

Survey on Local Food and Beneficial Management Practices, 2022

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In 2022, there were 14,708 agricultural operations that sold food locally in Canada, representing about 7.8% of all farm operations in the country (see Note to readers). Total food sales via local market channels amounted to \$5.3 billion.

Recently, Statistics Canada conducted the Survey on Local Food and Beneficial Management Practices, which collected information about local food sales and management practices considered beneficial from an environmental perspective. In the survey, food sales are considered local if they happen within the province of production or, in the case of interprovincial food sales, within 50 km of where they were grown or raised.

Chain retailers and direct-to-consumer are the main methods used to sell local food

In 2022, the main local market channels agricultural operations used to drive their local food sales were local independent or chain retailers (41.9%) and direct-to-consumer (38.8%). The most common reasons agricultural operations sold food locally were the social aspect or maintaining close contact with customers (33.4%), convenience (32.3%) and obtaining a higher margin compared with other market channels (31.2%).

Farms with greater than \$250,000 in sales generated the largest revenue from local food channels. The sales from these farms reached \$4.8 billion, or 90.4% of all local food sales.

Beneficial management practices agricultural operations use

The survey also enquired about beneficial management practices, which are practices that reduce overall environmental risk. It examined two practices: application of urease or nitrification inhibitors, which is the process of applying fertilizers containing urease or nitrification inhibitors to improve nutrient use efficiency in agricultural operations and potentially limiting nitrogen run-off and greenhouse gas emissions; and rotational grazing, which consists of moving animals between fields to manage grazing and rest periods to improve the root systems plants build.

In 2022, 18,353 agricultural operations, or nearly 9.7% of all agricultural operations in Canada, applied urease or nitrification inhibitors across more than 11 million acres of seeded cropland combined. The most frequent reasons given for utilizing fertilizers with urease or nitrification inhibitors were due to the recommendation by a trusted advisor (44.5%), anticipated financial benefits greater than costs (34.4%) and confidence that their operation could use urease or nitrification inhibitors successfully (24.2%).

Moreover, in 2022, 27,266 agricultural operations, or nearly 14.4% of the total number of agricultural operations in Canada, practiced rotational grazing on over 13 million acres of pasture land combined. Saskatchewan had the greatest number of acres of pasture land where rotational grazing was practiced, with over 5 million acres. The most common reasons for agricultural operations to practice rotational grazing in 2022 were to meet an on-farm conservation need (41.5%) and because the operation had confidence that they could practice rotational grazing successfully (40.5%).



Table 1
Profile of agricultural operations that sold food locally, by farm size, 2022

	Number of agricultural operations	Total sales dollar amount	Average sales dollar amount per farm
All farm sizes	14,708	5,265,726,973	358,010
Farms with between \$25,000 and \$99,999 in sales	6,578	227,974,062	34,659
Farms with between \$100,000 and \$250,000 in sales	2,871	278,352,920	96,938
Farms with more than \$250,000 in sales	5,259	4,759,399,991	904,967

Source(s): Tables [32-10-0457-01](#) and [32-10-0459-01](#).

Note to readers

Statistics Canada conducted the Survey on Local Food and Beneficial Management Practices from March to April 2023. The survey collects information on local food sales and beneficial management practices adopted by Canadian agricultural operations in 2022.

For the purpose of this survey, local food is defined as processed or unprocessed food or beverages for human consumption and the food is produced in the province where it is sold or is sold across provincial borders within 50 kilometres of where it was grown or raised. For example, a restaurant in Gatineau, Quebec, purchasing food products from a farm in Ottawa, Ontario, qualifies as local food sales.

The percentages of the total number of agricultural operations highlighted in this release are expressed as a proportion of the total number of agricultural operations in the [2021 Census of Agriculture](#).

Available tables: [32-10-0457-01](#) to [32-10-0471-01](#) .

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5385](#).

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) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).