



husband-wife families was greater than for other families and the average for both groups increased with the number of income recipients.

Family spending

6.2

Household surveys of family spending provide information on consumer spending that can be related to family characteristics such as geographic location, family size and income level. In general, the survey program has consisted of two phases: the collection, by means of monthly record-keeping surveys throughout the reference year, of detailed information on family food expenditures; and the collection of information by annual recall of all family expenditure, income and changes in assets and liabilities. The record-keeping phase was not featured in all the survey programs.

A primary use of such surveys is to provide information for constructing, reviewing and revising the weights of the Consumer Price Index (see Chapter 21). Initially these small-scale sample expenditure surveys carried out in selected Canadian urban centres since 1953 were designed to follow changes in the patterns of a well-defined group of middle-income urban families known as the "target group" of the Consumer Price Index. In recent years, demand for expenditure statistics to serve other needs of government, business, welfare organizations and academic research has resulted in a widening in the scope and size of the surveys. This culminated in the expansion of the biennial program for 1969 to provide a large-scale national survey for the first time since 1948-49 covering both urban and rural households in the 10 provinces.

The most recent survey program, the twelfth in the series, refers to 1976 and was carried out in two phases: the collection, by means of monthly record-keeping surveys throughout 1976, of detailed information on family purchases of food and non-alcoholic