

# Principal field crop areas, March 2021

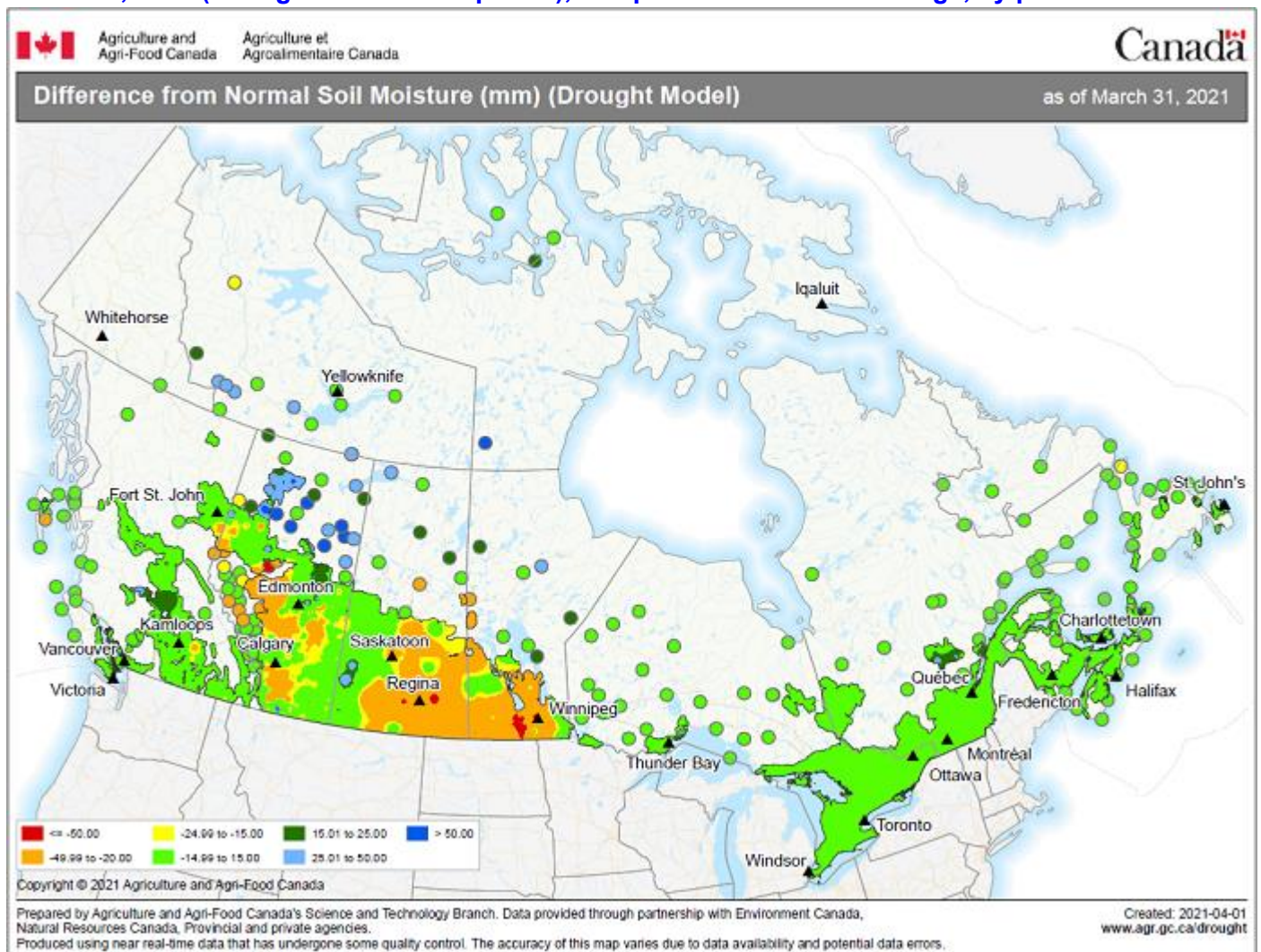
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Canadian farmers expect to plant more canola, barley, soybeans and corn for grain in 2021, while area seeded to wheat, oats, dry peas and lentils are anticipated to decrease compared with the previous year.

Anticipated seeded areas may differ from data on actual seeded areas to be released in June for several reasons, including the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on both the Canadian and world grain markets.

As always, weather may also contribute to changes in seeding decisions. During collection of the March crop survey, parts of Western Canada were experiencing particularly dry conditions, with soil moisture estimated well below average levels across much of the Prairies. By comparison, soil moisture conditions in Eastern Canada were considered normal because of average precipitation over the winter.

**Map 1 – Difference from normal soil moisture (in millimetres) (drought model) as of March 31, 2021 (during the collection period), compared with annual average, by province**



## Wheat

Canadian farmers anticipate planting less wheat in 2021 compared with a year earlier, down 6.9% to 23.3 million acres. The decrease is largely expected in spring wheat, which is anticipated to fall 8.8% to 16.3 million acres. Durum wheat is expected to edge up 0.3% to 5.7 million acres, while winter wheat is anticipated to fall 11.2% to 1.2 million acres. Area dedicated to wheat may decrease as some farmers anticipate planting more oilseeds.

In Saskatchewan, farmers expect total wheat area to decrease 6.0% to 12.1 million acres as a result of lower spring wheat (-9.0%). Durum wheat is expected to increase 1.1% to 4.7 million acres.

Farmers in Alberta anticipate planting 7.0% less wheat in 2021, at 6.9 million acres. Spring wheat is expected to fall 7.8% to 5.8 million acres, while durum wheat is anticipated to drop 1.1% to 1.0 million acres.

Manitoba farmers anticipate planting 2.8 million acres of wheat, down 10.2% from one year earlier.

## Canola

Canola area is expected to increase for the first time since 2017, rising 3.6% to 21.5 million acres, the largest seeded area since 2018.

High global demand for oilseeds has led to an increase in canola prices, which may influence farmers' decision to increase seeded area.

Farmers in Saskatchewan, the largest canola producing province, anticipate seeding 11.8 million acres of canola, up 4.4% from the same period one year earlier.

In Alberta, farmers expect seeded area of canola to increase 7.8% to 6.3 million acres.

In Manitoba, producers anticipate seeding fewer acres of canola, with expected seeded area falling 5.9% to 3.2 million acres in 2021.

## Soybeans

At the national level, farmers anticipate planting 5.3 million acres of soybeans, up 5.5% from 2020. An increase in anticipated area is likely due to high prices driven by strong worldwide demand.

In Ontario, the largest soybean producing province, farmers expect to plant 2.9 million acres of soybeans, up 2.0%.

Farmers in Manitoba anticipate planting more soybeans in 2021, up 17.3% to 1.3 million acres, the first time that soybean area in the province has risen since 2017. Favourable yields in 2020, coupled with good prices, may encourage farmers to increase soybean acreage.

Soybean area in Quebec is expected to rise 4.2% to 923,000 acres.

## Barley and oats

Nationwide, barley acreage is expected to increase 13.9% to 8.6 million acres in 2021, likely as a result of strong prices and low carry-in stocks.

Saskatchewan is expected to lead the increase, up 24.5% to 3.9 million acres. If realized, this would be the largest seeded area in the province since 2007. Both Alberta (+7.8%) and Manitoba (+10.8%) also anticipate planting more barley.

Oat area is expected to fall 6.0% to 3.6 million acres compared with one year earlier, as global oat supplies are anticipated to increase, possibly affecting prices in Canada. The decrease is expected mostly in Saskatchewan, where seeded area is anticipated to fall by 206,400 acres (-11.1%).

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## Corn for grain

At the national level, farmers expect to plant 3.6 million acres of corn for grain, up 1.8% from one year earlier.

In Ontario, farmers anticipate planting 2.2 million acres of corn, up 1.7% from 2020.

Quebec farmers expect to plant more acres of corn, with seeded area increasing 1.2% to 901,300 acres in 2021.

## Lentils and peas

Area seeded to lentils is expected to be relatively stable compared with one year earlier, edging down 0.3% to 4.2 million acres. Farmers in Saskatchewan, where almost 90% of Canada's lentils are grown, expect seeded area to decrease 1.6%, but this is anticipated to be offset by an increase in area in Alberta (+9.0%).

Farmers across Canada expect to plant fewer dry peas in 2021, with area anticipated to decrease 9.8% to 3.8 million acres compared with the same period one year earlier.

### Note to readers

*The 2021 Field Crop Survey for March, which collects information on crop planting intentions, was conducted from March 1 to 29, 2021, and included about 11,500 farmers. Farmers were asked to report their planting intentions for grain, oilseeds and special crops.*

*Subsequent surveys during the year will provide estimates of actual seeded acreages. Data on final acreages for 2021 will be released on December 3, 2021, and will be subject to revision for two years.*

*Field crop surveys collect data from Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta at all survey cycles. However, they collect data twice a year (in the June iteration of the field crop survey on seeded areas and in the November iteration of the field crop survey on final production) for Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and British Columbia, which represent from 2% to 4% of national totals. Therefore, Canadian totals for March include carry-over data for these provinces from their preceding November survey, and Canadian totals for July include carry-over data for these same provinces from their preceding June survey.*

**Release calendar:** *The dates for upcoming releases of stocks, areas and production of principal field crops are available online.*

*In this release, percentage changes are calculated using unrounded data.*

*Data for March 2021 are compared with final 2020 data.*

*An easy-to-print chart, [Crop Report Survey at a Glance](#), which provides an overview of our survey cycle, is now available.*

**Table 1**  
**March preliminary estimates of principal field crop areas**

	2019	2020	2021 <sup>1p</sup>	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021
	thousands of acres			% change	
Total wheat (including winter wheat remaining) <sup>2</sup>	24,604	24,982	23,260	1.5	-6.9
Durum wheat	4,894	5,689	5,705	16.2	0.3
Spring wheat	18,782	17,926	16,340	-4.6	-8.8
Winter wheat <sup>3</sup>	929	1,368	1,215	47.2	-11.2
Barley	7,402	7,561	8,613	2.1	13.9
Canary seed	291	273	244	-6.2	-10.8
Canola	21,181	20,783	21,530	-1.9	3.6
Chick peas	392	298	212	-24.0	-28.7
Corn for grain	3,695	3,559	3,623	-3.7	1.8
Dry beans	395	457	414	15.7	-9.4
Dry field peas	4,333	4,255	3,839	-1.8	-9.8
Fall Rye	300	390	417	30.3	6.9
Flaxseed	937	931	982	-0.7	5.6
Lentils	3,781	4,233	4,218	12.0	-0.3
Mustard seed	399	256	358	-35.7	39.7
Oats	3,596	3,839	3,608	6.8	-6.0
Soybeans	5,714	5,070	5,348	-11.3	5.5
Summerfallow	1,702	1,726	1,604	1.4	-7.1
Sunflower seed	76	112	84	46.7	-24.9

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

1. The methodology used for area estimates for the Atlantic provinces and British Columbia was modified in 2014. For more information, see note to readers.

2. Represents the sum of winter wheat, spring wheat and durum wheat.

3. The area remaining after winterkill.

**Note(s):**

The estimates in this table have been rounded to the nearest thousand. The percentage changes reflect the unrounded estimates.

Wheat types may not add up to total wheat as a result of rounding.

Source(s): Table [32-10-0359-01](#).

**Available tables:** [32-10-0002-01](#) and [32-10-0359-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [3401](#).

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](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).