

## **The 2015 Holiday Season**

This festive season, or simply the holidays, is a time for gathering and celebrating with family and friends, gift giving, reflection and thanks. To commemorate this time of year, the U.S. Census Bureau presents the following holiday-related facts and figures from its collection of statistics.

### **Rush to the Stores**

#### **\$24.5 billion**

Estimated retail sales by the nation's department stores (including leased departments) in December 2014. This represents an estimated 41.2 percent jump from the previous month when retail sales were estimated at \$17.3 billion. No other estimated month-to-month increase in department store sales last year was as large.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey

<http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=2014&endYear=2014&categories=4521I&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA>

Note: Leased departments are separately owned businesses operated as departments or concessions of other service establishments or of retail businesses, such as a separately owned shoeshine parlor in a barber shop, or a beauty shop in a department store. Also, retail sales and inventory estimates have not been adjusted to account for seasonal or pricing variations.

#### **14.2%**

The estimated percentage of total 2014 sales for department stores (including leased departments) in December. For jewelry stores, the estimated percentage was 18.2 percent.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey

<http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2014&categories=4521I&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA>

and <http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2014&categories=44831&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA>

#### **21.7%**

The estimated growth in inventories by our nation's department stores (excluding leased departments) from Aug. 31 to Nov. 30, 2014.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey

<<http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2014&categories=4521E&dataType=IM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA>>

## **\$48.3 billion**

Estimated value of retail sales by electronic shopping and mail-order houses in December 2014 — the highest estimated total for any month last year.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey

<<http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2014&categories=4541&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA>>

## **31,112**

The number of electronic shopping and mail-order houses in business in 2013. These businesses, which employed 383,066 workers in the pay period including March 12, are a popular source of holiday gifts.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 County Business Patterns

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/BP/2013/00A1//naics~45411>>

## **Christmas Trees and Decorations**

### **\$1.2 billion**

The value of U.S. imports of Christmas tree ornaments from China between January and September 2015. China was the leading country of origin for such items. Similarly, China was the leading foreign source of artificial Christmas trees shipped to the United States (\$163.3 million worth) during the same period.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics

<<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade>>

### **567**

Estimated number of U.S. producers who grew poinsettias in 2014. California, North Carolina and Florida ranked in the top three for sales of the popular holiday plant.

Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service (pg. 42)

<<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/FlorCrop/FlorCrop-06-04-2015.pdf>>

## **Where Toys are Made**

### **545**

The number of locations that primarily produced dolls, toys and games in 2013; they employed 6,538 workers in the pay period including March 12. California led the nation with 86 establishments.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 County Business Patterns

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/BP/2013/00A1/0100000US/0100000US.04000/aics~33993>>

## Holiday Names

Place names associated with the holiday season consist of a dozen places named Holly, including Mount Holly, N.C. (population 14,016) and Holly Springs, Miss. (7,574). There is Snowflake, Ariz. (5,644), Santa Claus, Ind. (2,479), North Pole, Alaska (2,178), Noel, Mo. (1,831) and — if you know about reindeer — Dasher, Ga. (959) and Rudolph, Wis. (433). There is also Unity, N.H. (1,615) and Peace, N.D. (28).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates

<<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2014/SUB-EST2014.html>>

## Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa

### 53%

Estimated proportion of the nation's potatoes produced in Idaho and Washington during 2014. Potatoes are a popular dish served during the holidays.

Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

<<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/Pota/Pota-09-17-2015.pdf>>

### \$1.7 billion

The estimated product shipments value of candles in 2013 by U.S. manufacturers. Many of these candles are lit during Diwali (Nov. 11), Hanukkah (Dec. 6-14) and Kwanzaa (Dec. 26-Jan. 1) celebrations.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Economic Census, Industry Series

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ASM/2013/31VS101//prodsv~3399995>>

### 11.5%

The estimated percentage by which the U.S. Postal Service surpassed its own projections for package deliveries in December 2014. This marks an increase of 18 percent from package deliveries in December 2013.

Sources: U.S. Postal Service

<[http://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2014/pr14\\_057.htm](http://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2014/pr14_057.htm)> and

<[http://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2015/pr15\\_002.htm](http://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2015/pr15_002.htm)>

The Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day
Super Bowl	Grandparents Day
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Women's History Month (March)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Earth Day (April 22)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Older Americans Month (May)	Thanksgiving Day
Mother's Day	The Holiday Season (December)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	
Father's Day	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

**Editor's note:** The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines.

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