

Wholesale trade, October 2023

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Wholesale sales (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and excluding oilseed and grain) fell 0.5% to \$81.7 billion in October. Sales declined in five of the seven subsectors, led by the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector and the food, beverage and tobacco subsector. On an annual basis, wholesale sales (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and excluding oilseed and grain) were 2.1% lower in October compared with the same month a year earlier.

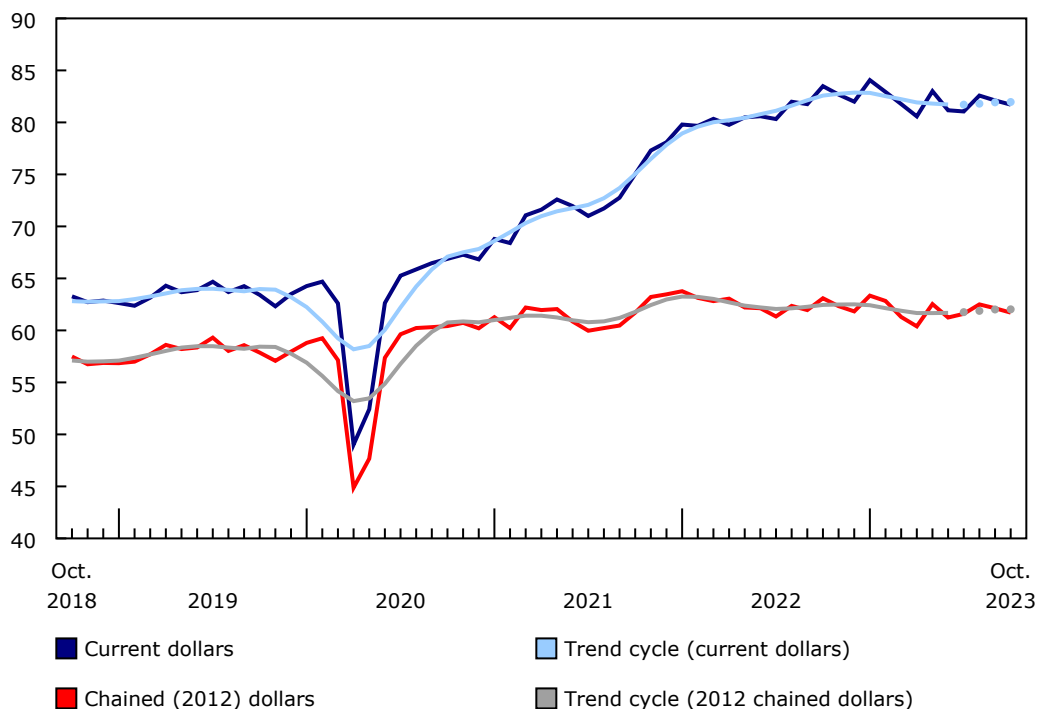
Petroleum products as well as oilseed and grain data continue to be available in data tables but will be excluded from monthly analysis until historical data are available for monthly and annual analysis.

In volume terms, wholesale sales (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and excluding oilseed and grain) fell 0.7% in October.

Chart 1

Wholesale sales (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and excluding oilseed and grain) decrease in October

billions of dollars



Note(s): The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated on the chart with a dotted line for the current reference month and the previous three months. For more information, see the Note to readers.

Source(s): Tables 20-10-0074-01 and 20-10-0003-01.



Lower sales in the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector lead the decline of wholesale sales in October

Sales in the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector decreased for the second consecutive month, down 1.6% in October to \$17.7 billion. The decline of sales in the subsector was led by two main industry groups. The construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies industry group fell 3.6% to \$6.0 billion, a result of companies completing shipments throughout the third quarter. The industry group reported a record sales level in August and has since seen its sales level decrease by over one-third. The computer and communications equipment and supplies industry group also reported a drop of sales in October (-2.9% to \$5.0 billion) following two consecutive months of increases.

The food, beverage and tobacco subsector also contributed to lower wholesale sales, down 1.1% to \$14.9 billion in October. Despite two of the four industry groups reporting an increase in sales, it was the decline of sales of the food industry group (-1.3% to \$13.1 billion) that led the subsector movement, reporting a monthly decrease of sales following strong growth in September.

The decrease in the wholesale sales sector was slightly offset by higher sales from the building material and supplies subsector, up 1.1% to \$12.1 billion in October. The lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies industry group (+1.2% to \$5.9 billion) and the electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies industry group (+1.8% to \$3.9 billion) led the subsector movement.

Decline of provincial sales led by lower sales in Ontario

A decrease of wholesale sales (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and excluding oilseed and grain) in October was led by Ontario and followed by British Columbia.

Wholesale sales in Ontario decreased by 2.6% to \$42.1 billion in October. Declines in this province were reported in six of the seven subsectors, with the largest decrease being in the motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories subsector (-4.8% to \$9.8 billion) following a substantial increase in September. Additionally, the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector was down 4.0% to \$8.6 billion in Ontario.

The second largest provincial decline in sales was in British Columbia, down 2.2% to \$7.6 billion in October. Lower sales were reported in six of the seven subsectors, led by the food, beverage and tobacco (-4.2% to \$1.5 billion) and the miscellaneous (-6.5% to \$876.9 million) subsectors.

Partially offsetting the decline in provincial sales was an increase from Quebec, up 3.2% to \$15.1 billion in October. An increase in sales was reported in five of the seven subsectors, with the largest increase in the motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories (+11.3% to \$2.0 billion) and the personal and household goods (+5.9% to \$3.3 billion) subsectors.

Inventories rise in October

Wholesale inventories (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and excluding oilseed and grain) rose 1.1% to \$129.3 billion in October, marking the largest monthly increase since February 2023.

Wholesale inventories bounced back in October, reaching levels similar to those reported in the first half of 2023. The increase of inventories in October was due to stronger inventories from five of the seven subsectors. The increase was led by the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector (+2.6% to \$39.0 billion), followed by the motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories subsector (+2.3% to \$17.5 billion).

The inventory-to-sales ratio increased from 1.52 in September to 1.58 in October. This ratio is a measure of the time (in months) required to exhaust inventories if sales were to remain at their current levels.

Table 1
Wholesale merchants' sales by industry—seasonally adjusted

	October 2022	September 2023 ^f	October 2023 ^p	September to October 2023	October 2022 to October 2023
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale sales (current dollars)	83,485	129,293	130,309	0.8	56.1
Total, wholesale sales (current dollars), excluding petroleum and oilseed and grain	..	82,112	81,709	-0.5	-2.1
Total, wholesale sales (2012 chained dollars), excluding petroleum and oilseed and grain	..	62,129	61,709	-0.7	..
Total wholesale sales (current dollars), excluding motor vehicle and parts	70,872	67,678	67,420	-0.4	-4.9
Farm product (excluding oilseed and grain)	1,269	1,438	1,433	-0.4	12.9
Oilseed and grain merchant ¹	..	2,427	3,526	45.3	..
Petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons ¹	..	44,754	45,074	0.7	..
Food, beverage and tobacco	15,252	15,006	14,845	-1.1	-2.7
Food	13,622	13,289	13,110	-1.3	-3.8
Beverage	902	923	961	4.0	6.5
Cigarette and tobacco product	498	524	529	0.9	6.2
Cannabis	229	270	246	-9.0	7.1
Personal and household goods	11,514	11,353	11,433	0.7	-0.7
Textile, clothing and footwear	1,457	1,294	1,395	7.8	-4.3
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	724	826	829	0.4	14.6
Home furnishings	724	682	695	1.8	-4.1
Personal goods	1,043	957	960	0.4	-7.9
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	7,567	7,595	7,555	-0.5	-0.2
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	1,124	1,149	1,021	-11.1	-9.1
Motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories	12,613	14,434	14,289	-1.0	13.3
Motor vehicle	9,932	11,863	11,650	-1.8	17.3
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	2,611	2,504	2,566	2.5	-1.7
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	70	67	73	8.9	5.1
Building material and supplies	12,467	11,930	12,060	1.1	-3.3
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	3,637	3,801	3,869	1.8	6.4
Metal service centres	2,524	2,297	2,288	-0.4	-9.3
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	6,306	5,832	5,903	1.2	-6.4
Machinery, equipment and supplies	17,491	17,948	17,652	-1.6	0.9
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	2,442	2,510	2,581	2.8	5.7
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	5,887	6,226	6,002	-3.6	1.9
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	5,120	5,100	4,953	-2.9	-3.3

Table 1 - continued
Wholesale merchants' sales by industry—seasonally adjusted

	October 2022	September 2023 ^r	October 2023 ^p	September to October 2023	October 2022 to October 2023
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	4,041	4,112	4,116	0.1	1.9
Miscellaneous	12,879	10,001	9,996	-0.0	-22.4
Recyclable material	1,308	1,114	1,248	12.0	-4.6
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	1,301	1,240	1,182	-4.6	-9.1
Agricultural supplies	5,188	3,117	3,181	2.1	-38.7
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,924	1,813	1,801	-0.7	-6.4
Mineral, ore and precious metal	x	502	489	-2.6	x
Log, wood chips, and other wood products	x	84	95	13.0	x
Other miscellaneous	2,372	2,131	1,999	-6.2	-15.7

^r revised

^p preliminary

.. not available for a specific reference period

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

1. Unadjusted and not included in wholesale sales calculation.

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

Source(s): Tables [20-10-0074-01](#) and [20-10-0003-01](#).

Table 2
Wholesale merchants' sales by province and territory—seasonally adjusted

	October 2022	September 2023 ^r	October 2023 ^p	September to October 2023	October 2022 to October 2023
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	83,485	82,112	81,709	-0.5	-2.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	409	406	428	5.5	4.6
Prince Edward Island	133	118	119	1.0	-10.7
Nova Scotia	1,178	1,126	1,133	0.7	-3.8
New Brunswick	798	755	775	2.6	-2.9
Quebec	15,435	14,645	15,121	3.2	-2.0
Ontario	41,477	43,272	42,142	-2.6	1.6
Manitoba	2,000	2,008	2,020	0.6	1.0
Saskatchewan	4,603	3,168	3,210	1.3	-30.3
Alberta	9,161	8,793	9,110	3.6	-0.6
British Columbia	8,221	7,753	7,582	-2.2	-7.8
Yukon	x	x	x	x	x
Northwest Territories	36	36	38	6.2	7.2
Nunavut	x	x	x	x	x

^r revised

^p preliminary

^x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

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

	October 2022	September 2023 ^r	October 2023 ^p	September to October 2023	October 2022 to October 2023
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale inventories	126,562	146,160	146,631	0.3	15.9
Total, wholesale inventories (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons)	126,562	127,824	129,275	1.1	2.1
Farm product (excluding oilseed and grain)	332	3,685	3,973	7.8	...
Petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons ¹
Food, beverage and tobacco	14,434	14,191	14,125	-0.5	-2.1
Food	12,849	11,892	11,901	0.1	-7.4
Beverage	828	1,548	1,537	-0.7	85.7
Cigarette and tobacco product	501	488	420	-13.9	-16.1
Cannabis	257	264	267	0.9	3.7
Personal and household goods	20,874	20,543	20,457	-0.4	-2.0
Textile, clothing and footwear	4,828	4,627	4,595	-0.7	-4.8
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	1,455	1,317	1,356	3.0	-6.8
Home furnishings	2,134	1,741	1,723	-1.1	-19.3
Personal goods	2,902	2,742	2,832	3.3	-2.4
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	8,405	9,032	8,883	-1.6	5.7
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	1,150	1,084	1,068	-1.5	-7.1
Motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories	14,127	17,063	17,452	2.3	23.5
Motor vehicle	7,894	11,142	11,492	3.1	45.6
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	6,098	5,781	5,807	0.5	-4.8
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	F	F	F	F	F
Building material and supplies	24,596	22,269	22,273	0.0	-9.4
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	7,235	6,805	6,664	-2.1	-7.9
Metal service centres	6,845	6,031	6,013	-0.3	-12.2
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	10,516	9,433	9,596	1.7	-8.7
Machinery, equipment and supplies	34,126	37,990	38,977	2.6	14.2
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	6,552	9,465	9,845	4.0	50.3
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	15,792	17,819	18,297	2.7	15.9
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	4,462	3,335	3,239	-2.9	-27.4
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	7,319	7,372	7,596	3.0	3.8
Miscellaneous	18,074	15,380	15,566	1.2	-13.9
Recyclable material	1,172	1,235 ^E	1,266	2.5	8.0
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	1,423	1,389	1,348	-2.9	-5.3
Agricultural supplies	8,592	6,709	6,978	4.0	-18.8
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,960	1,730	1,771	2.4	-9.6
Mineral, ore and precious metal	..	240	244	1.4	..
Log, wood chips, and other wood	..	77	121	57.5	..
Other miscellaneous	4,718	3,999	3,838	-4.0	-18.7

r revised

p preliminary

.. not available for a specific reference period

... not applicable

E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

1. Unadjusted and not included in wholesale sales calculation.

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

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

Note to readers

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted and expressed in current dollars unless otherwise noted.

Seasonally adjusted data are data that have been modified to eliminate the effect of seasonal and calendar influences to allow for more meaningful comparisons of economic conditions from period to period. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Section 2: Issues related to analysis and interpretation](#).

Trend-cycle estimates are included in selected charts as a complement to the seasonally adjusted series. These data represent a smoothed version of the seasonally adjusted time series (see [Section 1: Concepts and definitions](#)) and provide information on longer-term movements, including underlying changes in direction in the series. For information on trend-cycle data, see [Trend-cycle estimates – Frequently asked questions](#).

Both seasonally adjusted data and trend-cycle estimates are subject to revision as additional observations become available. These revisions could be large and could even lead to a reversal of movement, especially for reference months near the end of the series or during periods of economic disruptions.

Total wholesale sales expressed in volume are calculated by deflating current dollar values using relevant price indexes. The wholesale sales series in chained (2012) dollars is a chained Fisher volume index, with 2012 as the reference year. For more information, see the publication "[Deflation of wholesale sales](#)."

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 business-to-business electronic markets, and agents and brokers (NAICS 419).

Real-time data tables

Real-time data tables 20-10-0019-01, 20-10-0020-01 and 20-10-0005-01 will be updated soon.

Next release

Wholesale trade data for November 2023 will be released on January 15, 2024.

Available tables: [20-10-0003-01](#), [20-10-0074-01](#) and [20-10-0076-01](#).

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

The product "[Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey: Interactive Tool](#)" ([71-607-X](#)) is available online. This product is based on the data published in the tables of the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey: 20-10-0074-01, 20-10-0076-01 and 20-10-0003-01.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).