

Agricultural Water Survey, 2022

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Tuesday, October 17, 2023

Canadian farmers used 23% more water to irrigate their crops in 2022 compared with two years earlier, mostly due to drier conditions in Canada. Most of the irrigated water was used for field or forage crops.

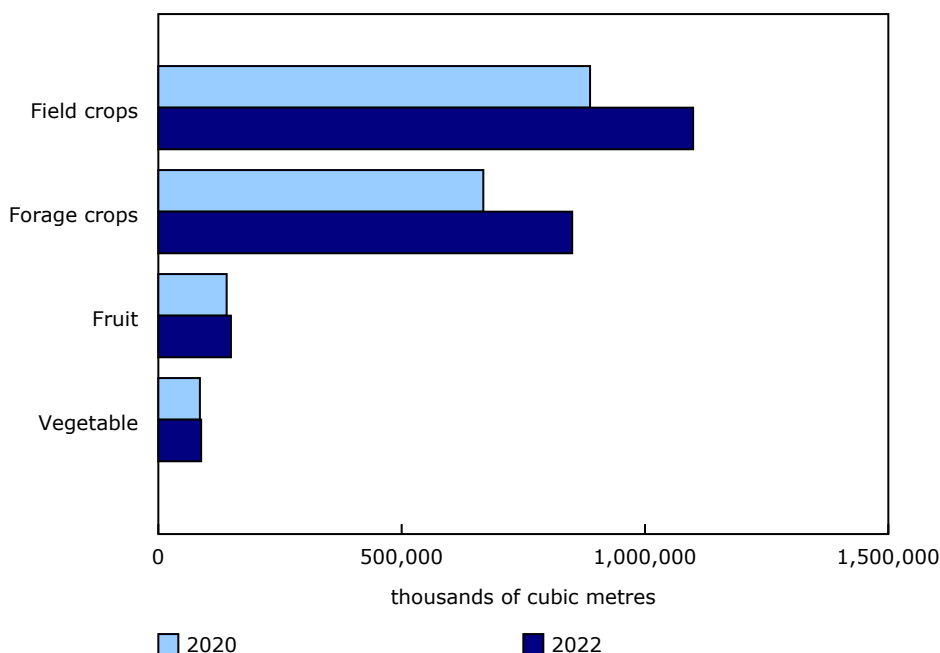
Canadian agricultural producers used approximately 2.2 billion cubic metres of water to irrigate their crops in 2022.

The total volume of water used for irrigation during the growing season was mainly up in Alberta. Alberta's total irrigation water volume increased by 34% from 2020 to 1.6 billion cubic metres in 2022, accounting for almost three-quarters of the national irrigation water applied to crops.

Field (50%) and forage (39%) crops used the most irrigation water across the country in 2022, with fruit (7%) and vegetable (4%) crops accounting for the rest.

The majority (83%) of irrigating farms in 2022 reported having no issues preventing them from irrigating.

Chart 1
Irrigation volume by crop type



Source(s): Table 38-10-0240-01.

Alberta accounts for almost three-quarters of irrigated land

Nationally, a total of 758 516 hectares of land were irrigated in 2022, up by 25% from 2020. Provincially, Alberta had the largest area of irrigated farmland (549 934 hectares) in 2022, accounting for almost three-quarters of the total area of land that was irrigated in Canada.

Canadian farmers also reported that field (444 066 hectares) and forage (247 958 hectares) crops accounted for the vast majority of irrigated land in 2022.

The three main types of irrigation Canadian agricultural operations used include sprinkler irrigation, micro-irrigation and surface irrigation. As in 2020, farm operations most often used sprinkler irrigation methods to irrigate their crops in 2022 (68%).

Note to readers

The Agricultural Water Survey gathered information on irrigation water use, irrigation methods and practices, and sources and quality of water used for agricultural purposes on Canadian farms during the 2022 growing season (April 1 to October 31, 2022). This survey is part of the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators program.

The volume of water is reported in cubic metres. One cubic metre equals 1 000 litres.

The area of land that received irrigation refers to land area that actually received irrigation. Land area that had the capacity to be irrigated but did not receive irrigation is not included.

The 2022 survey estimates for both irrigation volume and area of land that received irrigation showed growth rates that varied widely across regions. Differences in weather patterns, crop types and farming practices can all lead to these variations.

Available tables: [38-10-0239-01](#) to [38-10-0249-01](#) .

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5145](#).

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).