

Wholesale trade, October 2016

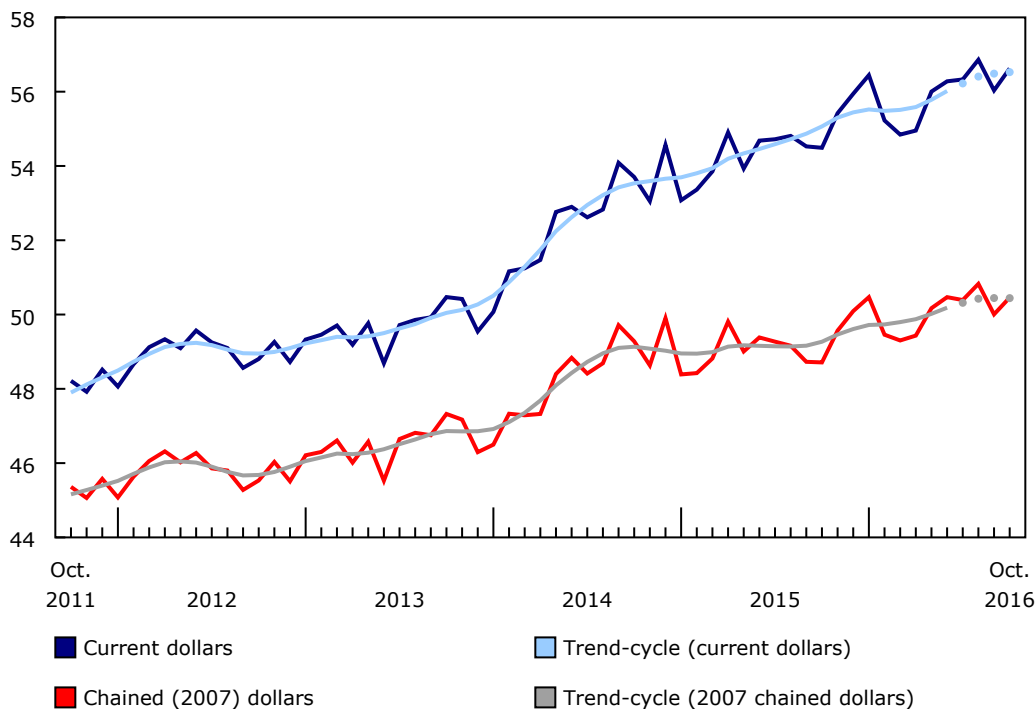
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Tuesday, December 20, 2016

Wholesale sales increased 1.1% to \$56.6 billion in October, offsetting most of September's 1.5% decrease. Gains were recorded in five subsectors, led by higher sales in the building material and supplies, motor vehicle and parts, and food, beverage and tobacco subsectors.

In volume terms, wholesale sales increased 0.9%.

Chart 1
Wholesale sales increase in October

billions of dollars



Source(s): CANSIM tables [081-0011](#) and [081-0015](#).

Higher sales in five subsectors

Sales rose in five of seven subsectors, representing approximately 87% of total wholesale sales.

The building material and supplies subsector recorded the largest increase in dollar terms, up 2.8% to \$7.6 billion on the strength of sales in the lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies industry, which recorded the lone increase (+5.6%) and reached a record high. Exports of forestry products and building and packaging materials increased in October.

Sales in the motor vehicle and parts subsector rose 1.8% to \$11.3 billion in October. While sales increased in two of three industries in the subsector, sales in the motor vehicle industry (+1.2%) rose to a record high and accounted for more than half of the advance in the subsector. Imports and exports of motor vehicles and parts increased in October.



In the food, beverage and tobacco subsector, sales increased 1.7% to \$10.9 billion in October, the first increase in three months and the highest level since May 2016. Sales in the food industry rose 1.8%, erasing the 1.8% decline observed in September.

The machinery, equipment and supplies subsector rose 1.1% to \$11.0 billion, a fifth increase in six months. Sales in the other machinery, equipment and supplies industry (+4.8%) accounted for most of the gain.

Sales in the miscellaneous subsector decreased 2.0% to \$6.8 billion, the second consecutive decline for the subsector. Three of the five industries in the subsector recorded lower sales, led by the agricultural supplies industry (-10.2%). This was the lowest level for the industry since November 2014.

Sales increase in four provinces

Sales increased in four provinces, with Quebec and Ontario recording the largest dollar-value increases.

Quebec increased 3.4% to \$10.4 billion in October with gains in six of seven subsectors. The largest contributors to Quebec's rise were the motor vehicle and parts subsector and the food, beverage and tobacco subsector. This was Quebec's first increase in three months.

Sales in Ontario increased 0.9% to \$29.3 billion, recording gains in five of the past six months. The gains in October were on the strength of the building material and supplies subsector and the miscellaneous subsector.

The machinery, equipment and supplies subsector and the motor vehicle and parts subsector contributed to the higher sales in British Columbia, which increased 3.4% from September to \$5.7 billion, with gains in six of seven subsectors. The province recorded a year-over-year increase of 10.8%.

Sales in Nova Scotia also increased in October, up 2.2% to \$786 million. The majority of subsectors posted gains, but the food, beverage and tobacco subsector added the most to the monthly growth within the province. This was Nova Scotia's third monthly increase in the past four months.

Declines in six provinces in October were led by Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, with the miscellaneous subsector leading the decrease for all three provinces.

Saskatchewan fell 8.1% from September to \$1.9 billion, declining 16.6% year over year. Alberta (-0.4%) declined to \$6.1 billion, its fifth decrease in the past seven months, and recorded a 6.2% decline year to date. Compared with September, Manitoba (-1.5%) decreased to \$1.4 billion, with declines in five of seven subsectors, and a year-over-year decline of 4.1%.

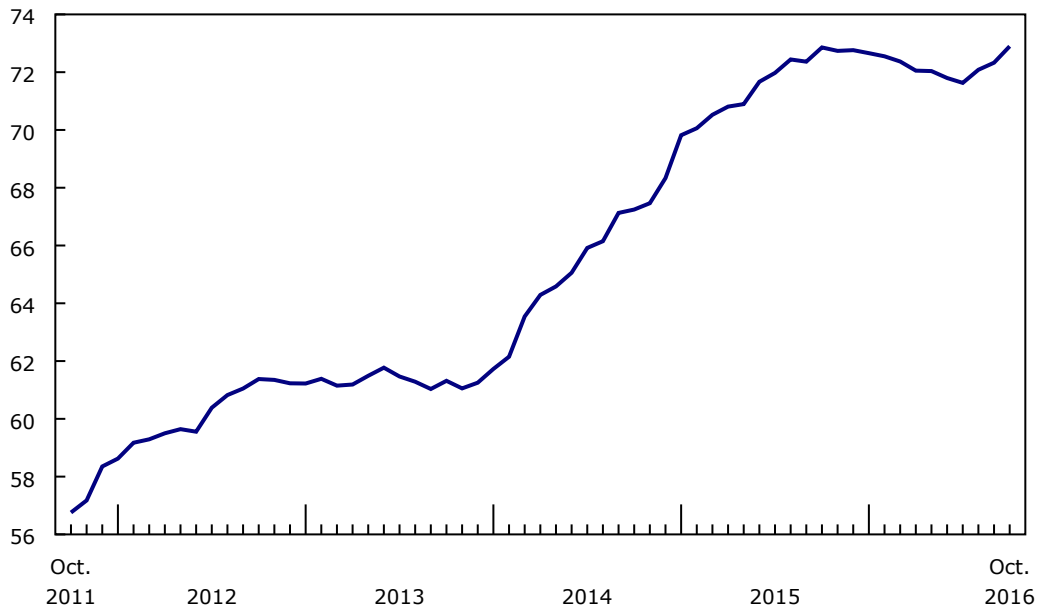
New Brunswick (-1.0%), Newfoundland and Labrador (-0.5%) and Prince Edward Island (-1.4%) all saw decreases in October. While the miscellaneous subsector contributed most to declines in Newfoundland and Labrador, the food, beverage and tobacco subsector led the decrease in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

Inventories rise

Wholesale inventories rose 0.8% to \$72.9 billion in October, a third consecutive increase. Gains were recorded in five of seven subsectors, together representing 76% of wholesale inventories.

Chart 2
Inventories rise in October

billions of dollars



Source(s): CANSIM table [081-0012](#).

Inventories in the personal and household goods subsector (+2.0%) posted the largest increase in dollar terms, reaching their highest level on record in October. The miscellaneous subsector (+1.7%) reported its first gain in eight months.

Both the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector (+0.5%) and the building material and supplies subsector (+0.6%) recorded higher inventories for the third consecutive month.

Inventories in the food, beverage and tobacco subsector were unchanged in October.

The motor vehicle and parts subsector (-0.3%) recorded its first decline in five months.

The inventory-to-sales ratio was unchanged at 1.29 in October. This ratio is a measure of the time in months required to exhaust inventories if sales were to remain at their current level.

Note to readers

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted and expressed in current dollars, unless otherwise noted. For information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

Total wholesale sales expressed in volume are calculated by deflating current dollar values using relevant price indexes. The wholesale sales series in chained (2007) dollars is a chained Fisher volume index with 2007 as the reference year. For more information, see [Sales in volume for Wholesale Trade](#).

The Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey covers all industries within the wholesale trade sector as defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), with the exception of oilseed and grain merchant wholesalers (NAICS 41112), petroleum and petroleum products merchant wholesalers (NAICS 412) and business-to-business electronic markets, and agents and brokers (NAICS 419).

For information on trend-cycle data, see the [StatCan Blog](#) and [Trend-cycle estimates – Frequently asked questions](#).

Real-time CANSIM tables

Real-time CANSIM tables 081-8011, 081-8012 and 081-8015 will be updated on January 6, 2017. For more information, consult the document [Real-time CANSIM tables](#).

Next release

Wholesale trade data for November 2016 will be released on January 23, 2017.

Table 1
Wholesale merchants' sales by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	October 2015	September 2016 ^r	October 2016 ^p	September to October 2016	October 2015 to October 2016
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale sales (current dollars)	54,489	56,034	56,625	1.1	3.9
Total, wholesale sales (2007 chained dollars)	48,711	50,005	50,458	0.9	3.6
Total wholesale sales (current dollars), excluding motor vehicle and parts	44,757	44,883	45,275	0.9	1.2
Farm product	732	596	594	-0.3	-18.8
Food, beverage and tobacco	10,414	10,743	10,925	1.7	4.9
Food	9,387	9,690	9,865	1.8	5.1
Beverage	531	533	545	2.2	2.6
Cigarette and tobacco product	495	520	516	-0.8	4.2
Personal and household goods	7,814	8,273	8,297	0.3	6.2
Textile, clothing and footwear	964	998	982	-1.6	1.9
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	766	837	857	2.4	11.8
Home furnishings	515	567	558	-1.5	8.4
Personal goods	768	752	762	1.3	-0.7
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	4,105	4,371	4,386	0.3	6.9
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	695	747	751	0.5	8.0
Motor vehicle and parts	9,732	11,152	11,350	1.8	16.6
Motor vehicle	7,274	8,846	8,955	1.2	23.1
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	2,411	2,260	2,350	4.0	-2.5
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	48	45	45	-0.9	-5.3
Building material and supplies	7,496	7,386	7,590	2.8	1.2
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	2,374	2,408	2,407	-0.0	1.4
Metal service centres	1,347	1,247	1,241	-0.5	-7.8
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	3,776	3,731	3,941	5.6	4.4
Machinery, equipment and supplies	11,318	10,920	11,042	1.1	-2.4
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	1,351	1,354	1,319	-2.6	-2.4
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	3,588	3,490	3,473	-0.5	-3.2
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	3,664	3,611	3,667	1.6	0.1
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	2,714	2,465	2,584	4.8	-4.8
Miscellaneous	6,984	6,965	6,826	-2.0	-2.3
Recyclable material	599	619	615	-0.6	2.7
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	991	989	1,020	3.2	3.0
Agricultural supplies	2,138	2,061	1,852	-10.2	-13.4
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,302	1,279	1,272	-0.6	-2.3
Other miscellaneous	1,954	2,018	2,067	2.5	5.8

^r revised

^p preliminary

Note(s): Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM tables [081-0011](#) and [081-0015](#).

Table 2
Wholesale merchants' sales by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	October 2015	September 2016 ^r	October 2016 ^p	September to October 2016	October 2015 to October 2016
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	54,489	56,034	56,625	1.1	3.9
Newfoundland and Labrador	444	383	381	-0.5	-14.1
Prince Edward Island	56	65	64	-1.4	14.9
Nova Scotia	789	769	786	2.2	-0.4
New Brunswick	518	539	534	-1.0	3.0
Quebec	9,941	10,107	10,450	3.4	5.1
Ontario	27,523	29,051	29,308	0.9	6.5
Manitoba	1,438	1,399	1,378	-1.5	-4.1
Saskatchewan	2,239	2,032	1,868	-8.1	-16.6
Alberta	6,299	6,074	6,051	-0.4	-3.9
British Columbia	5,170	5,543	5,730	3.4	10.8
Yukon	12	10	12	14.9	-4.2
Northwest Territories	54	56	57	1.6	4.7
Nunavut	6	6	7	13.7	23.5

^r revised

^p preliminary

Note(s): Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [081-0011](#).

Table 3
Wholesale merchants' inventories by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	October 2015	September 2016 ^r	October 2016 ^p	September to October 2016	October 2015 to October 2016
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale inventories	72,856	72,328	72,896	0.8	0.1
Farm product	237 ^E	223 ^E	229 ^E	2.9	-3.2
Food, beverage and tobacco	6,300	6,612	6,615	0.0	5.0
Food	5,728	6,011	5,995	-0.3	4.7
Beverage	357	382	399	4.5	11.6
Cigarette and tobacco product	215	219	221	0.7	2.8
Personal and household goods	13,217	13,497	13,773	2.0	4.2
Textile, clothing and footwear	2,440	2,463	2,439	-1.0	-0.1
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	869	867	844	-2.6	-2.9
Home furnishings	1,301	1,333	1,357	1.9	4.3
Personal goods	1,719 ^E	1,591	1,588 ^E	-0.2	-7.6
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	6,111	6,349	6,649	4.7	8.8
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	775	894	895	0.1	15.5
Motor vehicle and parts	10,558	10,975	10,942	-0.3	3.6
Motor vehicle	5,976	6,285	6,141	-2.3	2.8
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	4,486	4,604	4,716	2.4	5.1
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	97	86	85	-1.0	-12.0
Building material and supplies	12,024	11,993	12,067	0.6	0.4
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	3,259	3,279	3,291	0.4	1.0
Metal service centres	3,286	3,013	3,047	1.1	-7.3
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	5,480	5,701	5,729	0.5	4.6
Machinery, equipment and supplies	21,403	20,625	20,725	0.5	-3.2
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	4,513	4,531	4,649	2.6	3.0
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	10,811	9,977	9,886	-0.9	-8.6
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	2,014	2,231	2,277	2.0	13.1
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	4,065	3,886	3,914	0.7	-3.7
Miscellaneous	9,117	8,403	8,546	1.7	-6.3
Recyclable material	493	450	450 ^E	0.0	-8.7
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	826	805	799	-0.7	-3.4
Agricultural supplies	3,844	3,285	3,341	1.7	-13.1
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,338	1,329	1,348	1.4	0.7
Other miscellaneous	2,616	2,534	2,609	2.9	-0.3

^r revised

^p preliminary

^E use with caution

Note(s): Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [081-0012](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [081-0011](#), [081-0012](#) and [081-0015](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2401](#).

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300;
STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca).

For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact
John Burton (613-862-4878; john.burton@canada.ca), Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade Division.