

Food availability, 2020

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The pandemic impacted some aspects of the food supply chain from farm to fork, leading to the temporary shutdown of slaughterhouses and food processing plants, labour shortages, trade restrictions and a shift in consumer demand away from restaurant fare to home cooking.

Food availability indicates the amount of food that is physically present in a country for consumption, not demand.

Food available for consumption generally reflects consumer demand for preferred food options, but with the disruption of food supply chains during the pandemic, the correlation between food availability and consumer preference was not clear in 2020.

Fresh fruit and processed vegetable availability increased over the last decade

The total amount of fresh fruit available, including citrus, rose 2.9% from a decade earlier to 77.0 kilograms per person in 2020, led by fresh fruit production (+28.6%) and imports (+13.7%). The availability of fresh fruits was relatively stable (+0.5%) compared with 2019, while fresh fruit production declined 5.6% and imports rose 1.8%.

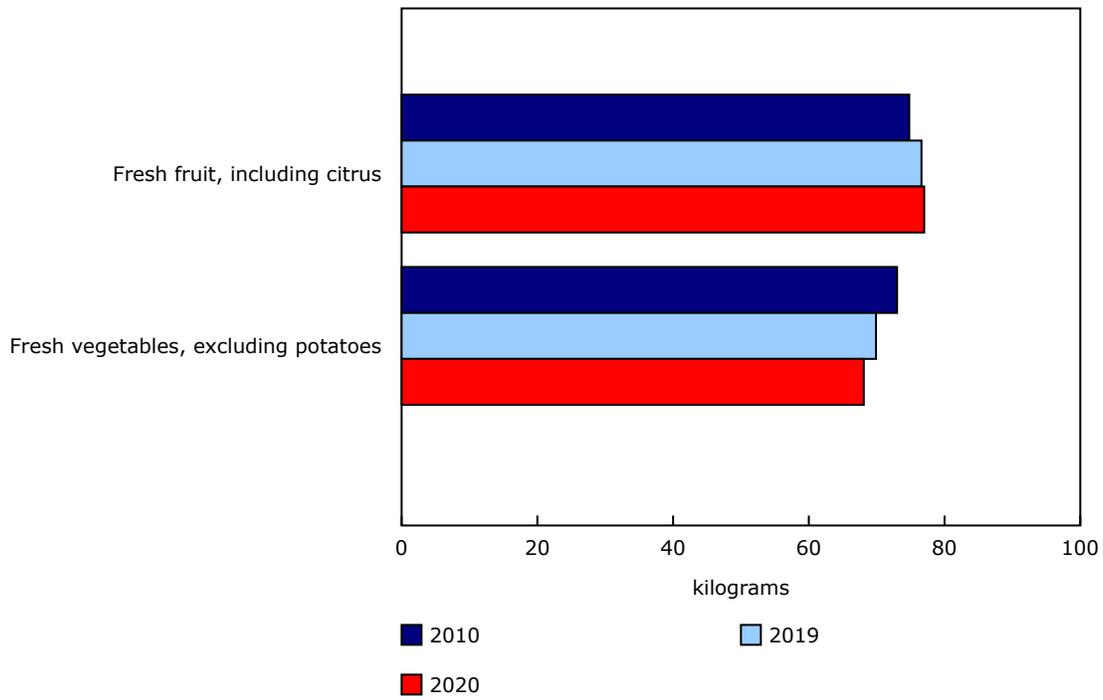
The total amount of processed fruit available for consumption decreased 1.9% from 2019 to 15.2 kilograms of fresh equivalent fruit per person in 2020, and was down 8.3% from 2010. The availability of total frozen fruits (-9.1%) and canned fruits (-8.9%) both declined from 2019.

The total amount of fresh vegetables available for consumption, excluding potatoes, was 68.1 kilograms per person in 2020, down 2.6% from the previous year and down 6.7% from a decade earlier.

Total processed vegetables, which include frozen and canned vegetables available for consumption (fresh equivalent weight), increased 3.9% from 2019 to 39.9 kilograms per person in 2020 and rose 4.4% from 2010. The total amount of frozen vegetables (fresh equivalent weight) was up 3.0% on an annual basis to 8.7 kilograms in 2020 and up 20.9% from a decade earlier.

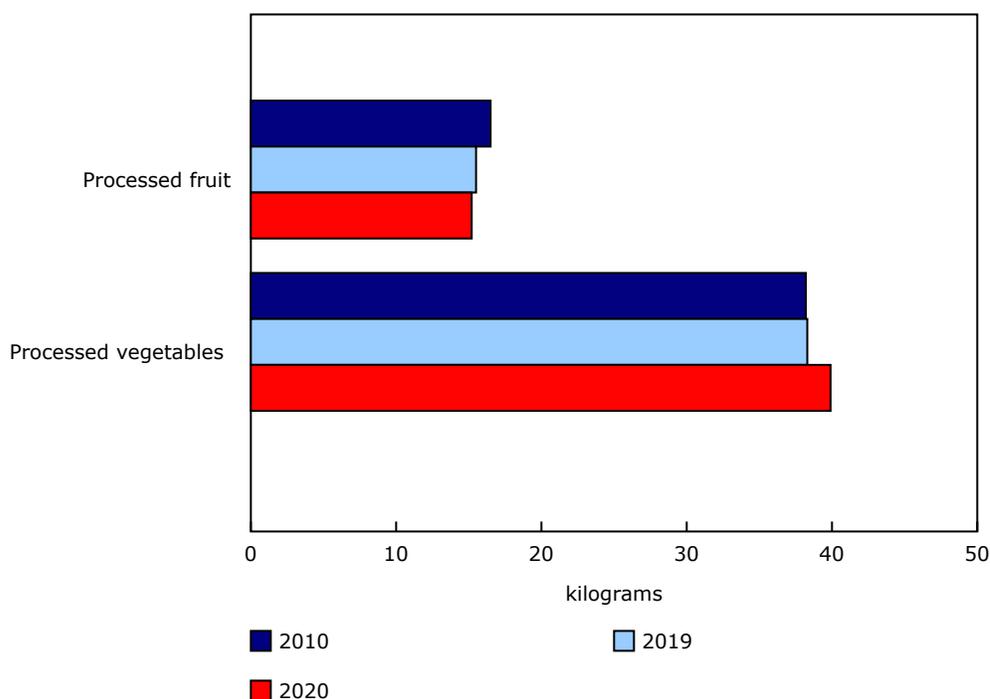


Chart 1
Availability of fresh fruit, including citrus, and fresh vegetables, excluding potatoes



Source(s): Table [32-10-0054-01](#).

Chart 2
Availability of processed fruit and vegetables, in fresh equivalent



Source(s): Table 32-10-0054-01.

Chicken continues to lead meat availability

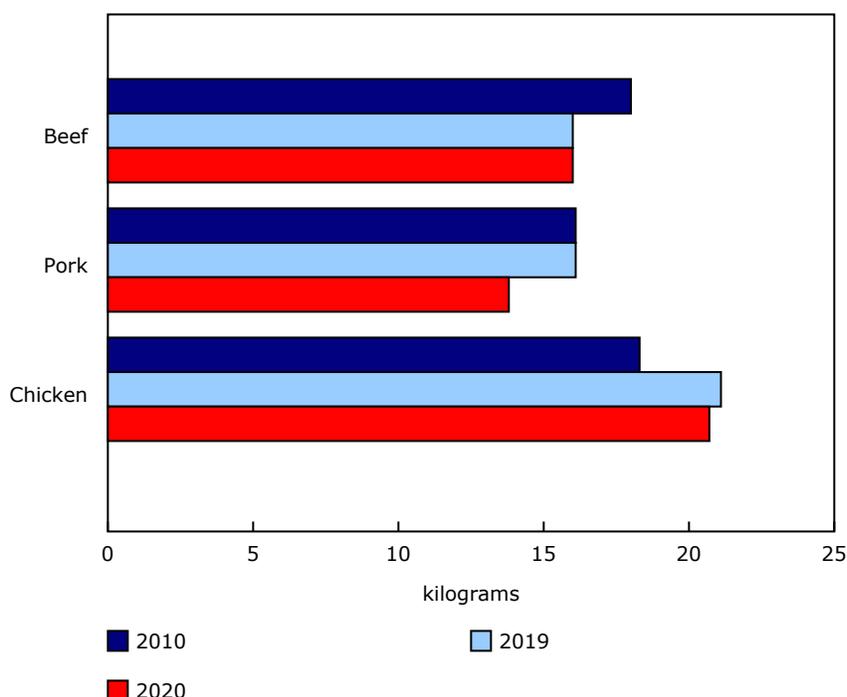
The availability of total poultry for consumption (including chicken, turkey and stewing hens) declined 2.4% from 2019 to 25.4 kilograms of boneless weight per person in 2020, but was up 9.0% from 2010.

Poultry production decreased 2.2% in 2020—the first decline in the total weight of poultry birds produced in Canada in a decade.

Chicken available for consumption was down 1.9% compared with the previous year to 20.7 kilograms available in 2020. The decrease in poultry available for consumption may have been attributable to disruptions to the poultry supply chain, such as the temporary closures of meat processing facilities and labour shortages during the pandemic.

Red meat available for consumption declined 7.2% on an annual basis to 32.1 kilograms of boneless weight per person in 2020, mainly as a result of lower pork availability (-14.8%). Conversely, beef availability held steady (+0.1%) from the previous year, at 16.0 kilograms, but was down 10.8% from 2010. Pork availability was down 14.5% from 2010 to 13.8 kilograms of boneless weight per person.

Chart 3
Availability of selected meat in boneless weights



Source(s): Table 32-10-0054-01.

Egg availability for consumption decreases despite higher egg production

The amount of eggs available for consumption edged down 0.3% compared with 2019 to 21.3 dozens per person in 2020, but was nevertheless up by almost one-third (+30.4%) from a decade earlier.

Total egg production rose 2.3% annually to 841.1 million dozens in 2020. Pandemic-related restrictions on imports (-20.3%) and disruptions at processing facilities (-2.0%) reduced the amount of eggs available.

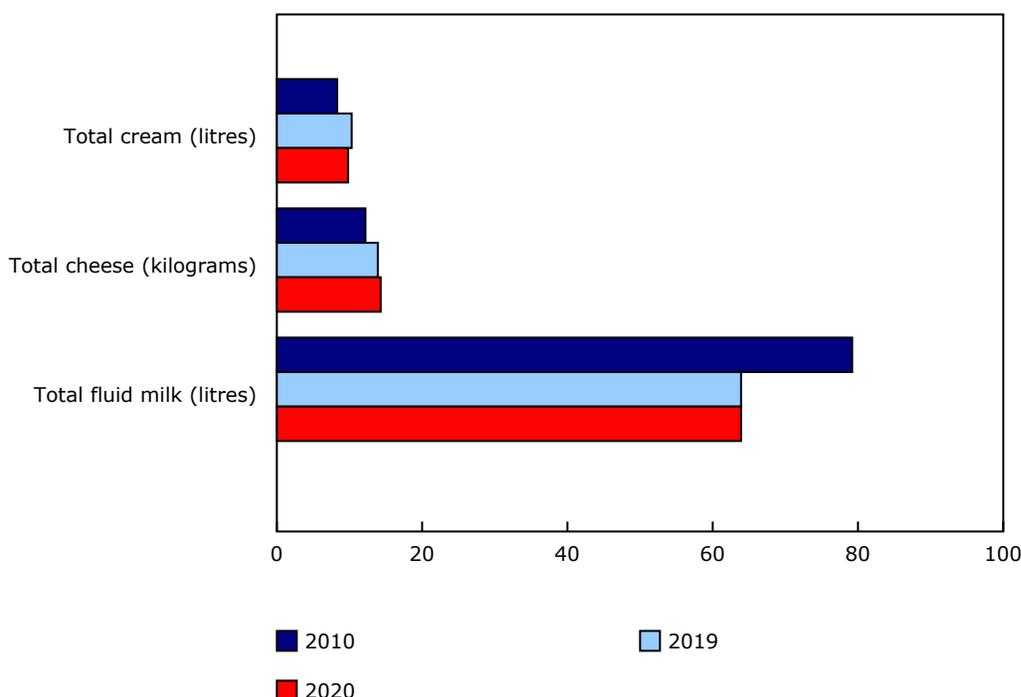
Total cheese and cream availability continues to increase, while total fluid milk availability declines

The amount of total milk available for consumption was unchanged from the previous year at 63.9 litres per person in 2020, but was down 19.3% from 2010. The decline over the past decade was partly attributable to the availability of skim milk, which fell by more than half (-56.1%) from 2010 to 3.7 litres per person in 2020, as a result of lower production.

In contrast, the availability of total cheese increased 16.8% from 2010 to 14.3 kilograms in 2020. Production and imports of cheddar cheese and variety cheeses were both up from a decade earlier, while the availability of processed cheese was down 1.7%.

The availability of all cream, including table cream, sour cream, whipping cream and cereal cream, was up 18.5% from 2010 to 9.8 litres. Conversely, while ice cream availability was overall down 0.8% from a decade earlier, it increased by almost one-third (+29.6%) in 2020 compared with 2019.

Chart 4
Dairy availability



Source(s): Table 32-10-0054-01.

Availability of wheat flour and breakfast food increases in 2020, while availability of rolled oats declines by over half

Wheat flour available for consumption increased for the third consecutive year, edging up 0.4% to 60.4 kilograms per person in 2020. However, this was down 3.4% from 2010 levels.

Conversely, the availability of rolled oats decreased by over half (-62.2%) from 2019, as a result of high exports (+22.5%). Despite the annual decline, rolled oats availability was up 77.1% from a decade earlier.

Breakfast food availability, which includes hot and cold cereals, was up 5.9% from 2019, but was down 12.5% from a decade earlier.

Maple sugar availability nearly halved in 2020 (correction)

Maple sugar available for consumption was nearly halved from the previous year to 0.19 kilograms in 2020, despite a record high in production (+8.3%), due to increased exports (+21.4%) and ending stocks (+22.7%) (corrections).

Refined sugar availability rose 1.4% from 2019 to 30.5 kilograms, as a result of higher production (+4.7%) and imports (+5.1%). This increase may have been related to panic buying at the onset of the pandemic.

The availability of honey was up 3.1% annually to 1.0 kilogram in 2020, spurred by higher imports (+9.7%) and lower exports (-22.0%), despite lower production (-4.3%).

Availability of juices and soft drinks continues decade-long decline

The availability of most juices has been decreasing for over a decade. The lower demand for juice may be due to health-conscious consumers shifting away from sugary drinks. The availability of all juices was down 2.7% from 2019 and down 21.6% from 2010.

Soft drink availability was down 5.8% annually to 52.8 litres per person in 2020 and was more than one-third (-38.6%) lower compared with 2010. The decrease in soft drink availability was also likely due to consumers choosing drinks that contain less sugar.

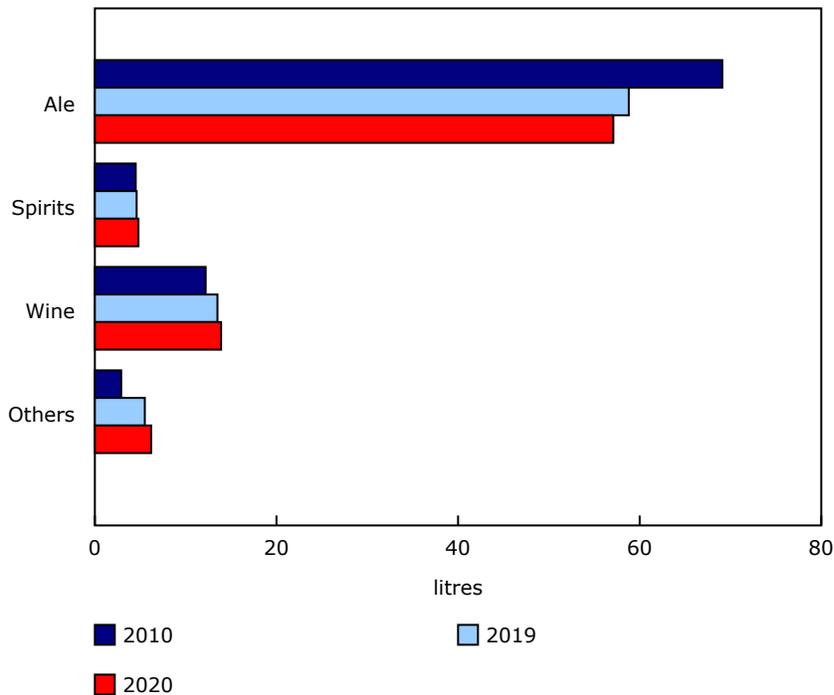
Ale availability declines, while that of wine, ciders, coolers and other refreshment beverages rises

Because alcohol data are reported by fiscal year (April to March) based on the sales volume of alcohol beverages, the availability of alcohol during the pandemic will be covered in next year's release.

The availability of ale declined 2.8% annually to 57.1 litres per person in 2019/2020, and was down 17.4% from 2009/2010.

Wine availability increased 3.0% from 2018/2019 to 13.9 litres per person in 2019/2020. Availability of wine (+13.5%), spirits (+5.7%) and ciders, coolers and other refreshment beverages (+116.7%) was up from a decade earlier.

Chart 5
Alcohol availability



Source(s): Table 32-10-0054-01.

Note to readers

Data on food availability per person for selected products and on the supply and disposition of these products are now available for 2020.

Data presented in this release are compiled from a wide variety of sources, both survey and administrative, from within Statistics Canada, as well as from other sources, including provincial and federal government departments, growers' associations and marketing boards.

The food availability data series is the result of a partnership between Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Statistics Canada.

Data were also culled from the Daily release "Poultry and egg statistics," released on May 27, 2021.

Find more [agriculture and food statistics](#).

Support the [2021 Census of Agriculture](#).

Available tables: [32-10-0053-01](#) and [32-10-0054-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3475](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).