
New England	+10	+1	+6	-7	+3
Middle Atlantic	+10	+4	+6	-3	+2
East North Central	+7	+5	+4	+9	+3
West North Central	+10	+2	+5	+11	+2
South Atlantic	+6	+5	+3	-3	+1
East South Central	+7	-1	+6	+13	+6
West South Central	+4	-5	+7	+1	-1
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-3	-5	-1	+2	-4
New England	+1	-11	-2	+14	+4
Middle Atlantic	+1	-1	-1	0	-2
East North Central	-7	-11	+2	-5	-9
West North Central	-7	-14	-4	(X)	-4
South Atlantic	-12	-11	+4	(X)	-7
Pacific	-4	-4	+4	+3	-8

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.
[1] Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants.

Note: Sales and inventory trends by geographic division shown in table 5 may be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes for the United States. The trends by geographic division pertain only to firms that were in business and reported data in the months for which comparisons are shown, and do not necessarily represent trends of all firms because of the omission of firms that started new businesses or went out of business during the months compared. The percentage changes by geographic division, therefore, are not as reliable as the percentage changes for the United States which are based on "composite" estimates and represent all firms in the sample. (See Text, page 11.)

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 14 through 16.

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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA--Continued

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

Percentage changes--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (2) percentage 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 chance. 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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1960. The published estimate is $4,798 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $4,798 million by .016, we obtain $77 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $4,721 and $4,875 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,644 to $4,952 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1960 to June 1960 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $4,798 million by $4,614 million, is 1.04 (it can also be expressed as a 4% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.04 by .009, we obtain .009 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 1.03 to 1.05 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 3% and 5% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.02 to 1.06.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY—ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to—				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to—	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-	-	0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-5	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958—is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 no 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 su as bags, boxes, cups, dishes, towels, napkins, tissues, a 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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
Luther H. Hodges, *Secretary*

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

DECEMBER 1960

BW-60-12

SALES AND INVENTORIES

FOR RELEASE
FEBRUARY 7, 1961[1]

ANNUAL SALES

Twelve-month 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $128.6 billion, were virtually the same as sales in the comparable period of 1959. Durable goods trades, with 1960 sales totaling $53.3 billion, showed a 3 percent decline from annual 1959 sales, but the nondurable goods trades, with sales of $75.3 billion, indicated a 3 percent gain over the same period.

Among the durable goods trades, 6 trades reported increases over 1959 sales, while 14 trades noted declines. The sharpest drop (11%) was indicated by iron, steel and products distributors and by lumber, millwork wholesalers. However, among the nondurable goods trades, only 4 trades showed declines, 3 indicated no change, and 19 reported increases. Retailer-cooperative grocery wholesalers, with sales up 13 percent over 1959, registered the principal gain.

DECEMBER SALES

December 1960 sales of merchant wholesalers, estimated at $10.8 billion, dropped 4 percent below November sales and were 5 percent below December sales a year ago. Sales in the durable goods trades, estimated at $4.0 billion, were 7 percent below November and 13 percent below December 1959 sales. The nondurable goods trades, with December sales of $6.7 billion, indicated a smaller (1%) decline from last month and no change from a year ago.

Most trades reported December sales below November levels. Substantial declines were indicated by clothing, furnishings wholesalers (30%), construction materials distributors (28%), dry goods wholesalers (18%), and plumbing, heating distributors (17%). The principal increase was registered by coal wholesalers (10%). Compared with year-ago sales, gains were noted by only two durable goods trades--automotive equipment (9%) and professional equipment, supplies (4%), and by nine nondurable goods trades. Poultry products distributors, up 17 percent over last December, showed the principal gain, while iron, steel scrap dealers, off 45 percent from a year ago, noted the sharpest decrease.

INVENTORIES

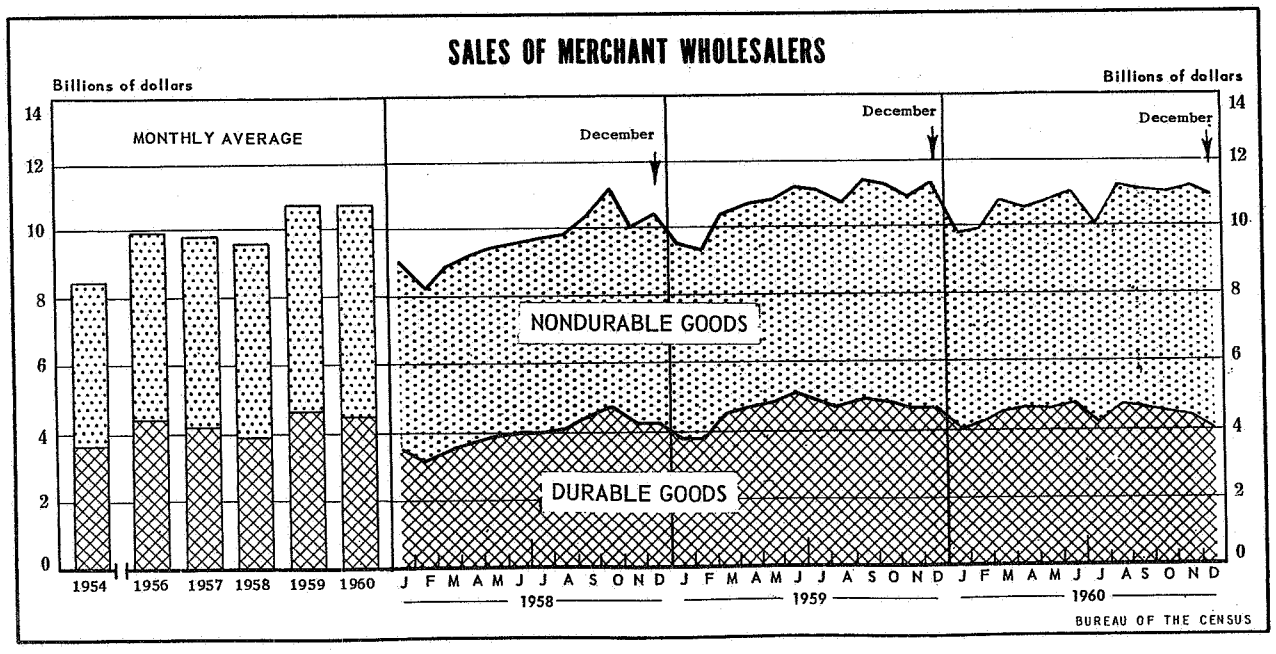
Inventories of merchant wholesalers, excluding farm products (raw materials) merchants, estimated at $11.7 billion at year-end 1960 were off 5 percent from their November 30 level, but were 3 percent higher than stocks on hand a year ago. Durable goods stocks declined 3 percent from their November level, while nondurable goods stocks were down 6 percent. However, both trade groups reported inventories up 2 and 3 percent respectively over their December 31, 1959 levels.

Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers reported the sharpest decline from November (16%), but indicated a 10 percent gain over a year ago. Iron, steel and products distributors showed the largest gain over year-ago stocks, remaining unchanged from their November level.

The December 1960 stock-sales ratio for merchant wholesalers was 122 percent, unchanged from November, but up 12 points over the December 1959 stock-sales ratio. The December stock-sales ratio of durable goods wholesalers was 175 percent compared to the nondurable goods ratio of 84 percent.

GENERAL

In addition to the monthly dollar volume estimates of sales and inventories for 1960, this report includes final estimates for the twelve months of 1960.



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

[1]An advance release of December 1960 data was issued on January 30, 1961.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1959												Total 1959
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,494	9,249	10,473	10,767	10,689	11,150	11,065	10,646	11,311	r11,371	10,859	11,370	128,444
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,663	8,564	9,675	10,034	9,917	10,380	10,195	9,924	10,452	10,383	9,933	10,366	118,486
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	3,795	3,821	4,479	4,710	4,753	5,073	4,867	4,702	4,913	4,844	4,593	4,655	55,205
Automotive wholesalers	453	432	509	514	511	555	568	529	524	542	513	499	6,149
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	357	340	384	404	402	437	424	411	434	442	426	380	4,841
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	600	593	632	635	652	716	699	719	777	765	754	791	8,333
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	277	279	300	312	322	355	328	347	375	363	351	378	3,987
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	322	315	331	323	330	361	370	372	402	402	402	413	4,343
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	186	197	229	230	224	222	209	223	242	252	237	239	2,690
Furniture wholesalers	59	60	66	69	69	69	66	73	76	77	69	75	828
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	126	137	162	161	156	153	143	149	166	176	168	164	1,861
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	368	369	428	458	461	483	482	474	510	521	458	423	5,435
Hardware wholesalers	166	170	199	210	207	211	204	200	217	217	194	189	2,384
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	203	200	229	248	254	272	278	274	293	304	264	234	3,053
Lumber, construction materials distributors	504	511	654	744	773	825	826	803	800	764	650	605	8,459
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	294	303	375	403	426	449	457	446	433	404	353	337	4,680
Construction materials distributors	210	207	279	341	348	376	368	358	367	360	297	268	3,779
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,010	1,007	1,183	1,265	1,288	1,360	1,285	1,208	1,220	1,186	1,141	1,173	14,326
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	465	455	541	558	561	596	546	519	518	509	512	538	6,318
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	93	93	105	102	99	118	116	125	125	120	113	113	1,322
Service establishment supply houses	123	120	139	147	151	146	139	133	147	151	130	145	1,671
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	358	364	443	469	488	546	463	414	476	431	430	461	5,343
Iron, steel and products distributors	263	264	328	347	361	403	350	307	345	308	302	311	3,889
Nonferrous metals distributors	95	100	115	122	126	143	114	107	131	123	128	150	1,454
Scrap, waste materials dealers	255	282	334	328	288	299	273	256	269	288	306	348	3,526
Iron, steel scrap dealers	145	169	200	189	159	165	150	128	140	156	177	224	2,002
Waste materials dealers	110	113	133	140	129	134	124	128	129	131	129	123	1,523
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,698	5,428	5,994	6,057	5,936	6,077	6,198	5,944	6,398	r6,527	6,266	6,715	73,238
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,867	4,743	5,196	5,324	5,164	5,307	5,328	5,222	5,539	5,539	5,340	5,711	63,280
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,697	1,626	1,726	1,792	1,718	1,749	1,812	1,710	1,846	1,853	1,734	1,844	21,107
General-line grocery wholesalers	733	706	736	778	729	747	795	749	785	790	751	793	9,092
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	583	570	617	612	603	583	603	579	638	639	599	634	7,260
Confectionery wholesalers	57	55	56	57	56	57	59	56	60	63	62	69	707
Meat, meat products wholesalers	324	295	317	344	329	362	356	327	363	361	323	347	4,048
Farm products (edible) distributors	375	343	385	414	397	441	435	361	385	383	396	439	4,754
Poultry, poultry products distributors	141	119	133	136	125	130	132	123	139	134	154	158	1,624
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	234	224	252	278	272	312	302	238	247	249	242	281	3,131
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	445	449	521	551	567	601	606	567	568	585	608	755	6,823
Beer, ale distributors	165	161	189	211	237	258	283	257	237	208	197	222	2,625
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	281	288	332	340	330	343	323	310	332	377	412	533	4,201
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	368	352	396	400	384	393	380	379	410	413	376	384	4,635
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	236	225	248	243	235	241	235	236	263	264	243	247	2,916
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	110	102	120	123	116	115	111	109	113	115	107	113	1,354
Paint, varnish wholesalers	22	25	29	34	33	37	34	34	34	34	27	24	367
Tobacco distributors	292	279	301	317	321	348	355	330	343	360	324	383	3,953
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	490	500	568	531	502	511	529	592	612	613	571	500	6,519
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	174	193	217	197	192	174	198	245	237	232	217	169	2,445
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	190	187	219	203	189	210	226	231	245	243	230	208	2,581
Paper, allied products wholesalers	320	298	332	349	335	338	328	346	362	367	349	361	4,085
Paper wholesalers	282	259	290	307	295	299	289	303	317	317	297	307	3,562
Coal wholesalers	92	81	78	73	73	71	62	65	71	76	77	86	905
Farm supplies wholesalers	135	143	175	171	146	120	112	117	122	108	108	119	1,576

See footnotes at end of table 1, page 3.

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

1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960												Total 12 mos.	
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.[1]	Dec.[2]	1960	1959
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	9,728	9,965	10,825	10,675	10,750	11,142	10,072	11,297	11,091	11,104	11,168	10,764	128,581	128,444
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	8,944	9,204	10,048	9,944	9,986	10,404	9,337	10,482	10,180	10,100	10,061	9,610	118,301	118,486
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	4,045	4,210	4,472	4,610	4,614	4,798	4,238	4,739	4,625	4,547	4,342	4,037	53,277	55,205
Automotive wholesalers	453	505	540	580	532	573	510	557	537	540	520	482	6,334	6,149
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	374	383	418	449	443	469	427	472	467	469	447	413	5,231	4,841
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	620	645	682	654	654	711	654	720	721	698	696	707	8,162	8,333
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	285	304	321	323	328	349	321	354	350	340	335	339	3,949	3,987
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	335	341	361	331	326	362	333	366	371	359	361	368	4,214	4,343
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	182	209	228	213	215	226	189	232	239	242	233	222	2,630	2,690
Furniture wholesalers	60	67	67	66	66	72	60	76	73	72	67	72	818	828
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	122	142	162	147	149	154	129	156	166	170	166	150	1,813	1,861
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	377	391	421	440	460	466	430	486	487	489	453	389	5,289	5,435
Hardware wholesalers	166	178	192	203	198	201	182	205	204	200	188	170	2,287	2,384
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	211	214	229	237	262	266	248	281	283	289	266	220	3,006	3,053
Lumber, construction materials distributors	521	545	593	677	728	779	692	747	710	688	608	494	7,782	8,459
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	308	323	356	368	385	420	361	381	352	340	295	270	4,159	4,680
Construction materials distributors	214	221	236	308	343	359	331	366	358	347	313	224	3,620	3,779
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,086	1,118	1,191	1,279	1,283	1,288	1,096	1,218	1,188	1,127	1,081	1,046	14,001	14,326
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	500	501	542	543	540	533	450	507	500	474	478	460	6,028	6,318
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	103	109	114	110	112	119	108	123	121	121	116	117	1,373	1,322
Service establishment supply houses	137	137	147	154	151	147	131	150	151	148	139	132	1,725	1,671
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	431	410	440	411	400	424	368	428	411	407	402	367	4,899	5,343
Iron, steel and products distributors	307	296	320	294	284	300	263	297	289	289	281	257	3,477	3,889
Nonferrous metals distributors	124	114	120	118	115	124	105	131	122	118	122	109	1,422	1,454
Scrap, waste materials dealers	315	323	314	292	276	271	243	274	245	260	248	222	3,283	3,526
Iron, steel scrap dealers	191	197	179	165	153	149	139	153	137	147	135	123	1,868	2,002
Waste materials dealers	124	126	135	127	123	121	104	121	108	114	113	99	1,415	1,523
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	5,682	5,755	6,353	6,065	6,136	6,344	5,834	6,557	6,465	6,558	6,826	6,727	75,302	73,238
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	4,898	4,998	5,577	5,334	5,372	5,606	5,099	5,742	5,554	5,554	5,719	5,573	65,022	63,280
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,739	1,740	1,937	1,797	1,828	1,941	1,787	1,951	1,857	1,882	1,916	1,854	22,229	21,107
General-line grocery wholesalers	756	760	832	810	802	852	798	865	841	828	851	825	9,820	9,092
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	608	615	695	600	614	646	590	639	618	636	634	612	7,507	7,260
Confectionery wholesalers	58	56	60	58	58	61	56	60	60	64	66	67	724	707
Meat, meat products wholesalers	317	309	349	329	354	382	344	386	338	354	365	350	4,177	4,048
Farm products (edible) distributors	355	347	416	423	410	445	399	395	371	383	427	439	4,810	4,754
Poultry, poultry products distributors	118	113	136	129	130	138	123	141	150	156	185	185	1,704	1,624
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	237	234	280	294	280	307	275	254	222	227	242	254	3,106	3,131
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	431	480	567	572	614	650	583	633	615	607	707	748	7,207	6,823
Beer, ale distributors	165	176	201	222	247	268	270	282	246	213	216	218	2,724	2,625
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	266	304	366	350	367	382	313	350	369	395	491	530	4,483	4,201
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	372	385	410	389	391	404	360	421	415	409	405	363	4,724	4,635
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	241	250	260	236	236	245	224	262	271	269	259	236	2,989	2,916
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	105	108	121	118	120	120	101	122	111	109	119	103	1,357	1,354
Paint, varnish wholesalers	25	27	30	34	35	38	35	36	33	32	26	24	375	367
Tobacco distributors	294	303	336	328	343	371	344	365	365	345	353	377	4,124	3,953
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	491	512	572	537	501	527	466	625	566	582	560	445	6,384	6,519
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	166	193	223	209	185	176	174	259	222	229	211	148	2,395	2,445
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	193	192	210	196	194	215	187	230	225	228	230	189	2,489	2,581
Paper, allied products wholesalers	333	329	365	356	342	346	316	377	354	364	364	344	4,190	4,085
Paper wholesalers	290	289	320	312	299	301	275	328	308	312	306	291	3,631	3,562
Coal wholesalers	76	72	77	65	67	68	61	68	70	73	69	76	842	905
Farm supplies wholesalers	128	139	171	187	151	127	106	121	125	118	101	108	1,582	1,576

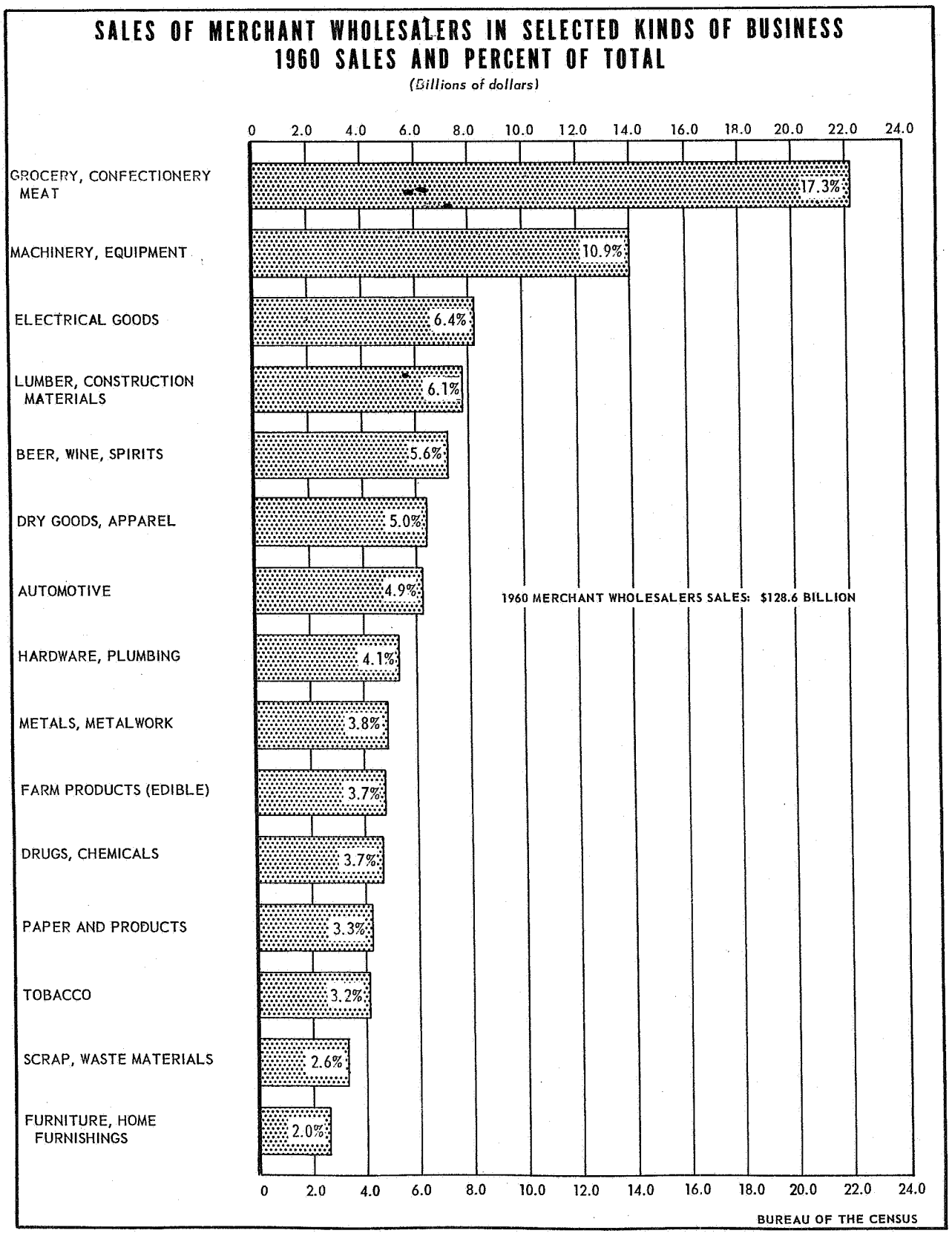
[1] Final estimate

[2] Preliminary estimate

See page 15, Estimating Procedure.

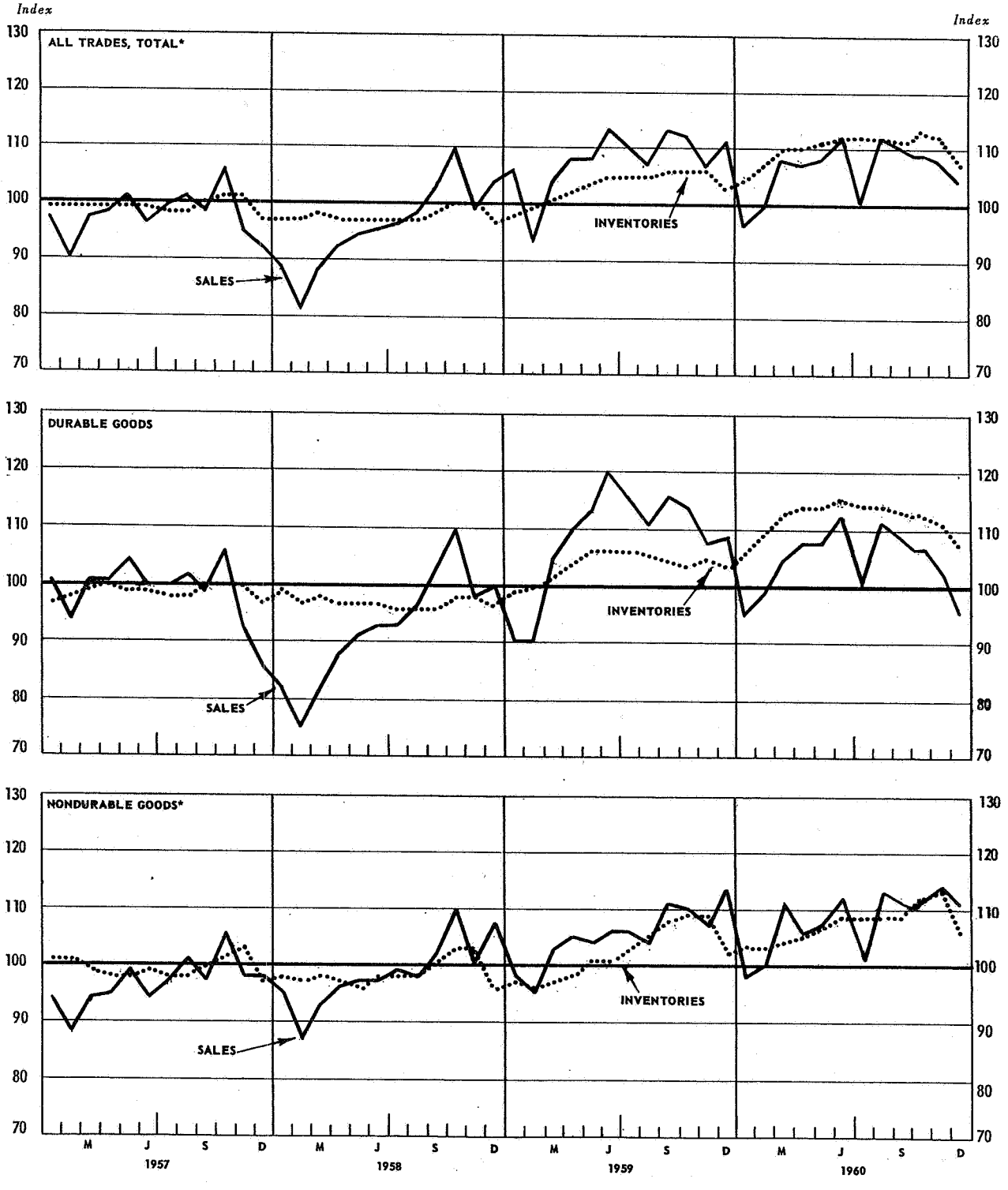
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Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Census of Business, had wholesale sales equivalent to about 0.04 percent and 0.3 percent respectively, of the United States total. Merchant wholesalers total and group totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.


SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
1960 SALES AND PERCENT OF TOTAL
(Billions of dollars)
0 2.0 4.0 6.0 8.0 10.0 12.0 14.0 16.0 18.0 20.0 22.0 24.0
GROCERY, CONFECTIONERY MEAT
17.3%
MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
10.9%
ELECTRICAL GOODS
6.4%
LUMBER, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
6.1%
BEER, WINE, SPIRITS
5.6%
DRY GOODS, APPAREL
5.0%
AUTOMOTIVE
4.9%
1960 MERCHANT WHOLESALERS SALES: $128.6 BILLION
HARDWARE, PLUMBING
4.1%
METALS, METALWORK
3.8%
FARM PRODUCTS (EDIBLE)
3.7%
DRUGS, CHEMICALS
3.7%
PAPER AND PRODUCTS
3.3%
TOBACCO
3.2%
SCRAP, WASTE MATERIALS
2.6%
FURNITURE, HOME FURNISHINGS
2.0%
0 2.0 4.0 6.0 8.0 10.0 12.0 14.0 16.0 18.0 20.0 22.0 24.0
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS
1957, 1958, 1959 AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100



*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

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 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1959											
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	10,733	10,876	11,096	11,330	11,421	11,570	11,590	11,687	11,582	11,705	11,773	11,427
Selected Kinds of Business												
Automotive wholesalers	878	891	890	942	935	942	926	924	924	933	932	959
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	788	796	796	844	831	829	811	813	810	819	815	835
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	963	1,032	1,020	1,056	1,048	1,055	1,030	1,039	1,049	1,091	1,105	1,041
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	440	460	452	478	469	476	459	467	472	478	483	462
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	523	572	588	579	579	579	571	572	578	613	622	579
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers	820	850	887	893	891	927	926	914	883	878	865	850
Hardware wholesalers	401	420	442	435	434	452	456	444	423	420	417	406
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	419	430	445	459	457	475	470	470	460	458	448	444
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	1,896	1,912	1,982	2,031	2,047	2,089	2,101	2,102	2,061	2,070	2,108	2,109
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	805	780	823	871	860	866	871	868	836	816	818	833
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	705	722	740	741	773	795	797	727	661	589	603	647
Iron, steel and products distributors	585	603	627	613	639	661	664	590	530	460	469	505
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,144	1,130	1,160	1,186	1,177	1,150	1,168	1,211	1,202	1,228	1,243	1,206
General-line grocery wholesalers	636	637	675	686	656	625	645	666	660	671	676	660
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	557	541	568	566	598	617	595	648	676	736	738	598
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	451	442	460	448	469	489	471	524	545	609	617	502
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	470	476	476	486	487	488	489	512	521	529	519	504
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	341	343	339	351	351	354	349	372	381	388	376	362
Paper, allied products wholesalers	308	306	318	312	326	325	333	323	330	336	329	321
Paper wholesalers	258	256	267	260	274	274	279	269	277	280	274	268

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1959											
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	124	127	115	113	115	111	114	118	111	113	119	110
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	171	173	151	148	147	140	146	150	141	143	152	148
Automotive wholesalers	194	206	175	183	183	170	163	175	176	172	182	192
Automotive equipment, tire-tube wholesalers	221	234	207	209	207	190	191	198	187	185	191	220
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	161	174	161	166	161	147	147	144	135	143	147	132
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	159	165	151	153	146	134	140	135	126	132	138	122
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	162	182	172	179	175	160	154	154	144	152	155	140
Hardware, plumbing-heating goods wholesalers	223	230	207	195	193	192	192	193	173	169	189	201
Hardware wholesalers	242	247	222	207	210	214	224	222	195	194	215	215
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	206	215	194	185	180	175	169	172	157	151	170	190
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	188	190	168	161	159	154	164	174	169	175	185	180
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	173	171	152	156	153	145	160	167	161	160	160	155
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	197	198	167	158	158	146	172	176	139	137	140	140
Iron, steel and products distributors	222	228	191	177	177	164	190	192	154	149	155	16.
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	88	90	83	82	86	84	84	89	84	87	90	79
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	67	69	67	66	68	66	64	71	65	66	72	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	87	90	92	88	90	84	81	89	84	85	90	83
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	125	120	109	103	105	103	98	114	119	126	121	79
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	160	153	139	132	142	143	146	169	164	162	150	94
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	128	135	120	122	127	124	129	135	127	128	138	131
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	144	152	137	144	149	147	149	158	145	147	155	147
Paper, allied product wholesalers	96	103	96	89	97	96	102	93	91	92	94	89
Paper wholesalers	91	99	92	85	93	92	97	89	87	88	92	87

See footnotes at end of table 3, page 7.

Table 2. ESTIMATED MONTHLY INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	1960											
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.[1]	Dec.[2]
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	11,439	11,702	12,008	12,072	12,172	12,267	12,300	12,296	12,195	12,346	12,288	11,735
Selected Kinds of Business												
Automotive wholesalers	923	955	991	1,010	1,013	1,032	1,025	1,040	1,028	1,017	1,005	974
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	818	843	866	880	874	877	873	895	891	885	874	845
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	1,075	1,115	1,122	1,146	1,166	1,162	1,119	1,118	1,133	-1,150	1,130	1,046
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	475	489	496	520	512	496	485	492	487	495	485	446
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	600	627	626	625	654	666	634	625	646	654	645	600
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	875	920	957	932	929	912	925	911	891	882	871	827
Hardware wholesalers	424	450	464	446	440	432	434	429	410	410	406	384
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	452	471	493	486	489	480	489	482	482	472	465	443
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2,113	2,137	2,213	2,197	2,181	2,192	2,234	2,229	2,175	2,186	2,162	2,132
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	831	825	859	868	871	850	856	863	844	831	832	832
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	674	749	787	823	852	869	869	821	812	803	801	804
Iron, steel and products distributors	537	606	661	688	708	726	731	682	679	670	672	674
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	1,184	1,177	1,191	1,200	1,191	1,181	1,192	1,226	1,213	1,270	1,273	1,207
General-line grocery wholesalers	635	646	684	705	676	657	671	685	674	707	709	676
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	570	572	601	606	631	672	654	662	652	731	771	656
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	464	469	486	491	496	523	510	527	524	606	655	553
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	509	519	526	531	526	539	540	551	549	559	543	523
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	362	371	370	382	379	389	385	399	399	411	392	373
Paper, allied products wholesalers	325	325	329	327	338	340	341	331	324	329	335	328
Paper wholesalers	271	271	275	273	284	285	286	276	268	272	278	275

See footnotes below table 3.

Table 3. STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1959 AND 1960

(Percent)

Kind of business	1960											
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.[1]	Dec.[2]
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	128	127	120	121	122	118	132	117	120	122	122	122
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	172	171	166	162	163	157	178	158	160	163	169	175
Automotive wholesalers	204	189	184	174	190	180	201	167	191	188	193	202
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	219	220	207	196	197	187	204	190	191	189	196	205
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	173	173	165	175	178	163	171	155	157	165	162	148
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	167	161	155	161	156	142	151	139	139	145	145	132
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts, distributors	179	184	173	189	201	184	190	171	174	182	179	163
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	232	235	227	212	202	196	215	187	183	180	192	213
Hardware wholesalers	255	253	242	220	222	215	238	209	201	205	216	226
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	214	220	215	205	187	180	197	172	170	163	175	201
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	195	191	186	172	170	170	204	183	183	194	200	204
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	166	165	158	160	161	159	190	170	169	175	174	181
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	156	183	179	200	213	205	236	192	198	197	199	219
Iron, steel and products distributors	175	205	207	234	249	242	278	230	235	231	239	262
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	92	90	82	86	86	84	93	84	86	89	87	84
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	68	68	61	67	65	61	67	63	65	67	66	65
General-line grocery wholesalers	84	85	82	87	84	77	84	79	80	85	83	82
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	132	119	106	106	103	103	112	105	106	120	109	88
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	174	154	133	140	135	137	163	151	142	153	133	104
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	137	135	128	137	135	133	150	131	132	137	134	144
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	150	148	142	162	161	159	172	152	147	153	151	158
Paper, allied products wholesalers	98	99	90	92	99	98	108	86	92	90	92	95
Paper wholesalers	93	94	86	88	95	95	104	84	87	87	91	95

[1] Final estimate
[2] Preliminary estimate

See page 15, Estimating Procedure.

Note: These data exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Totals include data for some kinds of business not shown separately. Inventory detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS: 1958, 1959, AND 1960

1957-59 MONTHLY AVERAGE = 100

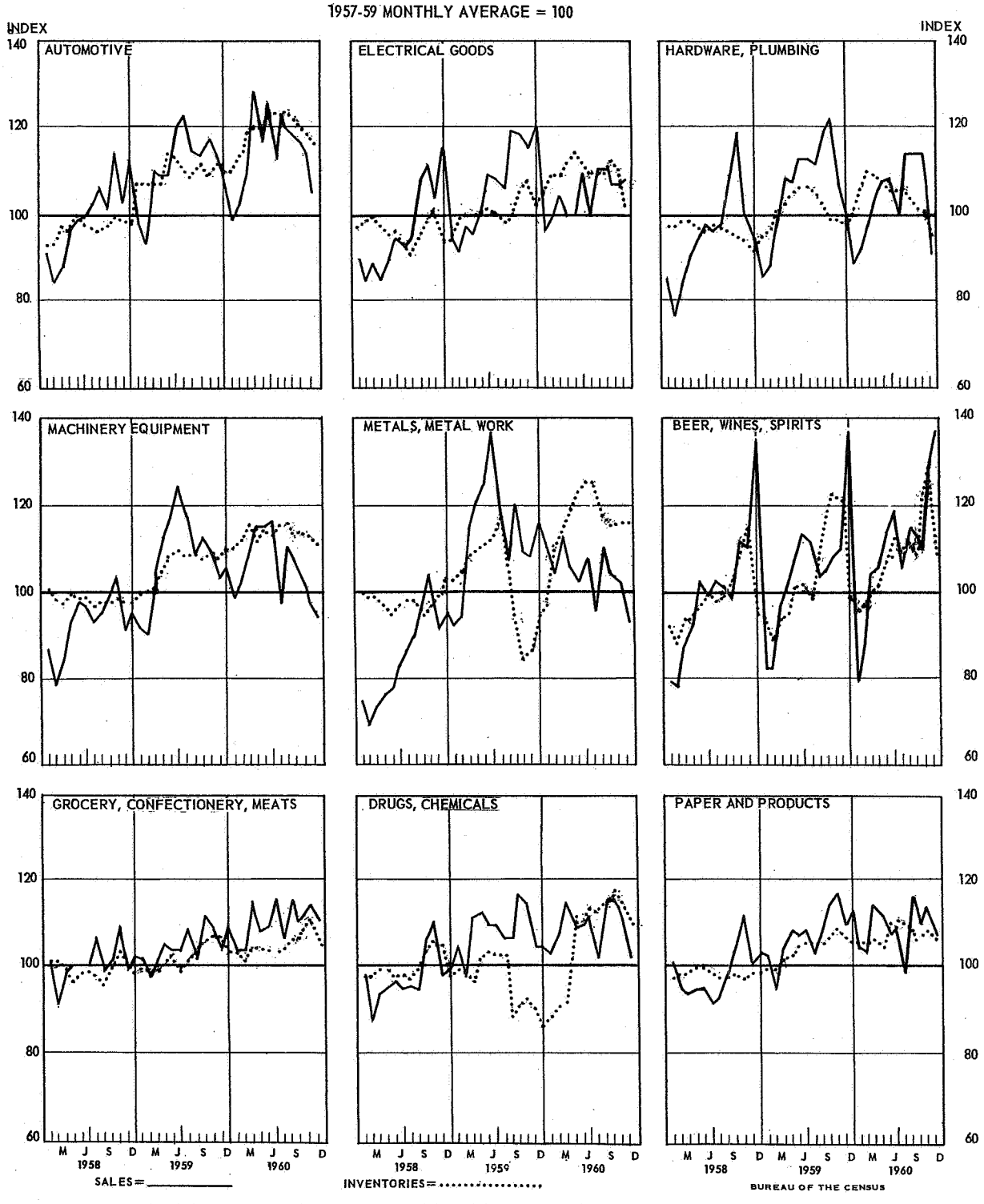
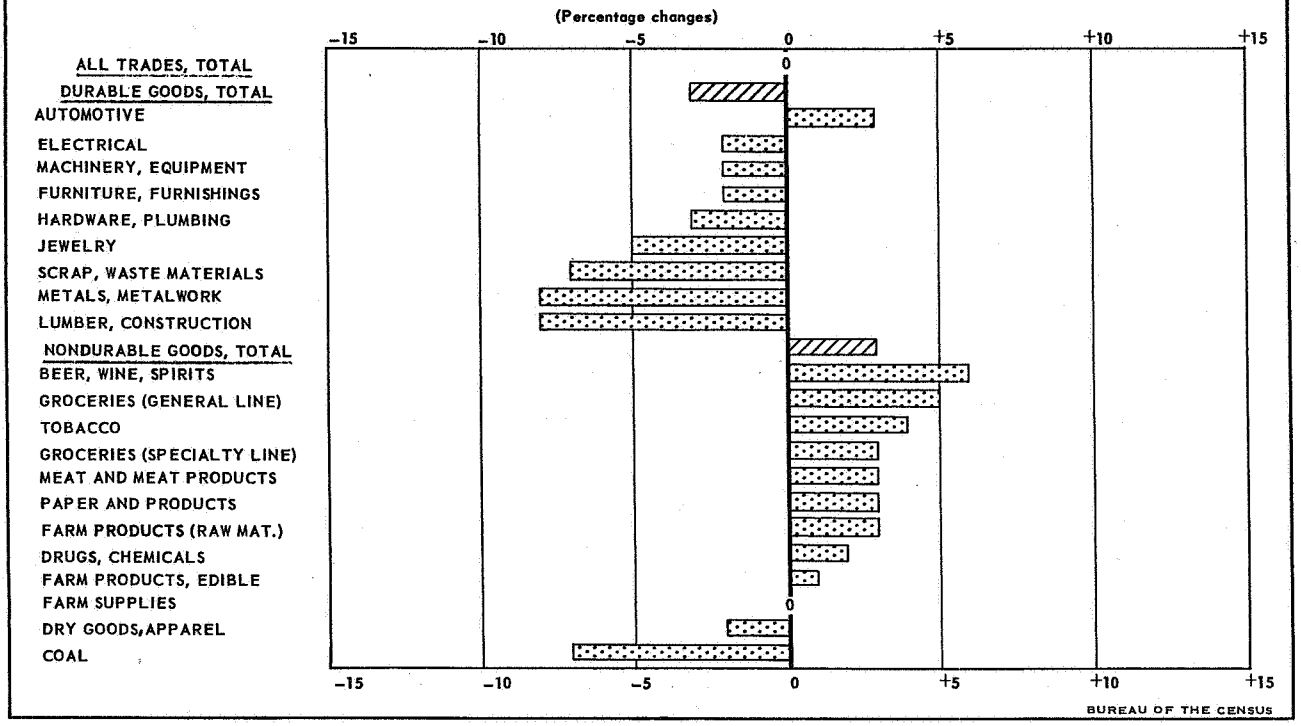


Table 4. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: DECEMBER 1960

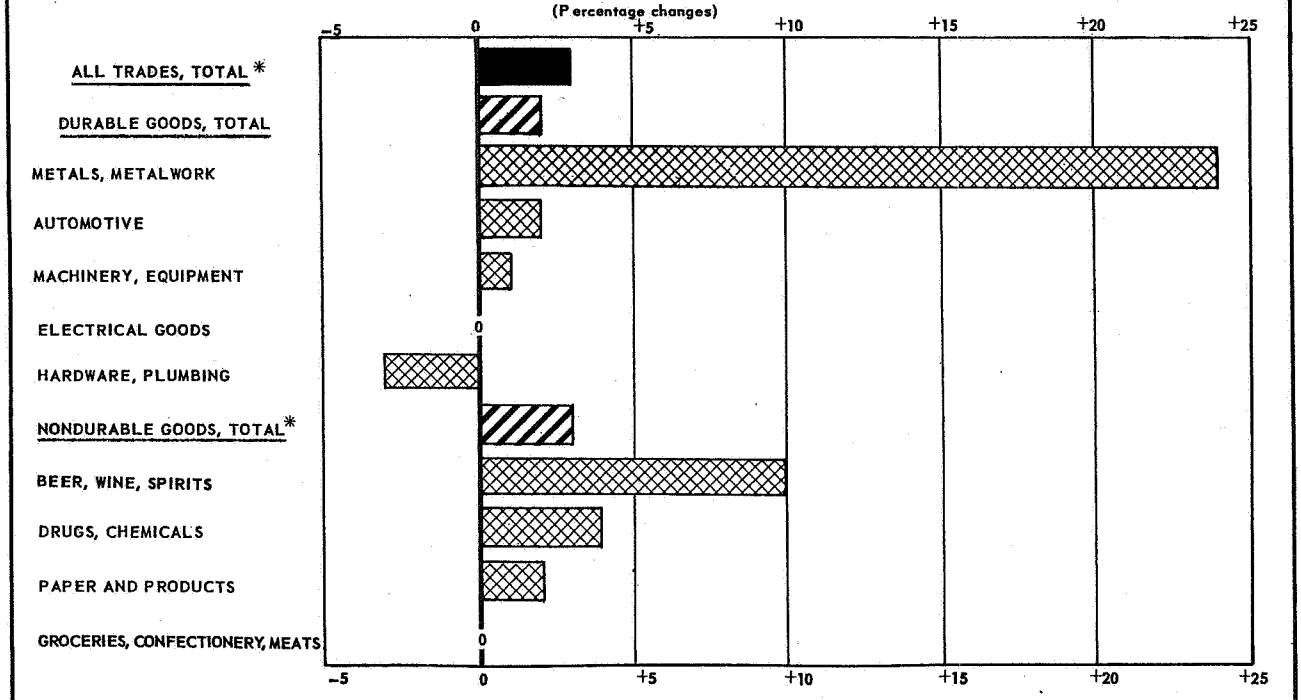
Kind of business	Sales			Inventories end-of-month (at cost)	
	December 1960 from--		12 mos. 1960 from 12 mos. 1959	December 1960 from--	
	December 1959	November 1960		December 1959	November 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	-5	-4	0	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	-7	-4	0	+3	-5
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	-13	-7	-3	+2	-3
Automotive wholesalers	-3	-7	+3	+2	-3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+9	-8	+8	+1	-3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	-11	+2	-2	0	-7
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-10	+1	-1	-3	-8
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-11	+2	-3	+4	-7
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-7	-5	-2	+4	-5
Furniture wholesalers	-4	+7	-1	-3	-2
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	-9	-10	-3	+6	-7
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	-8	-14	-3	-3	-5
Hardware wholesalers	-10	-10	-4	-5	-5
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-6	-17	-2	0	-5
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-18	-19	-8	-2	-5
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	-20	-8	-11	-7	-8
Construction materials distributors	-16	-28	-4	+4	-3
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-11	-3	-2	+1	-1
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-18	-9	+10	+6	-5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-3	+3	+6	-3	-2
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	-14	-4	-5	0	0
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	+4	+1	+4	+12	-2
Surgical, medical, hospital supply houses*	0	+8	+7	+5	+9
Service establishment supply houses	-9	-5	+3	+7	-2
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	-20	-9	-8	+24	0
Iron, steel and products distributors	-17	-9	-11	+33	0
Nonferrous metals distributors	-27	-11	-2	-8	+1
Scrap, waste materials dealers	-36	-10	-7	-4	+1
Iron, steel scrap dealers	-45	-9	-7	-1	+1
Waste materials dealers	-20	-12	-7	-7	+2
Jewelry wholesalers	-6	+9	-5	-3	-11
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	0	-1	+3	(X)	(X)
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	-2	-3	+3	+3	-6
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	+1	-3	+5	0	-5
General-line grocery wholesalers	+4	-3	+8	+2	-5
Voluntary groups*	+7	0	+7	+3	-4
Retailer-cooperative*	+11	0	+13	+6	-4
Nonaffiliated*	+1	-7	+4	+5	-6
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-3	-3	+3	-4	-6
Confectionery wholesalers	-3	+2	+2	0	-9
Meat, meat products wholesalers	+1	-4	+3	+3	-3
Farm products (edible) distributors	0	+3	+1	+3	-7
Poultry, poultry products distributors	+17	0	+5	-6	-9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-10	+5	-1	+9	-6
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	-1	+6	+6	+10	-15
Beer, ale distributors	-2	+1	+4	+7	-10
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	-1	+8	+7	+10	-16
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	-5	r-10	+2	+4	-4
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-4	-9	+3	+3	-5
General-line drug wholesalers*	-5	-3	+2	+4	-5
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	-9	-13	0	+8	-1
Paint, varnish wholesalers	0	-8	+2	0	0
Tobacco distributors	-2	+7	+4	0	-9
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-11	-21	-2	+8	0
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	-12	-30	-2	+1	-5
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-9	-18	-4	+21	+2
Piece goods converters	-11	-9	0	-1	+2
Paper, allied products wholesalers	-5	-5	+3	+2	-2
Paper wholesalers	-5	-5	+2	+3	-1
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	+2	-7	+8	0	-7
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	+15	+4	+3	(X)	(X)
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-4	+2	-1	-1	-7
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	+6	+5	+4	+7	-10
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	+13	+4	+4	-5	-8
Coal wholesalers	-12	+10	-7	+8	-10
Farm supplies wholesalers	-9	+7	0	-12	+5

* See text, page 14.
X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data. See "Inventories," page 14.
r Revised since Advanced Release January 30, 1961.

SALES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS– TWELVE MONTHS OF 1960 COMPARED WITH TWELVE MONTHS OF 1959



INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS DECEMBER 1960 COMPARED WITH DECEMBER 1959



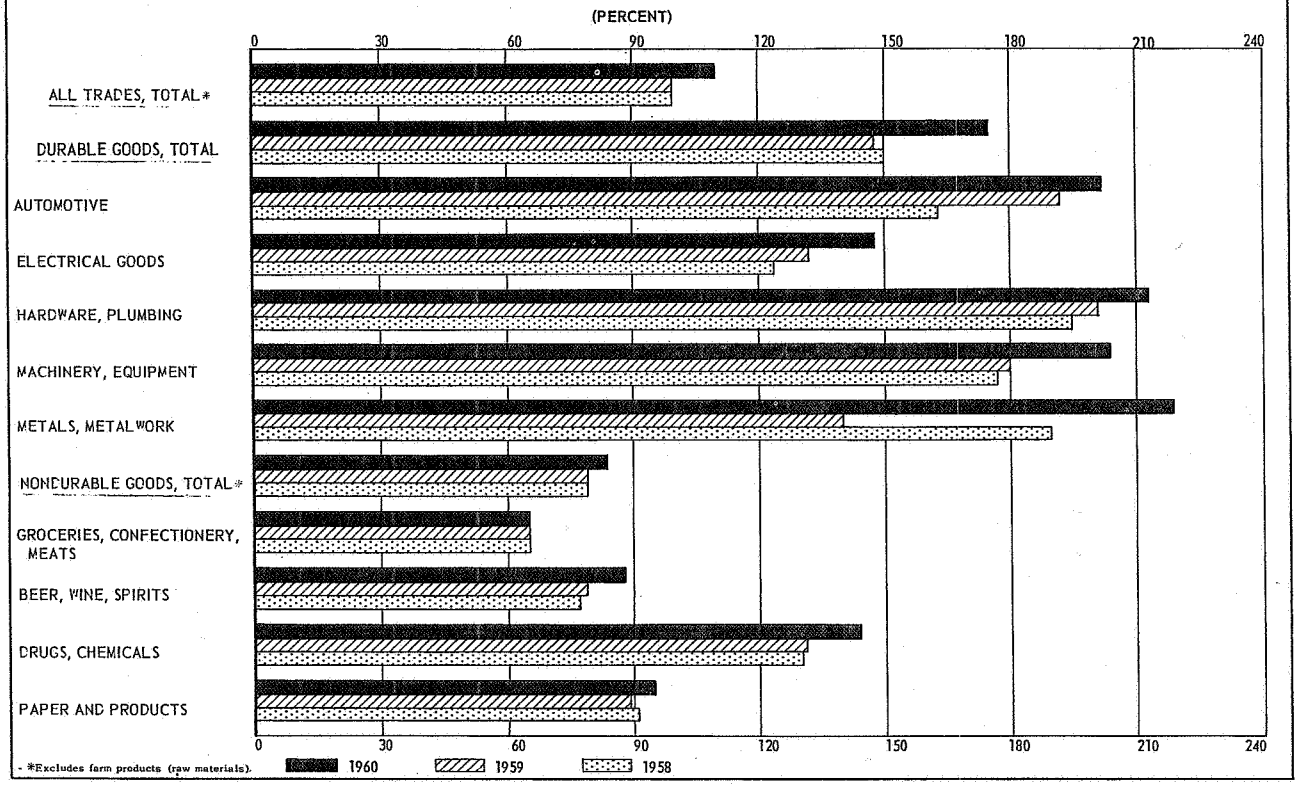
*Excludes farm products (raw materials).

Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS
DECEMBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page12)	Sales			Inventory end-of-month (at cost)	
	December 1960 from		12 mos. 1960 from 12 mos. 1959	December 1960 from	
	December 1959	November 1960		December 1959	November 1960
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL[1]	-5	-4	0	+3	-5
New England	-4	-1	0	+4	-7
Middle Atlantic	-10	-6	0	+4	-3
East North Central	-7	-2	-2	+6	-4
West North Central	+1	-3	+1	-3	-5
South Atlantic	-4	-7	0	+1	-6
East South Central	-6	-2	0	-1	-2
West South Central	-7	+2	-2	-1	-6
Mountain	-7	-7	-1	0	-4
Pacific	-7	-4	0	-2	-4
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	+9	-8	+8	+1	-3
New England	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Middle Atlantic	+11	-4	+3	0	-1
East North Central	+6	-7	+3	+5	+1
West North Central	+8	+3	+1	-2	-6
South Atlantic	-1	-23	+1	+1	0
East South Central	+11	-10	+2	+1	-2
West South Central	+6	-6	-3	-1	-3
Mountain	(X)	+2	-8	+3	-4
Pacific	-7	-8	+3	-4	-2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	-10	+1	-1	-3	-8
New England	(X)	+6	-1	-4	-8
Middle Atlantic	-8	-9	+2	+5	-6
East North Central	-9	+2	-1	-2	-12
West North Central	-11	+6	-9	-12	-6
South Atlantic	-15	+5	-5	+1	-10
East South Central	-13	0	-2	+15	-3
West South Central	-6	+5	-6	-5	-8
Mountain	+3	+1	-2	-5	-9
Pacific	-12	+1	-8	-2	-6
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	-11	+2	-3	+4	-7
New England	-18	+5	-3	+38	-4
Middle Atlantic	-19	0	-4	-5	-4
East North Central	-10	-4	-6	+7	-8
West North Central	-7	(X)	-8	(X)	-10
South Atlantic	-18	-4	-6	-9	-10
East South Central	-7	(X)	+1	(X)	-5
West South Central	-21	-13	-7	(X)	-10
Pacific	-2	+5	-5	-5	-4
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	-7	-5	-2	+4	-5
New England	-14	-13	+2	-15	-5
Middle Atlantic	-13	-13	-1	+4	(X)
East North Central	-7	+6	0	-3	-6
West North Central	-13	-5	-2	-6	-8
South Atlantic	-9	+8	+2	(X)	-6
East South Central	-27	+7	-9	(X)	-9
West South Central	-10	-4	-2	-8	-7
Hardware wholesalers	-10	-10	-4	-5	-5
New England	+9	-16	+4	+19	-2
Middle Atlantic	-18	-12	-5	-7	-4
East North Central	-10	-14	-1	-3	-3
West North Central	+5	-17	-3	-5	-5
South Atlantic	-13	-11	-6	-1	-5
East South Central	-14	-10	-7	-14	-11
West South Central	-16	-11	-7	-8	-10
Mountain	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Pacific	-12	-2	-9	-7	-5
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	-6	-17	-2	0	-5
New England	-22	-17	-4	+12	-5
Middle Atlantic	-13	-17	-3	+8	-2
East North Central	-7	-16	-4	-3	-7
West North Central	-15	-22	-7	+1	-4
South Atlantic	-7	-14	-6	-4	-7
East South Central	-22	-11	-9	-2	-1
West South Central	0	-11	-1	-6	-8
Pacific	-18	-19	-8	-2	-5
Lumber, construction materials distributors	-6	(X)	+2	-22	(X)
New England	-21	-28	-8	+7	0
Middle Atlantic	-19	-23	-10	-3	-2
East North Central	-5	(X)	-11	+3	-14
West North Central	(X)	-15	-8	-10	-4
South Atlantic	-10	(X)	-10	(X)	-4
West South Central	-28	-10	-12	-5	-4
Pacific					

See footnotes at end of table.

STOCK-SALES RATIOS OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS IN SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS DECEMBER 1960 COMPARED WITH DECEMBER 1959 AND 1958



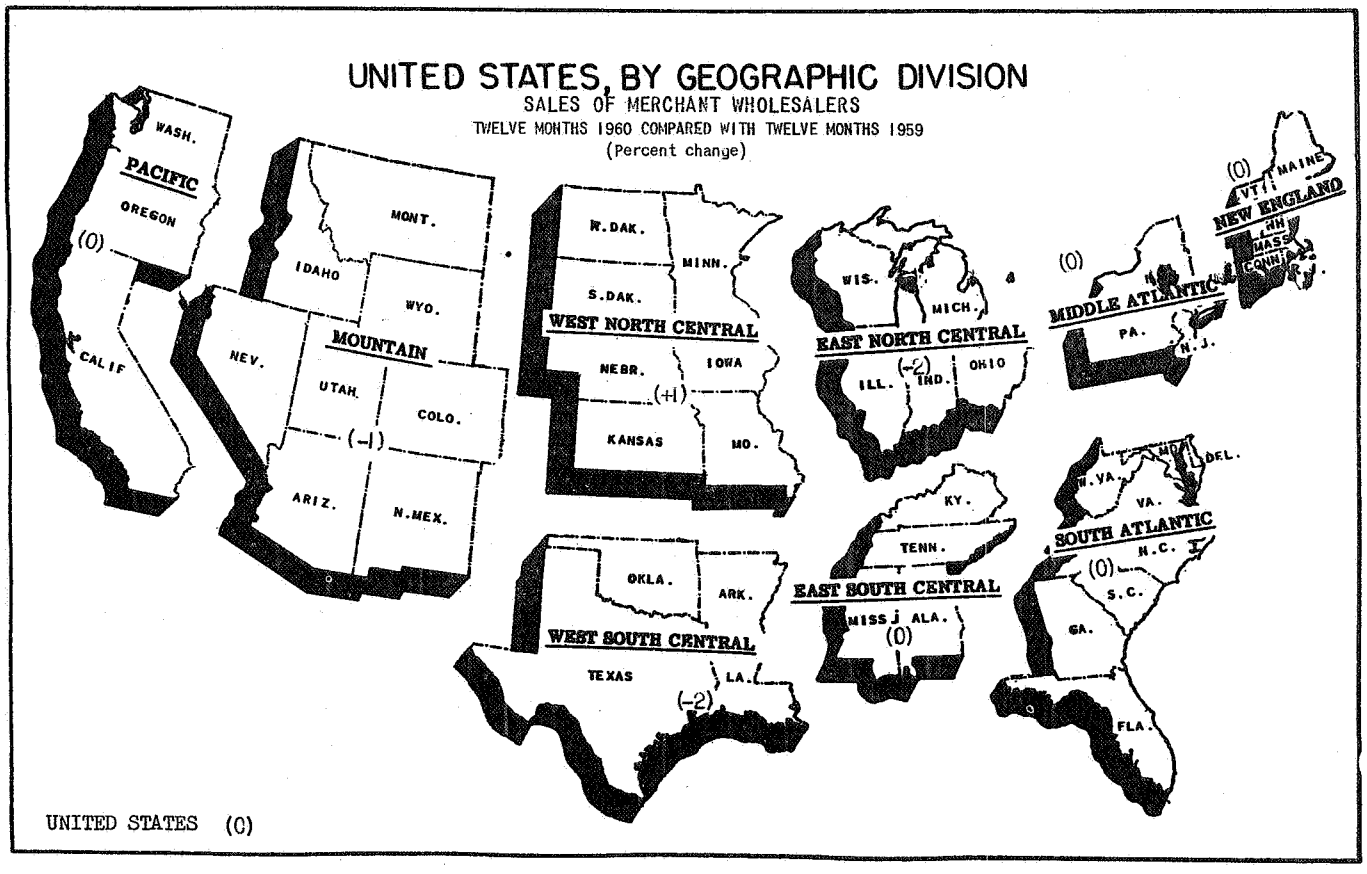


Table 5. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS: GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION, FOR SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS--Continued

DECEMBER 1960

Kind of business and geographic division (see map page12)	Sales			Inventory, end-of-month (at cost)	
	December 1960 from--		12 mos. 1960 from 12 mos. 1959	December 1960 from--	
	December 1959	November 1960		December 1959	November 1960
Industrial machinery, equipment supplies distributors	-14	-4	-5	0	0
Middle Atlantic	-12	+3	+6	+10	-1
East North Central	-27	-10	-3	+3	+2
West North Central	-21	-5	-10	+3	+3
South Atlantic	(X)	(X)	+4	+6	-1
East South Central	-1	-5	0	-1	-4
West South Central	-18	+3	-16	-6	+1
Mountain	-13	+14	-9	+4	-4
Pacific	-7	-8	-6	+6	-5
General-line grocery wholesalers	+4	-3	+8	+2	-5
New England	+5	+5	+7	-7	-8
Middle Atlantic	+5	+2	+8	+2	+5
East North Central	+5	-1	+7	+3	-7
West North Central	+15	-2	+9	+6	-6
South Atlantic	+11	-1	+7	+1	-10
East South Central	-1	-7	+3	+9	-8
West South Central	-3	-9	+7	+5	-4
Mountain	+9	-10	+8	+23	-7
Pacific	+2	-7	+8	+7	-3
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	-3	-3	+3	-4	-6
Middle Atlantic	0	-2	+4	+10	-9
East North Central	+10	+7	+4	(X)	0
South Atlantic	(X)	(X)	+4	(X)	-7
West South Central	+3	+1	+5	(X)	-4
Pacific	-4	0	+10	(X)	-3
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	-10	+5	-1	+9	-6
New England	-3	+11	-2	+7	+1
Middle Atlantic	-8	0	0	-9	-8
East North Central	-9	+5	0	(X)	-1
West North Central	-4	+2	+3	+2	-5
South Atlantic	0	+10	+2	(X)	-9
West South Central	-4	+6	-3	-2	-6
Pacific	-6	+3	+2	+3	-9
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	-4	-9	+3	+3	-5
New England	-6	+3	+4	+2	-1
Middle Atlantic	-7	-14	0	+1	-5
East North Central	-6	-5	+2	+5	-7
West North Central	0	0	+1	+9	-4
South Atlantic	-4	-5	+3	+4	-4
East South Central	-4	0	+4	0	-4
West South Central	-5	-2	+4	0	-6
Mountain	-9	-11	+3	+3	-8
Pacific	-12	-12	+3	-2	-2
Tobacco distributors	-2	+7	+4	0	-9
New England	0	+12	+5	+6	+1
Middle Atlantic	-8	+3	+4	-1	-8
East North Central	+2	+8	+4	+2	-10
West North Central	-6	+2	+4	-10	-12
South Atlantic	+2	+11	+3	+5	-11
East South Central	+10	+7	+7	-5	-11
West South Central	(X)	+5	+5	-8	-11
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	-11	-21	-2	+8	0
New England	(X)	-7	-2	(X)	-2
Middle Atlantic	-14	-21	-2	+12	+4
East North Central	+4	-21	+2	-11	-7
West North Central	+2	-27	-3	+2	0
South Atlantic	-6	-24	+4	+15	-14
Pacific	(X)	-25	+1	+7	-7

X Withheld due to extreme variability of reported data.

[1] Inventory trends for "Merchant Wholesalers, Total" for the United States and by geographic division, exclude "Farm products (raw materials) merchants.

Note: Sales and inventory trends by geographic division shown in table 5 may be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes for the United States. The trends by geographic division pertain only to firms that were in business and reported data in the months for which comparisons are shown, and do not necessarily represent trends of all firms because of the omission of firms that started new businesses or went out of business during the months compared. The percentage changes by geographic division, therefore, are not as reliable as the percentage changes for the United States which are based on "composite" estimates and represent all firms in the sample. (See Text, page 14.)

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE, ESTIMATING PROCEDURES, 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 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 merchants 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 14 through 16.

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 four times 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) and 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). Sales trends, based on the table 1 dollar volume estimates, are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business carried in table 1. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 1 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates but where the measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by * in table 4), the trend figures 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). Such figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, including those newly in business, but only of those firms represented in the specific months compared.

Sales trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5), based on weighted sales of identical firms. United States trend estimates, based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates shown in table 4, may, in some instances, be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identical firms due to differences in treatment of "births" and "deaths" in the two methods of estimating as well as the sampling errors associated with these estimates. (See "estimating procedure" and "reliability of data" below.)

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 includes monthly dollar volume estimates of inventories for selected kinds of business for the United States. Inventory trends based on table 2 estimates are provided in table 4 for the kinds of business covered in table 2. For certain additional kinds of business, trend figures are derived from dollar volume estimates which are not published in table 2 because these dollar volume estimates are subject to high sampling variability or other causes affecting reliability of the estimates where measurements of trend are considered to have acceptable reliability. For still other kinds of business (identified by an * in table 4), the trends are based only on weighted inventory data reported by identical firms. As for sales, these trend figures do not purport to represent the trends of all firms, but only those firms represented in the specific months.

Farm products (raw materials) merchants carry substantial inventories which are frequently subject to sharp fluctuations. Their inventory data appear to be subject to a very large bias due, in part, to the lack of adequate monthly records on the dollar value of inventories. For this reason, separate inventory data are not published for this trade. Also, because inventory movements for this trade can dominate the total for all merchant wholesalers and thus conceal significant movements of other wholesalers, data for this trade are excluded from the total.

Inventory trends by geographic division are also shown for selected kinds of business (table 5) based on weighted inventories of identical firms. United States trend estimates based on the "composite" dollar volume estimates may in some instances be outside the range indicated by the percentage changes based on identicals. For an explanation, see paragraph above on sales trends by geographic division.

Inventories represent stocks, at cost, of merchandise on hand for sale at the end of the month. These do not include goods held on a consignment basis, nor does it include such items as fixtures, equipment and supplies not held for sale.

Stock-sales ratios.--These are presented in table 3 for selected kinds of business. The stock-sales ratios are percentages derived by dividing the estimated dollar volume of inventories, at cost, by the dollar volume of sales. No adjustment is made in these ratios for the mark-up in sales which varies from trade to trade. These stock-sales ratios may differ from those previously published in this series which were based on identical firms reporting inventories in conjunction with sales. The new stock-sales may be somewhat lower because the new ratios include the sales of firms which carry no inventories.

4. Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar-volume sales and inventories for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a by-product of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication basically because their sampling variability is so high relative to the changes from month-to-month, or between other periods, that might be anticipated actually to occur, as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census on request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication.

It should be noted that in some cases figures for an individual kind of business can be derived from the Monthly Whole-

sale Trade Report itself by subtracting figures for certain published kinds of business from their respective kind-of-business group totals. However, in these cases, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

The initial publication of dollar volume estimates of inventories in the May 1960 report includes data for the period May 1959 to May 1960. Data for the period November 1956 to April 1959 are also available upon request.

5. 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, 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.

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 and inventories for each monthly panel provides unbiased dollar volume estimates, by kind of business, for two months--the current month and the previous month. However, the published estimates, both preliminary and final, are "composite" estimates. The preliminary "composite" estimate is a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the unbiased estimate (weight .3) for the current month obtained from the summation of the current month reports and (b) a ratio estimate (weight .7) 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 final "composite" estimate (available one month later) is also a weighted average of two estimates: (a) the preliminary "composite" estimate (weight .72) and (b) the unbiased estimate (weight .28) for the same month as obtained from the next month's reporting panel. The "composite" estimates provide a measure of the dollar volume of sales and inventories considerably more reliable than the unbiased estimates and the final "composite" estimate is also generally more reliable than the preliminary "composite" estimate.

Percentage changes--Two types of percentage change figures are presented in this report: (1) percentage changes derived from dollar volume estimates and (2) percentage 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 chance. 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.

6. 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 about 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 be within about one percent of the results of a complete enumeration. The sampling error of the inventory estimates for all trades combined is somewhat less than one percent.

Sampling errors have been computed by kind of business for the monthly estimates of sales and inventories and for the ratios of current month to previous month and current month to year-ago sales and inventories for selected months during 1958 and 1959. Table 6 presents the range of the sampling errors and their medians; however, the sampling errors for selected individual months, are available upon request. The sampling errors shown in table 6 are based on the preliminary "composite" estimates. The sampling errors of the final "composite" estimates are expected to be generally lower than those shown for the preliminary "composite" estimates. Sampling errors of the ratios based on weighted identicals are not available. However, where these ratios are based on a small number of reports (viz., trends by geographic division) the sampling variability is usually quite high.

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. They may also vary as a result of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations. They may also increase over time as the original sample changes as a result of births and deaths of business firms.

These measures of sampling variability do not include biases that may arise from nonsampling errors, such as the failure of respondents to submit correct figures or to submit reports 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 some trades where the nonresponse rate was considered too high to provide reliable level estimates. Approximately 10 percent of the total sales and 25 percent of total inventories are imputed for nonresponse. Biases may also arise due to the use of estimates by respondents. This probably occurs more often in the case of inventories than for sales, reflecting the fact that inventory records are not kept by all businesses on a monthly basis to the same extent as for sales.

For kinds of business where estimates appear to be subject to high sampling variability, or to considerable bias, dollar volume figures are not published. However, as the effect of such variability or bias is less serious for short range comparisons than for long range ones, trend figures based on the unpublished dollar volume estimates are provided where such trend figures are within acceptable standards of reliability.

7. Use of Sampling Errors

The use of sampling errors shown in table 6 is illustrated by the following computation: Multiply the median 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 of the estimate 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 median 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 sales estimate made for all durable goods in June 1960. The published estimate is $4,798 million while the median sampling error shown in this report is 1.6 percent (or .016). Multiplying $4,798 million by .016, we obtain $77 million. Thus, the chances are two out of three that the "expected value" of the estimate is between $4,721 and $4,875 million. Doubling the given median sampling error gives us the limits, $4,644 to $4,952 million, which will contain the "expected value" 19 out of 20 times.

As an example of the use of these median sampling error data with ratios, consider the ratio of change from May 1960 to June 1960 for all durable goods. This ratio of change, obtained by dividing $4,798 million by $4,614 million, is 1.04 (it can also be expressed as a 4% increase). The median sampling error of this statistic is 0.9 percent (.009). Multiplying 1.04 by .009, we obtain .009 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 1.03 to 1.05 (that is, that the May to June change was between a 3% and 5% increase), while there is a probability of 19 out of 20 that the "expected ratio" is contained in the range 1.02 to 1.06.

Table 6. SAMPLING VARIABILITY--ESTIMATES OF SALES AND INVENTORIES OF MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

Kind of business	Sales						Inventories			
	Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--				Sampling error of monthly dollar estimates		Sampling error of the ratio of current month compared to--	
			Previous month		Year ago				Previous month	Year ago
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median		
MERCHANT WHOLESALERS, TOTAL	0.8-1.5	1.0	0.6-0.6	0.6	0.6-1.1	0.8	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	0.8-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.6-1.1	0.8	0.5	0.7
DURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.3-2.0	1.6	0.6-1.1	0.9	1.2-2.0	1.5	-	-	0.5	0.8
Automotive wholesalers	4-11	7	2-6	3	4-11	8	2-3	3	2	3
Automotive equipment, tire, tube wholesalers	2-6	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-4	3	2	3
Electrical, electronics, appliance distributors	2-4	3	1-2	1	2-3	2	2-3	3	1	2
Electrical apparatus, supplies distributors	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-2	2	2	1
Electrical appliances, TV, radio sets, electronic parts distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	2-5	3	3-4	4	2	3
Furniture, home furnishings wholesalers	2-5	3	2-5	3	3-5	3	-	-	2	2
Furniture wholesalers	4-7	6	3-5	4	4-8	6	-	-	2	3
Home furnishings, floor coverings wholesalers	3-6	4	3-5	4	3-5	4	-	-	2	2
Hardware, plumbing, heating goods wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	1
Hardware wholesalers	2-4	3	1-2	2	2-3	2	2-2	2	1	1
Plumbing, heating equipment, supplies distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-3	3	3-5	3	2	2
Lumber, construction materials distributors	2-4	2	2-4	2	2-3	2	-	-	2	3
Lumber, millwork wholesalers	3-6	4	2-6	2	3-6	4	-	-	3	3
Construction materials distributors	3-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	5
Machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	2-3	3	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	1	2
Air conditioning, commercial refrigeration equipment, distributors	-	-	3-9	7	7-11	10	-	-	3	5
Commercial machines, equipment distributors	-	-	3-6	4	5-6	6	-	-	3	3
Industrial machinery, equipment, supplies distributors	3-6	4	2-3	2	4-5	4	4-5	5	3	3
Professional equipment, supplies distributors	4-6	5	2-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Service establishment supply houses	5-7	5	2-4	3	4-7	5	-	-	3	3
Metals, metalwork (except scrap) distributors	3-5	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	2-5	3	2	2
Iron, steel and products distributors	4-6	6	2-4	3	4-7	5	3-4	4	2	2
Nonferrous metals distributors	3-4	4	1-2	2	3-6	4	-	-	2	2
Scrap, waste materials dealers	3-5	4	2-3	2	4-4	4	-	-	4	5
Iron, steel scrap dealers	4-7	5	4-4	4	5-6	6	-	-	2	6
Waste materials dealers	6-10	7	3-4	3	4-9	6	-	-	3	2
Jewelry wholesalers	-	-	4-9	6	6-8	8	-	-	2	2
NONDURABLE GOODS, TOTAL	1.2-1.8	1.6	0.7-1.1	0.8	1.0-1.3	1.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL (excluding farm products, raw materials, merchants)	1.0-1.2	1.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	-	-	0.8	1.2
Grocery, confectionery, meat wholesalers	2-2	2	1-1	1	1-2	2	2-3	2	1	2
General-line grocery wholesalers	2-3	2	1-2	1	1-2	2	2-5	3	2	2
Specialty-line grocery wholesalers	5-8	7	3-3	3	4-6	5	-	-	3	5
Confectionery wholesalers	4-8	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	6
Meat, meat products wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-4	4	-	-	3	8
Farm products (edible) distributors	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	3	-	-	4	6
Poultry, poultry products distributors	5-7	6	2-4	3	5-5	5	-	-	3	9
Fresh fruit, vegetable wholesalers	3-7	5	2-3	2	3-4	4	-	-	6	7
Beer, wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	2-4	3	1-3	2	2-3	2	3-5	3	2	3
Beer, ale distributors	3-6	5	2-3	3	2-4	3	-	-	5	5
Wine, distilled spirits wholesalers	3-4	4	2-3	2	3-4	3	3-5	4	2	4
Drugs, chemicals, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	1-2	2	1	2
Drug wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	3-5	4	2-2	2	2-3	3	2-3	2	2	2
Industrial chemicals, explosives wholesalers	3-6	5	3-3	3	3-4	3	-	-	3	3
Paint, varnish wholesalers	4-6	5	2-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	3	2
Tobacco distributors	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-2	2	-	-	3	3
Dry goods, apparel wholesalers	2-4	3	2-3	2	3-3	3	-	-	2	2
Clothing, furnishings, footwear wholesalers	4-8	6	3-6	5	5-5	5	-	-	3	3
Dry goods wholesalers (general and specialty lines)	4-6	5	2-4	4	4-6	5	-	-	6	3
Piece goods converters	-	-	1-2	2	3-4	4	-	-	3	3
Paper, allied products wholesalers	2-3	3	1-2	2	2-2	2	2-3	3	2	2
Paper wholesalers	2-4	3	2-2	2	2-3	2	3-4	4	2	2
Stationery, wallpaper wholesalers	-	-	3-4	3	3-5	4	-	-	4	3
Farm products (raw materials) merchants	-	-	3-6	5	7-9	7	-	-	3	5
Other nondurable goods wholesalers	-	-	2-2	2	2-3	3	-	-	1	3
Amusement, sporting goods distributors	-	-	3-4	4	3-4	3	-	-	4	5
Book, magazine, newspaper wholesalers	-	-	2-3	3	3-4	4	-	-	2	3
Coal wholesalers	3-5	4	1-2	2	2-4	2	-	-	3	3
Farm supplies wholesalers	6-8	7	2-5	4	5-8	6	-	-	4	3

NA Not available.

Note: Only one measurement covering October 1958--is currently available for the sampling error of the ratio of current month to previous month or year-ago inventories. The sampling error of the sales ratios are based on 4 measurements during 1958 and 1959 while the sampling errors of the volume estimates of sales and inventories are based on 12 measurements during 1958 and 1959.

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 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. (Not shown separately in the accompanying table.)

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 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, and kitchen utensils.

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.

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 establishments, 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, semiprecious 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 no 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 manufactures.

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 wholesalers

Drug 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 good, 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.

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 bitumious 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; phonograph records, and musical instruments; 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
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