

# Canada's 2021 Census of Agriculture: A closer look at farming across the regions

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Data from the 2021 Census of Agriculture revealed that the agriculture sector continues to play an important role in the Canadian economy and society, with [189,874 farms](#), [262,455 farm operators](#) and [242,052 paid employees](#). The Canadian farming industry is adapting quickly with increases in land sustainability practices, renewable energy production and technology use. Each region of Canada has its own story to tell about how it contributes to the country's vast array of agricultural commodities.

Today, Statistics Canada is pleased to announce the release of 11 articles profiling farm and farm operator trends in Canada's provinces and territories. These profile articles look at key trends from 2016 to 2021, and compare them against national totals. These articles are published in *Canadian Agriculture at a Glance*.

## Atlantic Canada is a major player in lowbush blueberry and potato farming

In 2021, Atlantic Canada accounted for 3.2% of total farms and 1.3% of total farm area in Canada. While this region does not account for the largest number of farms or largest farm area, it does make up a significant portion of a few prominent agricultural commodities.

The warmer temperatures and moist climate found in the region make it an ideal place to grow potatoes, particularly in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. As a result, Atlantic Canada accounted for 35.7% of total potato acreage reported in Canada.

Apples and lowbush blueberries are also well-known commodities in Atlantic Canada. Over one-eighth (13.2%) of Canada's apple acreage was grown in this region. Additionally, it accounted for over half (52.1%) of Canada's lowbush blueberry acreage and 62.1% of farms reporting lowbush blueberries.

Separate profiles are available for each of the four provinces in Atlantic Canada: [Newfoundland and Labrador](#), [Prince Edward Island](#), [Nova Scotia](#) and [New Brunswick](#).

## Ontario and Quebec lead the way in dairy cow and hog inventories, as well as in farm area for select types of crops

[Ontario](#) and [Quebec](#) both contribute to Canadian agriculture in significant ways. In addition to accounting for 40.9% of total farms reported in Canada in 2021, these neighbouring provinces were home to the vast majority of dairy cows and hogs and pigs in the country. Together, farms in Ontario and Quebec made up 69.8% and 57.6%, respectively, of Canada's reported dairy cows and hogs and pigs.

Ontario led the nation in total farm area for several crops, including soybeans (54.4%), corn for grain (59.9%) and winter wheat (76.1%). Greenhouse commodities is another area in which Ontario continued to dominate. In 2021, Ontario farms made up 61.8% of Canada's total greenhouse area.

Meanwhile, Quebec was a major contributor to commodities such as maple taps and cranberries. In 2021, farms in Quebec accounted for 89.1% of Canada's total maple taps and 58.4% of total cranberry acreage.

## Western Canada continues to be a central hub for oilseed and grain farming, as well as beef and cattle farming

In [Manitoba](#), [Saskatchewan](#) and [Alberta](#), the abundance of sprawling land makes it an ideal place to grow hay and field crops. In 2021, these three provinces accounted for 82.3% of total farm area and 47.5% of total farms reported in Canada.



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Nearly all of Canada's canola (99.2%), spring wheat (97.6%) and barley (96.2%) crop areas were reported in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. In addition to their dominance in field crops, 72.7% of Canada's cattle and calves inventory was reported in these three provinces.

In 2021, nearly half (46.0%) of Canada's total farm operators were found in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Close to one-third (29.5%) of farm operators in these three provinces were female, while just under 1 in 10 (9.6%) farm operators were younger than 35 years old.

[British Columbia is home to Canada's horticulture sector](#), accounting for more than one-fifth (22.2%) of farms classified as greenhouse, nursery and floriculture. In particular, the province was the second-largest contributor to the number of farms reporting nursery products (29.2%) and Christmas trees (20.2%). British Columbia also accounted for 47.2% of Canada's total mushroom growing area and 15.2% of total farms reporting mushrooms in 2021.

In addition to the 10 provincial profiles, Statistics Canada is also publishing a [report on farms and farm operators for the North](#).

## New ways of accessing detailed Census of Agriculture information

To facilitate data access, Statistics Canada is also releasing two tools that will help users find local information quickly and effectively.

The [Census of Agriculture: Community Profiles](#) is a new interactive tool that shows users what a typical farm and farm operator look like in their community. This tool provides a statistical profile of farm and farm operator variables for a specific geographic location or community.

The [Census of Agriculture: Mapping Tool](#) allows users to visualize Census of Agriculture data at all geographic levels for which they are published. Back in February 2022, this mapping tool used 2016 Census of Agriculture data. It has since been updated with 2021 Census of Agriculture data.

### Note to readers

#### Definitions and concepts

*A significant conceptual change to the main statistical unit used by Statistics Canada's Agriculture Statistics Program has been introduced for the 2021 Census of Agriculture. A "farm" or an "agricultural holding" (i.e., the census farm) now refers to a unit that produces agricultural products and reports revenues or expenses for tax purposes to the Canada Revenue Agency. Before 2021, a "farm" was defined as an agricultural operation that produced at least one agricultural product intended for sale.*

*The data displayed by geography have undergone random tabular adjustment. The Canada total data for geographic breakdowns may differ from the Canada total data displayed in tables by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) category and sales class.*

*The data for Yukon and the Northwest Territories are not included in the national totals; they are presented separately.*

*There were no farms reported in Nunavut for the 2021 Census of Agriculture.*

*For additional information on concepts and definitions, readers are invited to read the [Guide to the Census of Agriculture, 2021](#), or to consult the [main release of the Census of Agriculture](#).*

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3438](#).**

The [Census of Agriculture: Community Profiles](#) is available on the Statistics Canada website.

The [Census of Agriculture: Mapping Tool](#) with 2021 data is available on the Statistics Canada website.

The [Census of Agriculture: Provincial and Territorial Profile Articles](#) are available in the *Canadian Agriculture at a Glance* publication on the Statistics Canada website.

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; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).