



category of stores during 1970-73 (74.2%); only the major appliances section showed a greater increase during that time (84.7%). Other departments which showed above-average sales increases in both time segments are: television, radio and music; housewares and small electrical appliances; sporting goods and luggage; and stationery, books and magazines. Three departments showed particularly substantial increases during 1966-69: women's footwear, men's footwear and hosiery where sales were 75% to 85% higher in 1969 than in 1966. However, all three had lower-than-average sales increases in 1970-73 with hosiery recording the lowest increase of any department, 2.2%.

**Voluntary group stores.** In a variety of trades, independent retailers have turned increasingly toward affiliation with voluntary group organizations in order to stem the continuing encroachment on their market share by chains and department stores. Through such group affiliation independent stores may enjoy many of the advantages accruing to chain store firms: bulk purchasing, centralized buying, lower unit advertising costs, and a number of important management services. (It should be noted that not only independent stores but some chains are also affiliated in group organizations.) As sponsors and/or suppliers of many voluntary groups, wholesalers have also benefited, particularly through the streamlining of their selling and order-filling systems.

The 1972 survey of voluntary group stores affiliated with food wholesalers revealed that sales of grocery and combination stores affiliated in voluntary groups totalled \$2,420.5 million,