

Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey - Sampling Frame

The sampling frame used for the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey and the Annual Wholesale Trade Survey consists of firms. The firms consist of one or more establishments. We create these sampling units from data collected as part of the 2012 Economic Census and from establishment records contained on the Census Bureau's Business Register as of December 2015. The Business Register is a database that contains records of all known establishments in the U.S.

To create the sampling frame, we extract the records for all employer establishments located in the United States and classified in the wholesale trade sector as defined by the 2012 North American Industry Classification System. For these establishments we extract sales, end-of-year inventories, payroll, employment, name and address information, wholesale type of operation code (TOC), as well as primary identifiers and associated Employer Identification Numbers (EINs). We use the TOC to distinguish between three different types of wholesale establishments: (1) merchant wholesale establishments, excluding manufacturers' sales branches and offices (MSBOs); (2) MSBOs; and (3) agents, brokers, and business electronic markets. The MWTS sample is drawn from the first group, merchant wholesale establishments, excluding MSBOs. To create the sampling units, we sum the establishment data for all wholesale establishments associated with the same firm identifier. In some cases, a multiunit firm has establishments active in more than one wholesale TOC. In these situations, we create firm-level sampling units for each type of operation. No aggregation is necessary to put single-unit establishment information on a firm basis. Thus, the sampling units created for single-unit firms simultaneously represent establishment and firm information.