

What is the Census of Agriculture?

Every five years, the Government of Canada conducts a census, which includes two components: **the Census of Population** and **the Census of Agriculture**.

The Census of Population is an enumeration of every household and person in Canada and includes questions on topics such as age, marital status, household members and languages spoken. All levels of government, Indigenous communities, the private sector, social services sectors and other organizations use census data to make informed decisions that affect the lives of everyone in Canada.

The Census of Agriculture has a different goal: to learn about Canada's farming and food production. It asks questions about every farm, ranch or other agricultural operation in Canada, including questions about land use, crops, livestock, agricultural labour, farm income and land management. The government and agricultural operators in Canada need to know about agricultural trends, products and operations in their region so that they can make informed decisions about goods and services, how to sell or advertise agricultural products, and what kinds of financial investments should be made.

The Census of Agriculture collects data on the agricultural industry, including

- the number of farms and farm operators
- the area of land used for farms
- farm business
- land use and management
- livestock numbers (e.g., number of sheep, cows, chickens)
- areas where crops are grown (e.g., field crops, fruits, vegetables, hay, sod, Christmas trees)
- the cost to run a farm
- the machinery and equipment used to run a farm.

Canadian farms produce a large amount of our food and many non-food products that are used around the country or exported to other countries. Agriculture is an important part of the Canadian economy.

Data from the Census of Agriculture are used to understand trends and changes in farming practices and products over time, and this is important for decision making. Here are some examples:

- The Canadian government uses these data to make sure that people who work in agriculture receive programs and services to meet their needs.
- Agricultural producers use census data to tell the government and people who live in Canada how they are doing economically.
- Companies that supply agricultural products and services use this information to decide where service centres should be located.

More information on the Census of Agriculture is available on the **2016 Census of Agriculture portal**:

- **English:** <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/ca2016>
- **French:** <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/fra/ra2016>