

Wholesale trade, April 2018

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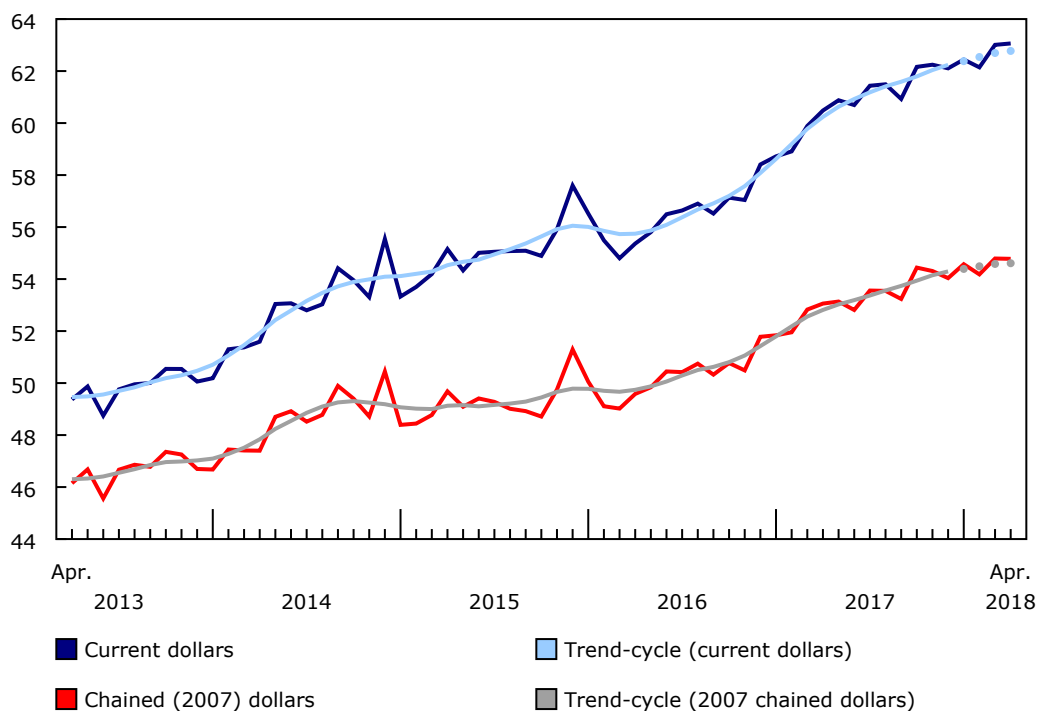
Wholesale sales edged up 0.1% to \$63.1 billion in April. Sales were up in three of seven subsectors, accounting for 54% of total wholesale sales.

Increases in the machinery, equipment and supplies and the food, beverage and tobacco subsectors were almost completely offset by declines in the motor vehicle and parts subsector.

In volume terms, wholesale sales were unchanged at \$54.8 billion.

Chart 1 Wholesale sales edge up in April

billions of dollars



Source(s): Tables [20-10-0074-01](#) and [20-10-0018-01](#).

Increase attributable to higher sales in three of seven subsectors

The machinery, equipment and supplies subsector rose for the third consecutive month, up 2.3% to \$13.0 billion in April. This was the largest monthly dollar increase since December 2017. Sales were up in three of four industries, led by the construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies industry (+5.8%). Imports of logging, mining and construction machinery have also risen for three consecutive months.

Sales in the food, beverage and tobacco subsector were up 1.9% to \$12.1 billion, mainly on the strength of higher sales in the food industry (+2.0%). The gains in the food industry in April more than offset the 1.7% decline reported in March. Exports of food, beverage and tobacco products increased in April.

Wholesale sales in the personal and household goods subsector increased 1.5% to a record \$8.9 billion. Sales were up in four of six industries, led by the home entertainment equipment and household appliance industry (+6.0%).

Offsetting most of the gains in April, the motor vehicle and parts subsector fell 4.0% to \$11.5 billion, the largest percentage decline since November 2016. Following an 8.4% increase in March, the motor vehicle industry was down 4.6% in April. Despite the decline, sales were 2.3% higher than the same month last year. Imports of passenger cars and light trucks fell 8.9% in April, following a 13.4% gain in March.

Sales up in seven provinces

Wholesale sales rose in seven provinces in April, led by British Columbia and Quebec.

Sales in British Columbia were up 1.6% to a record \$6.6 billion. The building material and supplies subsector (+8.0%) contributed the most to the gain. This was the second consecutive monthly increase for both the province and the subsector.

In dollar terms, Quebec was the second largest contributor to the increase in April, rising 0.9% to \$11.5 billion, its second consecutive monthly gain. The machinery, equipment and supplies subsector (+6.3%) contributed the most to the increase in Quebec.

Sales were up in Alberta (+0.7% to \$6.8 billion) and in Saskatchewan (+1.0% to \$2.1 billion). Sales in the machinery equipment and supplies subsector led the gains in both provinces. This was the fourth increase in five months for Alberta, while sales increased for the second consecutive month for Saskatchewan.

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador also recorded gains as a result of higher sales in the food, beverage and tobacco subsector. Sales in Nova Scotia rose 1.9% to \$861 million, its fourth consecutive monthly gain, while sales in Newfoundland and Labrador were up 2.9% to \$344 million, following three consecutive monthly declines.

Sales declined 0.7% to \$32.6 billion in Ontario on weaker sales in the motor vehicle and parts subsector. This was the second decline in three months for the province.

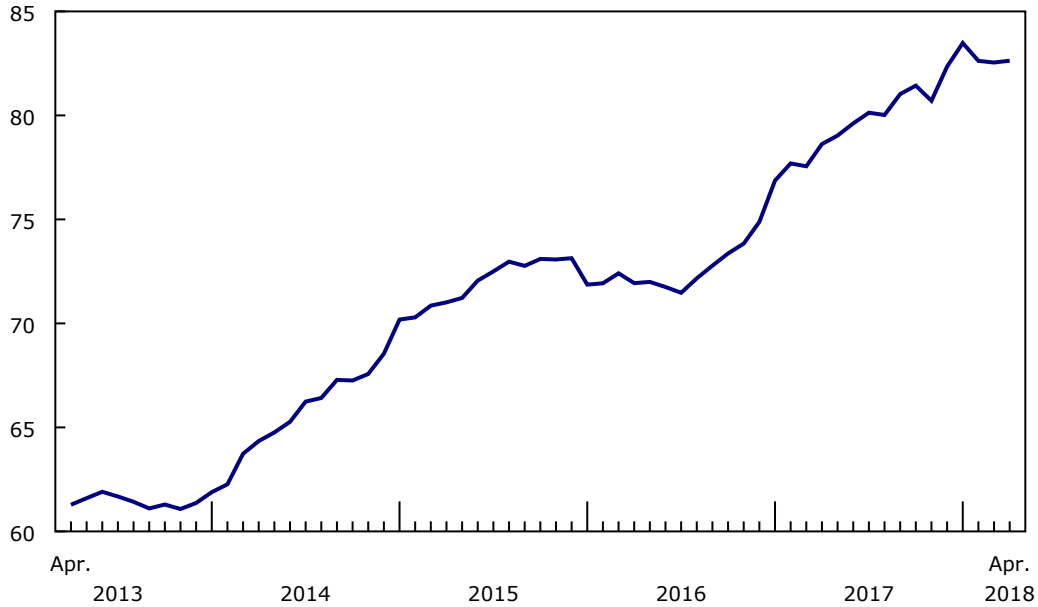
In Manitoba, sales decreased for the third consecutive month, down 1.0% to \$1.6 billion, led by the miscellaneous subsector.

Wholesale inventories edge up in April

Wholesale inventories edged up 0.1% in April to \$82.6 billion, the first increase in three months. Higher inventories in four subsectors, representing 45% of total wholesale inventories, offset declines in three subsectors.

Chart 2 Inventories edge up in April

billions of dollars



Source(s): Table [20-10-0076-01](#).

The miscellaneous subsector rose 3.4% in April, the fifth increase in six months. Increases in the agricultural supplies industry (+5.1%) led the rise.

Inventories in the building material and supplies subsector were up 1.4%, a second consecutive increase. Higher inventories were recorded in all three industries, led by the lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies industry (+2.1%).

The motor vehicle and parts subsector rose for the second time this year, up 0.7% in April. Inventories in the motor vehicle industry (+1.1%) contributed the most to the gain.

Inventories in the food, beverage and tobacco subsector (-2.5%) reported the largest dollar-value decline. This was the third decrease in four months for the subsector.

The inventory-to-sales ratio was unchanged at 1.31 in April. 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 data tables

Real-time data tables 20-10-0019-01, 20-10-0020-01 and 20-10-0023-01 will be updated on July 9.

Next release

Wholesale trade data for May will be released on July 23.

Table 1
Wholesale merchants' sales by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	April 2017	March 2018 ^r	April 2018 ^p	March to April 2018	April 2017 to April 2018
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale sales (current dollars)	60,482	63,008	63,062	0.1	4.3
Total, wholesale sales (2007 chained dollars)	53,057	54,790	54,778	-0.0	3.2
Total wholesale sales (current dollars), excluding motor vehicle and parts	49,176	51,052	51,584	1.0	4.9
Farm product	762	808	725	-10.2	-4.8
Food, beverage and tobacco	11,780	11,856	12,087	1.9	2.6
Food	10,641	10,652	10,861	2.0	2.1
Beverage	619	629	640	1.7	3.3
Cigarette and tobacco product	519	575	586	1.9	12.9
Personal and household goods	8,369	8,813	8,947	1.5	6.9
Textile, clothing and footwear	1,125	1,125	1,124	-0.1	-0.1
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	851	833	883	6.0	3.8
Home furnishings	573	575	578	0.6	0.9
Personal goods	852	793	833	5.0	-2.3
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	4,237	4,674	4,675	0.0	10.3
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	732	813	855	5.1	16.7
Motor vehicle and parts	11,306	11,955	11,478	-4.0	1.5
Motor vehicle	9,120	9,787	9,333	-4.6	2.3
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	2,135	2,112	2,088	-1.1	-2.2
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	51	56	57	1.0	11.1
Building material and supplies	8,385	9,158	9,122	-0.4	8.8
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	2,508	2,805	2,782	-0.8	10.9
Metal service centres	1,584	1,863	1,797	-3.6	13.4
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	4,293	4,490	4,543	1.2	5.8
Machinery, equipment and supplies	12,227	12,747	13,042	2.3	6.7
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	2,030	1,756	1,833	4.3	-9.7
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	3,640	3,995	4,227	5.8	16.1
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	3,567	3,800	3,775	-0.6	5.8
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	2,991	3,196	3,208	0.4	7.3
Miscellaneous	7,653	7,671	7,661	-0.1	0.1
Recyclable material	898	1,005	1,000	-0.5	11.3
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	1,001	1,045	1,103	5.5	10.1
Agricultural supplies	2,030	2,005	1,925	-4.0	-5.2
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,432	1,463	1,455	-0.5	1.6
Other miscellaneous	2,292	2,153	2,178	1.2	-4.9

^r revised

^p preliminary

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

Source(s): Tables [20-10-0074-01](#) and [20-10-0018-01](#).

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

	April 2017	March 2018 ^r	April 2018 ^p	March to April 2018	April 2017 to April 2018
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	60,482	63,008	63,062	0.1	4.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	303	335	344	2.9	13.8
Prince Edward Island	63	69	77	10.9	21.0
Nova Scotia	825	845	861	1.9	4.4
New Brunswick	527	544	543	-0.1	2.9
Quebec	11,101	11,365	11,469	0.9	3.3
Ontario	31,282	32,828	32,583	-0.7	4.2
Manitoba	1,602	1,609	1,593	-1.0	-0.6
Saskatchewan	2,227	2,072	2,094	1.0	-6.0
Alberta	6,348	6,738	6,783	0.7	6.8
British Columbia	6,121	6,526	6,632	1.6	8.3
Yukon	11	10	11	9.6	3.2
Northwest Territories	60	54	56	3.9	-6.1
Nunavut	12	11	16	38.4	34.6

^r revised

^p preliminary

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

Source(s): Table [20-10-0074-01](#).

Table 3
Wholesale merchants' inventories by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	April 2017	March 2018 ^r	April 2018 ^p	March to April 2018	April 2017 to April 2018
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale inventories	78,624	82,542	82,630	0.1	5.1
Farm product	189	199	200	0.6	5.9
Food, beverage and tobacco	7,978	8,508	8,295	-2.5	4.0
Food	7,234	7,720	7,531	-2.4	4.1
Beverage	510	502	482	-4.1	-5.6
Cigarette and tobacco product	234	285	282	-1.3	20.6
Personal and household goods	13,385	13,830	13,633	-1.4	1.9
Textile, clothing and footwear	2,599	2,502	2,505	0.1	-3.6
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	1,102	1,075	1,063	-1.1	-3.5
Home furnishings	1,311	1,378	1,310	-4.9	-0.1
Personal goods	1,843	1,835	1,896 ^E	3.4	2.9
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	5,623	6,020	5,780	-4.0	2.8
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	908	1,020	1,079	5.8	18.9
Motor vehicle and parts	12,356	12,033	12,112	0.7	-2.0
Motor vehicle	7,300	6,949	7,029	1.1	-3.7
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	4,984	5,007	5,008	0.0	0.5
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	72	77	76	-1.1	5.0
Building material and supplies	13,022	13,855	14,052	1.4	7.9
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	3,754	4,045	4,079	0.8	8.6
Metal service centres	3,540	3,834	3,869	0.9	9.3
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	5,727	5,977	6,104	2.1	6.6
Machinery, equipment and supplies	21,994	23,938	23,809	-0.5	8.3
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	5,904	6,637	6,642	0.1	12.5
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	9,396	10,537	10,451	-0.8	11.2
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	2,342	2,299	2,219	-3.5	-5.3
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	4,352	4,465	4,497	0.7	3.3
Miscellaneous	9,700	10,179	10,529	3.4	8.6
Recyclable material	772	943	957	1.5	23.9
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	792	780	782	0.2	-1.3
Agricultural supplies	3,782	4,234	4,449	5.1	17.6
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,351	1,426	1,426	0.0	5.6
Other miscellaneous	3,002	2,797	2,916	4.2	-2.9

^r revised

^p preliminary

^E use with caution

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

Source(s): Table 20-10-0076-01.

Available tables: [20-10-0018-01](#), [20-10-0074-01](#) and [20-10-0076-01](#).

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.