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MONTHLY WHOLESALE TRADE: SALES AND INVENTORIES December 2006

Intention to Revise Wholesale Data: Monthly wholesale sales, inventories, and inventories/sales ratios will be revised based on the results of the 2005 Annual Trade Survey and the final results of the 2002 Census of Wholesale Trade. Revised unadjusted and corresponding adjusted data are tentatively scheduled for release on our website March 29, 2007.

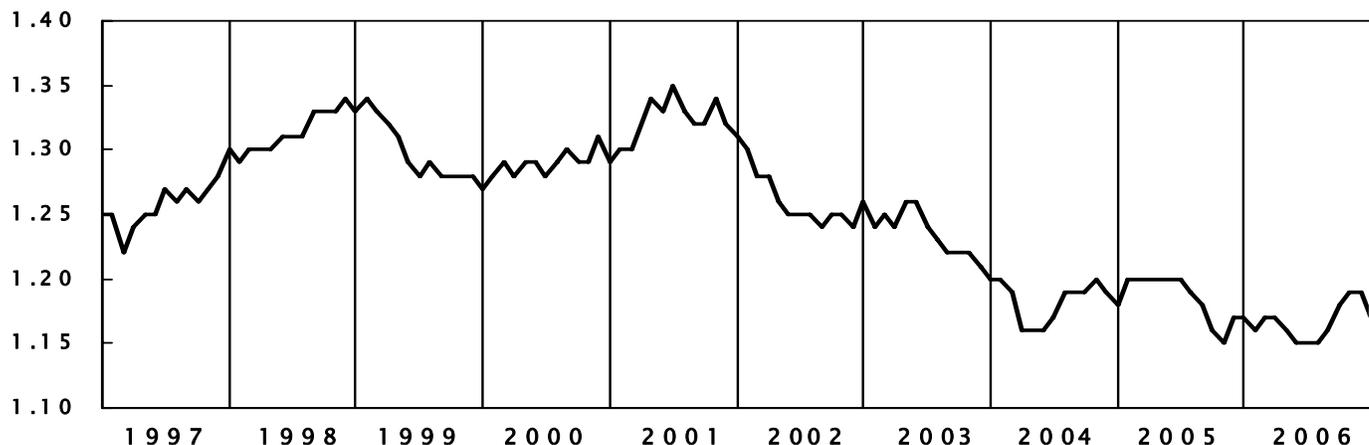
Sales. The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that December 2006 sales of merchant wholesalers, except manufacturers' sales branches and offices, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$337.1 billion, up 1.8 percent (+/-0.7%) from the revised November level and were up 8.6 percent (+/-1.2%) from the December 2005 level. The November preliminary estimate was revised downward \$0.1 billion. December sales of durable goods increased 1.1 percent (+/-0.8%) from last month and were up 7.0 percent (+/-1.8%) from a year ago. Compared to last month, sales of hardware and plumbing and heating equipment and supplies were up 4.2 percent and sales of motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and supplies increased 2.9 percent. December sales of nondurable goods were up 2.5 percent (+/-0.7%) from last month and were up 10.2 percent (+/-2.0%) from last year. Compared to last month, sales of petroleum and petroleum products increased 5.6 percent and sales of grocery and related products were up 3.1 percent.

Inventories. Total inventories of merchant wholesalers, except manufacturers' sales branches and offices, after adjustment for seasonal variations but not for price changes, were \$393.8 billion at the end of December, down 0.5 percent (+/-0.3%) from last month, but were up 8.6 percent (+/-1.7%) from a year ago. The November preliminary estimate was revised downward \$0.9 billion or 0.2 percent. End-of-month inventories of durable goods decreased 0.4 percent (+/-0.5%)* from November, but were up 8.3 percent (+/-2.3%) from last December. Compared to last month, inventories of motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and supplies were down 2.8 percent, while inventories of furniture and home furnishings increased 2.0 percent. End-of-month inventories of nondurable goods decreased 0.7 percent (+/-0.5%) from November, but were up 9.0 percent (+/-3.5%) compared to last December. Inventories of petroleum and petroleum products were down 6.3 percent from last month and inventories of farm product raw materials decreased 4.6 percent.

Inventories/Sales Ratio. The December inventories/sales ratio for merchant wholesalers, except manufacturers' sales branches and offices, based on seasonally adjusted data, was 1.17. The December 2005 ratio was 1.17.

Data in this report are based on a sample and, therefore, are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. A discussion of the reliability of the estimates and general survey methodology appears in BW/05-A Current Business Reports.

Monthly Inventories/Sales Ratios of Merchant Wholesalers, Except Manufacturers' Sales Branches and Offices: 1997 to 2006 (Estimates adjusted for seasonal and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



Monthly Wholesale Trade for January is scheduled to be released March 9, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. EST.

For information, visit the Census Bureau's Web site at <<http://www.census.gov/whl>>. This report is also available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's STAT-USA (202-482-1986).

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero.

Table 1. Estimates of Monthly Sales, Inventories, and Inventories/Sales Ratios of Merchant Wholesalers, Except Manufacturers' Sales Branches and Offices

[Total sales and inventory estimates are shown in millions of dollars. Estimates are based on data from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey.]

| NAICS ¹ code | Kind of Business | Sales | | | | | | Inventories | | | | | | Inventories/Sales Ratios | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| | | Monthly | | | Percent change | | | Monthly | | | Percent change | | | Ratios | | |
| | | Dec. 2006 (p) | Nov. 2006 (r) | Dec. 2005 (r) | Dec./Nov. | Nov./Oct. | Dec. 06/Dec. 05 | Dec. 2006 (p) | Nov. 2006 (r) | Dec. 2005 (r) | Dec./Nov. | Nov./Oct. | Dec. 06/Dec. 05 | Dec. 2006 (p) | Nov. 2006 (r) | Dec. 2005 (r) |
| Adjusted² | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 42 | U.S. Total | 337,112 | 331,213 | 310,405 | 1.8 | 0.9 | 8.6 | 393,762 | 395,797 | 362,592 | -0.5 | 1.1 | 8.6 | 1.17 | 1.19 | 1.17 |
| 423 | Durable | 164,707 | 162,945 | 153,913 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 7.0 | 248,455 | 249,484 | 229,321 | -0.4 | 0.2 | 8.3 | 1.51 | 1.53 | 1.49 |
| 4231 | Automotive | 29,396 | 28,579 | 25,532 | 2.9 | 4.7 | 15.1 | 36,837 | 37,907 | 35,467 | -2.8 | 0.1 | 3.9 | 1.25 | 1.33 | 1.39 |
| 4232 | Furniture | 5,979 | 5,994 | 5,358 | -0.3 | 1.6 | 11.6 | 8,570 | 8,398 | 7,847 | 2.0 | 1.2 | 9.2 | 1.43 | 1.40 | 1.46 |
| 4233 | Lumber | 10,497 | 10,358 | 11,967 | 1.3 | -0.2 | -12.3 | 16,396 | 16,465 | 15,491 | -0.4 | 0.6 | 5.8 | 1.56 | 1.59 | 1.29 |
| 4234 | Prof. equip. | 28,301 | 27,934 | 26,353 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 7.4 | 32,070 | 31,934 | 29,193 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 9.9 | 1.13 | 1.14 | 1.11 |
| 42343 | Comp. equip. | 15,463 | 15,047 | 13,252 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 16.7 | 11,026 | 11,228 | 10,577 | -1.8 | -2.0 | 4.2 | 0.71 | 0.75 | 0.80 |
| 4235 | Metals | 12,597 | 13,014 | 11,956 | -3.2 | -0.3 | 5.4 | 24,240 | 23,929 | 18,613 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 30.2 | 1.92 | 1.84 | 1.56 |
| 4236 | Electrical | 26,042 | 25,535 | 22,432 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 16.1 | 31,423 | 31,683 | 28,393 | -0.8 | -0.2 | 10.7 | 1.21 | 1.24 | 1.27 |
| 4237 | Hardware | 7,506 | 7,202 | 7,535 | 4.2 | -1.7 | -0.4 | 14,533 | 14,649 | 13,719 | -0.8 | 0.0 | 5.9 | 1.94 | 2.03 | 1.82 |
| 4238 | Machinery | 27,143 | 27,156 | 25,951 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 4.6 | 63,234 | 63,431 | 57,973 | -0.3 | -0.3 | 9.1 | 2.33 | 2.34 | 2.23 |
| 4239 | Misc. Durable | 17,246 | 17,173 | 16,829 | 0.4 | -4.1 | 2.5 | 21,152 | 21,088 | 22,625 | 0.3 | 1.3 | -6.5 | 1.23 | 1.23 | 1.34 |
| 424 | Nondurable | 172,405 | 168,268 | 156,492 | 2.5 | 0.9 | 10.2 | 145,307 | 146,313 | 133,271 | -0.7 | 2.6 | 9.0 | 0.84 | 0.87 | 0.85 |
| 4241 | Paper | 8,016 | 7,956 | 7,803 | 0.8 | -0.2 | 2.7 | 7,498 | 7,528 | 7,439 | -0.4 | -0.9 | 0.8 | 0.94 | 0.95 | 0.95 |
| 4242 | Drugs | 31,200 | 30,347 | 29,000 | 2.8 | -2.7 | 7.6 | 31,252 | 31,238 | 29,075 | 0.0 | 3.5 | 7.5 | 1.00 | 1.03 | 1.00 |
| 4243 | Apparel | 11,014 | 11,282 | 10,274 | -2.4 | 0.1 | 7.2 | 16,088 | 15,765 | 15,650 | 2.0 | 0.2 | 2.8 | 1.46 | 1.40 | 1.52 |
| 4244 | Groceries | 38,680 | 37,520 | 35,906 | 3.1 | -1.1 | 7.7 | 27,204 | 27,014 | 24,451 | 0.7 | 2.8 | 11.3 | 0.70 | 0.72 | 0.68 |
| 4245 | Farm products | 10,606 | 10,512 | 8,746 | 0.9 | -0.7 | 21.3 | 16,647 | 17,443 | 11,111 | -4.6 | 14.2 | 49.8 | 1.57 | 1.66 | 1.27 |
| 4246 | Chemicals | 8,249 | 8,016 | 7,593 | 2.9 | 0.4 | 8.6 | 8,559 | 8,572 | 8,226 | -0.2 | -0.1 | 4.0 | 1.04 | 1.07 | 1.08 |
| 4247 | Petroleum | 37,345 | 35,349 | 32,147 | 5.6 | 7.5 | 16.2 | 9,784 | 10,442 | 9,279 | -6.3 | 0.6 | 5.4 | 0.26 | 0.30 | 0.29 |
| 4248 | Alcohol | 9,014 | 8,881 | 7,841 | 1.5 | 2.6 | 15.0 | 9,640 | 9,558 | 9,065 | 0.9 | 1.4 | 6.3 | 1.07 | 1.08 | 1.16 |
| 4249 | Misc. Nondur. | 18,281 | 18,405 | 17,182 | -0.7 | 0.5 | 6.4 | 18,635 | 18,753 | 18,975 | -0.6 | -2.1 | -1.8 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.10 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | Sales to date | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2006 | | 2005 | |
| 42 | U.S. Total | 325,121 | 327,179 | 307,346 | -0.6 | -4.2 | 5.8 | 396,162 | 397,797 | 364,121 | -0.4 | 1.3 | 8.8 | 3,903,571 | 3,550,116 | |
| 423 | Durable | 158,805 | 160,979 | 152,303 | -1.4 | -4.7 | 4.3 | 244,597 | 248,842 | 225,652 | -1.7 | -0.1 | 8.4 | 1,915,921 | 1,760,675 | |
| 4231 | Automotive | 29,690 | 28,693 | 26,247 | 3.5 | 1.7 | 13.1 | 36,211 | 38,589 | 34,970 | -6.2 | 1.3 | 3.5 | 323,926 | 293,784 | |
| 4232 | Furniture | 5,513 | 6,210 | 5,128 | -11.2 | -2.8 | 7.5 | 8,493 | 8,314 | 7,761 | 2.2 | -1.5 | 9.4 | 68,096 | 61,081 | |
| 4233 | Lumber | 8,387 | 9,571 | 9,837 | -12.4 | -10.8 | -14.7 | 15,609 | 15,510 | 14,747 | 0.6 | -0.1 | 5.8 | 134,814 | 132,279 | |
| 4234 | Prof. equip. | 30,565 | 27,627 | 29,304 | 10.6 | -3.2 | 4.3 | 31,749 | 32,605 | 28,872 | -2.6 | -0.8 | 10.0 | 325,154 | 306,186 | |
| 42343 | Comp. equip. | 17,566 | 14,370 | 15,399 | 22.2 | -2.7 | 14.1 | 11,070 | 11,643 | 10,588 | -4.9 | -1.9 | 4.6 | 168,241 | 159,467 | |
| 4235 | Metals | 10,745 | 12,376 | 10,485 | -13.2 | -8.7 | 2.5 | 24,507 | 23,666 | 18,818 | 3.6 | 0.2 | 30.2 | 150,859 | 133,247 | |
| 4236 | Electrical | 24,401 | 26,020 | 21,535 | -6.2 | -2.3 | 13.3 | 30,732 | 31,651 | 27,740 | -2.9 | -0.7 | 10.8 | 289,415 | 264,262 | |
| 4237 | Hardware | 6,530 | 6,892 | 6,751 | -5.3 | -11.9 | -3.3 | 14,344 | 14,327 | 13,541 | 0.1 | -0.6 | 5.9 | 90,672 | 84,116 | |
| 4238 | Machinery | 26,573 | 25,146 | 26,288 | 5.7 | -8.3 | 1.1 | 62,033 | 62,987 | 56,872 | -1.5 | 0.2 | 9.1 | 320,948 | 291,951 | |
| 4239 | Misc. Durable | 16,401 | 18,444 | 16,728 | -11.1 | -5.8 | -2.0 | 20,919 | 21,193 | 22,331 | -1.3 | -0.9 | -6.3 | 212,037 | 193,769 | |
| 424 | Nondurable | 166,316 | 166,200 | 155,043 | 0.1 | -3.8 | 7.3 | 151,565 | 148,955 | 138,469 | 1.8 | 3.7 | 9.5 | 1,987,650 | 1,789,441 | |
| 4241 | Paper | 7,671 | 7,892 | 7,694 | -2.8 | -6.2 | -0.3 | 7,663 | 7,558 | 7,632 | 1.4 | -1.3 | 0.4 | 95,177 | 88,790 | |
| 4242 | Drugs | 30,826 | 30,468 | 29,812 | 1.2 | -5.8 | 3.4 | 32,877 | 31,488 | 30,529 | 4.4 | 3.5 | 7.7 | 366,326 | 326,852 | |
| 4243 | Apparel | 9,153 | 11,429 | 8,743 | -19.9 | -10.4 | 4.7 | 15,863 | 15,324 | 15,431 | 3.5 | -4.1 | 2.8 | 127,755 | 115,761 | |
| 4244 | Groceries | 38,138 | 37,895 | 36,301 | 0.6 | -2.4 | 5.1 | 28,292 | 28,284 | 25,307 | 0.0 | 5.2 | 11.8 | 447,191 | 424,165 | |
| 4245 | Farm products | 11,338 | 11,805 | 9,629 | -4.0 | -2.9 | 17.7 | 19,327 | 18,420 | 12,866 | 4.9 | 20.1 | 50.2 | 121,681 | 107,835 | |
| 4246 | Chemicals | 7,432 | 7,743 | 7,092 | -4.0 | -4.3 | 4.8 | 8,499 | 8,503 | 8,168 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 4.1 | 93,892 | 87,394 | |
| 4247 | Petroleum | 34,880 | 32,274 | 30,154 | 8.1 | -4.3 | 15.7 | 10,332 | 10,411 | 9,947 | -0.8 | 4.3 | 3.9 | 417,752 | 342,139 | |
| 4248 | Alcohol | 10,096 | 9,467 | 9,158 | 6.6 | 6.1 | 10.2 | 9,033 | 10,026 | 8,494 | -9.9 | 1.3 | 6.3 | 101,088 | 94,546 | |
| 4249 | Misc. Nondur. | 16,782 | 17,227 | 16,460 | -2.6 | -1.5 | 2.0 | 19,679 | 18,941 | 20,095 | 3.9 | -0.7 | -2.1 | 216,788 | 201,959 | |

^p Preliminary estimate. ^r Revised estimate.

¹ For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see the 2002 NAICS manual or <http://www.census.gov/epcd/naics02/naicod02.htm#N42>.

² Estimates are adjusted for seasonal variation and, in the case of sales, also for trading-day differences. See Table 3 for the seasonal adjustment factors used. Cumulative seasonally adjusted sales estimates are not tabulated.

Note: Estimates have not been adjusted for price changes. Table 2 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/mwts/www/mwtsreliability.html>.

Table 2. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability of Monthly Wholesale Sales and Inventory Estimates

[Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey.]

| NAICS code | Kind of Business | Median coefficient of variation for monthly total | | | | Median standard error for percent change | | | | Coefficient of variation for total | | Standard error for percent change |
|------------|-------------------|---|------------|-----------------|------------|--|------------|--|------------|------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | Preliminary estimates | | Final estimates | | Ratio of two consecutive months | | Current month to current month last year | | Sales to date | | Current year sales to date |
| | | Sales | Inv. | Sales | Inv. | Sales | Inv. | Sales | Inv. | Current year | Previous year | to previous year sales to date |
| 42 | U.S. Total | 0.9 | 1.3 | 0.9 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0.6 | 0.7 |
| 423 | Durable | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.1 |
| 4231 | Automotive | 2.7 | 4.9 | 2.7 | 4.8 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 2.0 | 6.2 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| 4232 | Furniture | 3.0 | 4.5 | 3.1 | 4.5 | 1.6 | 0.8 | 3.2 | 6.2 | 2.9 | 3.4 | 3.3 |
| 4233 | Lumber | 4.1 | 7.9 | 4.1 | 7.8 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 2.7 | 6.8 | 4.0 | 5.4 | 2.9 |
| 4234 | Prof. equip. | 3.6 | 4.5 | 3.5 | 4.3 | 1.5 | 0.6 | 2.3 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 2.7 | 2.1 |
| 42343 | Comp. equip. | 5.4 | 6.4 | 5.6 | 6.1 | 2.7 | 1.0 | 4.9 | 8.6 | 5.1 | 3.9 | 4.6 |
| 4235 | Metals | 3.6 | 5.5 | 3.5 | 5.4 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 2.8 | 5.4 | 3.3 | 2.4 | 2.9 |
| 4236 | Electrical | 3.0 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 3.5 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 2.1 | 3.4 |
| 4237 | Hardware | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 2.9 | 4.7 |
| 4238 | Machinery | 3.3 | 2.4 | 3.1 | 2.4 | 1.5 | 0.7 | 2.7 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 2.7 |
| 4239 | Misc. Durable | 4.6 | 5.4 | 4.8 | 5.3 | 1.6 | 0.8 | 5.5 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 2.7 | 6.1 |
| 424 | Nondurable | 1.3 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 1.2 | 2.1 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.3 |
| 4241 | Paper | 6.6 | 5.9 | 6.2 | 5.4 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 4.7 | 3.3 | 6.2 | 4.0 | 4.7 |
| 4242 | Drugs | 3.0 | 5.1 | 2.9 | 5.0 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 2.7 | 6.1 | 2.8 | 2.1 | 2.4 |
| 4243 | Apparel | 4.2 | 5.1 | 4.2 | 5.0 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 3.2 | 4.0 | 3.5 | 3.9 | 2.7 |
| 4244 | Groceries | 3.4 | 6.5 | 3.5 | 6.2 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 1.9 | 6.6 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 2.0 |
| 4245 | Farm products | 5.0 | 7.8 | 4.9 | 8.1 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 4.0 | 4.9 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 3.8 |
| 4246 | Chemicals | 6.8 | 6.3 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 6.7 | 7.7 | 6.6 | 5.1 | 7.6 |
| 4247 | Petroleum | 3.3 | 3.9 | 3.2 | 3.8 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 3.9 | 4.9 | 3.1 | 2.5 | 4.3 |
| 4248 | Alcohol | 7.4 | 3.6 | 7.5 | 3.7 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.3 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 1.6 |
| 4249 | Misc. Nondur. | 4.5 | 5.5 | 4.5 | 5.4 | 1.1 | 0.7 | 3.9 | 5.5 | 4.4 | 1.9 | 4.2 |

Note: Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or trading-day differences and are derived from estimates for the period July 2006 to present. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/mwts/www/mwtsreliability.html>.

Reliability of the Estimates

Because the estimates presented in this report are based on a sample survey, they may contain sampling error and nonsampling error.

Sampling error is the difference between the estimate and the result that would be obtained from a complete enumeration of the sampling frame conducted under the same survey conditions. This error occurs because only a subset of the entire sampling frame is measured in a sample survey. Standard errors and coefficients of variation (CV), as given in Table 2 of this report, are estimated measures of sampling variation.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90-percent confidence interval. If, for example, the percent change estimate is +1.2 percent and its estimated standard error is 0.9 percent, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.645 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.5 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.3 percent to +2.7 percent. If the interval contains 0, then one does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude at the 90 percent confidence level that the change is different from zero and therefore the change is not statistically significant. Estimated changes shown in the text are statistically significant unless otherwise noted. For a monthly total, the median estimated coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.645 \times CV \times$ (the estimated value). The Census Bureau recommends that individuals using estimates in this report incorporate this information into their analyses, as sampling error could affect the conclusions drawn from the estimates.

Nonsampling error encompasses all other factors that contribute to the total error of a sample survey estimate. This type of error can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of wholesale businesses, mistakes in the recording and coding of data, model error, and other errors of collection, response, coverage, or processing. Although nonsampling error is not measured directly, the Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the process to minimize this type of error.

Table 3. Seasonal Adjustment Factors for Monthly Wholesale Sales and Inventory Estimates

[Seasonal adjustment factors are computed using the Census Bureau's X-12 ARIMA program and are based on data from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey.]

| NAICS code | Kind of Business | Sales | | | | | | Inventories | | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|------|
| | | 2007 | 2006 | | | | | 2005 | 2007 | 2006 | | | | | 2005 |
| | | Jan. | Dec.r | Nov.r | Oct. | Sep. | Dec.r | Jan. | Dec.r | Nov.r | Oct. | Sep. | Dec.r | | |
| 42 | U.S. Total ¹ | 0.966 | 0.964 | 0.988 | 1.041 | 0.997 | 0.994 | 1.008 | 1.005 | 1.008 | 1.005 | 0.994 | 1.005 | | |
| 423 | Durable | 0.945 | 0.959 | 0.988 | 1.048 | 1.009 | 0.990 | 0.995 | 0.986 | 0.998 | 1.000 | 0.995 | 0.986 | | |
| 4231 | Automotive | 0.935 | 1.010 | 1.004 | 1.034 | 0.945 | 1.028 | 0.995 | 0.983 | 1.018 | 1.006 | 0.971 | 0.986 | | |
| 4232 | Furniture | 0.940 | 0.922 | 1.036 | 1.083 | 1.026 | 0.957 | 0.995 | 0.991 | 0.990 | 1.017 | 1.024 | 0.989 | | |
| 4233 | Lumber | 0.949 | 0.799 | 0.924 | 1.034 | 1.007 | 0.822 | 0.988 | 0.952 | 0.942 | 0.948 | 0.979 | 0.952 | | |
| 4234 | Prof. equip. | 0.934 | 1.080 | 0.989 | 1.026 | 1.085 | 1.112 | 1.007 | 0.990 | 1.021 | 1.032 | 1.004 | 0.989 | | |
| 42343 | Comp. equip. | 0.952 | 1.136 | 0.955 | 1.006 | 1.134 | 1.162 | 1.007 | 1.004 | 1.037 | 1.036 | 0.995 | 1.001 | | |
| 4235 | Metals | 0.985 | 0.853 | 0.951 | 1.039 | 0.985 | 0.877 | 1.000 | 1.011 | 0.989 | 0.994 | 1.001 | 1.011 | | |
| 4236 | Electrical | 0.954 | 0.937 | 1.019 | 1.073 | 1.040 | 0.960 | 0.981 | 0.978 | 0.999 | 1.004 | 1.015 | 0.977 | | |
| 4237 | Hardware | 0.947 | 0.870 | 0.957 | 1.067 | 0.986 | 0.896 | 0.990 | 0.987 | 0.978 | 0.984 | 0.994 | 0.987 | | |
| 4238 | Machinery | 0.939 | 0.979 | 0.926 | 1.020 | 0.998 | 1.013 | 0.979 | 0.981 | 0.993 | 0.988 | 0.989 | 0.981 | | |
| 4239 | Misc. Durable | 0.945 | 0.951 | 1.074 | 1.093 | 0.981 | 0.994 | 1.016 | 0.989 | 1.005 | 1.027 | 1.011 | 0.987 | | |
| 424 | Nondurable | 0.988 | 0.968 | 0.991 | 1.038 | 0.982 | 0.998 | 1.031 | 1.040 | 1.027 | 1.012 | 0.988 | 1.040 | | |
| 4241 | Paper | 1.004 | 0.957 | 0.992 | 1.056 | 1.012 | 0.986 | 0.993 | 1.022 | 1.004 | 1.009 | 1.003 | 1.026 | | |
| 4242 | Drugs | 1.030 | 0.988 | 1.004 | 1.037 | 0.979 | 1.028 | 1.015 | 1.052 | 1.008 | 1.008 | 1.018 | 1.050 | | |
| 4243 | Apparel | 0.958 | 0.831 | 1.013 | 1.132 | 1.041 | 0.851 | 1.018 | 0.986 | 0.972 | 1.016 | 1.050 | 0.986 | | |
| 4244 | Groceries | 0.968 | 0.986 | 1.010 | 1.023 | 0.981 | 1.011 | 1.009 | 1.040 | 1.047 | 1.023 | 1.010 | 1.035 | | |
| 4245 | Farm products | 1.128 | 1.069 | 1.123 | 1.149 | 0.912 | 1.101 | 1.210 | 1.161 | 1.056 | 1.004 | 0.816 | 1.158 | | |
| 4246 | Chemicals | 1.021 | 0.901 | 0.966 | 1.013 | 0.992 | 0.934 | 0.993 | 0.993 | 0.992 | 0.986 | 0.991 | 0.993 | | |
| 4247 | Petroleum | 0.998 | 0.934 | 0.913 | 1.026 | 1.013 | 0.938 | 1.055 | 1.056 | 0.997 | 0.962 | 1.016 | 1.072 | | |
| 4248 | Alcohol | 0.806 | 1.120 | 1.066 | 1.031 | 0.963 | 1.168 | 0.960 | 0.937 | 1.049 | 1.050 | 1.021 | 0.937 | | |
| 4249 | Misc. Nondur. | 0.961 | 0.918 | 0.936 | 0.955 | 0.952 | 0.958 | 1.054 | 1.056 | 1.010 | 0.996 | 0.975 | 1.059 | | |

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¹Adjusted sales and inventory estimates for detailed kind-of-business levels in Table 1 are computed by dividing each unadjusted estimate by the seasonal adjustment factor for the corresponding kind of business and month. Adjusted estimates for broad kind-of-business levels are obtained by summing adjusted estimates at the appropriate detailed levels. Seasonal factors shown for broad kind-of-business levels may be used to approximate adjusted estimates at these levels, but the resulting estimates may differ slightly from the published estimates.

Note: The seasonal adjustment factors shown are estimates derived from a model that uses sample survey data as input. Therefore, these estimates may contain sampling error and nonsampling error. Additional information on the general form of the model and the X-12 ARIMA program may be found at <http://www.census.gov/srd/www/x12a/>.

Description of the Survey

The Census Bureau conducts the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey (MWTS) to provide national estimates of monthly sales, end-of-month inventories, and inventory-to-sales ratios by kind of business for wholesale firms located in the United States. Specifically, the MWTS covers wholesale merchants who sell goods on their own account and include such businesses as wholesale merchants or jobbers, industrial distributors, exporters, and importers. Sales offices and branches maintained by manufacturing, refining, or mining firms for the purpose of marketing their products are not covered in this report. Also excluded is NAICS Industry Group 4251: Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers.

The MWTS sample was selected using a stratified, one-stage design with strata defined by kind of business (e.g., Automotive, Furniture, Lumber, etc.) and annual sales size. The sample includes firms of all sizes and is updated on a quarterly basis to account for new wholesale firms, deaths, and other changes to the wholesale universe. Each month, questionnaires are mailed to employer firms selected in a probability sample of approximately 4,500. Data for nonresponding firms are imputed based on data for similar-sized firms classified in the same kind of business. Approximately 27% of the total sales estimate and 29% of the total end-of-month inventory estimate is based on imputed data. Monthly sales and inventory estimates are obtained by summing weighted data (either reported or imputed). The monthly estimates are benchmarked to annual survey estimates and are adjusted for seasonal variation and trading-day differences. Individuals who use estimates in this report to create new estimates should cite the Census Bureau as the source of only the original estimates. Additional information on the MWTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at: <http://www.census.gov/whl>.