

almost unchanged from the preceding year. On the downtrend were fur, maple products and other miscellaneous commodities, while honey, tobacco, wool and lumber registered increases (Table 18.26).

Merchandising of farm supplies and consumer goods by marketing and purchasing cooperatives rose \$371 million, or 31%, in 1974. Food dollar volume expanded 18%, slightly more than the 16% increase in the food component of the consumer price index. Sales of fertilizer and agricultural chemicals boomed for a second straight year on record physical volumes and prices. Feed sales jumped 44% mostly due to record grain prices. Farm machinery sales climbed 17% but would have been much higher had all orders been filled. As it was, machinery manufacturers could not keep up with surging demand brought on by greatly expanded farm cash receipts. All other sales categories rose at rates above 25% in a combination of higher unit sales and rising prices.

Gross business volume of the production cooperatives fell \$9 million, or 18.9%, to \$46.5 million. Moderate increases in the central and Maritime provinces were outweighed by western declines. Alberta and Saskatchewan revenues were severely depressed by a cutback in livestock feeding owing to the high level of grain prices. Assets expanded to \$42 million, a gain of \$2 million, with expansion in Quebec overcoming declines in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Revenues of the other service cooperatives, including many new ones, expanded at an accelerated rate in 1974. Gross revenues came to \$62 million with most provinces contributing to a gain of \$15 million or 32%. Quebec, with many new incorporations, had gains in transportation, housing and miscellaneous services, while in British Columbia there was greater participation in dental insurance plans. Alberta volume rose on the strength of rural electric and new gas utilities business. Saskatchewan and Ontario revenue totals were boosted by the inclusion of some cooperatives not reported in the previous year. Service cooperatives' assets amounted to \$183 million for 1974 as compared to \$134 million a year earlier. Ontario with expanded activity in the housing sector and Alberta with rural electrification expansion and new development of gas utilities accounted for the bulk of the asset increase.

Total business volume of fishing cooperatives for 1974 rose almost \$6 million, or 12%, with most of the gain occurring in British Columbia. Assets of the fishing cooperatives increased about \$6 million, most of it going into British Columbia inventories and accounts receivable and financed by accounts payable to members.

Wholesale cooperative revenues rose 33% or \$346 million in 1974 to a level of \$1,389 million. Supply sales contributed three quarters of the increase, gaining \$272 million, or 37%, and exceeding \$1 billion for the first time. The jump in supply volume was broadly based with all sales categories moving upward in a year of record farm receipts and generally high spending levels throughout the economy. However, it was also a year of widespread shortages and delayed deliveries for many items, and wholesalers accordingly were hard-pressed to meet member demands. Marketing volume of the wholesalers rose about 23% or \$73 million to a total of \$386 million. About two thirds of the gain came from Quebec dairy sales which benefitted from the acquisition of a private dairy company by cooperative interests in that province. Assets of the wholesalers grew \$98 million, or 33%, to \$398 million in the year.

Control and sale of alcoholic beverages

18.1.6

The retail sale of alcoholic beverages in Canada is controlled by provincial and territorial government liquor control authorities. Alcoholic beverages are sold directly by most of these authorities to the consumer or to licensees for resale. However, in some provinces beer and wine are sold directly by breweries and wineries to consumers or to licensees for resale. During the year ended March 31, 1975, provincial government liquor authorities operated 1,496 retail stores and had 349 agencies in smaller centres.