Farming

Statistics Statistique Canada Canada

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Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

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April 2003

Catalogue no. 21-522-XPE ISSN 0835-6246 ISBN 0-662-33490-6

Catalogue no. 21-522-XIE ISSN 1493-8863 ISBN 0-662-33499-X

Frequency: Irregular

Ottawa

Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued cooperation and goodwill.

Some facts about Farming Facts

Farming Facts is published by the Agriculture Division of Statistics Canada to illustrate the wide variety of information available about and for the agricultural community. In this edition, some of the interesting facts and statistics on farming in Canada come from the 2001 Census of Agriculture and include first-time information on organic farming and the latest trends in computer use on farms. *Farming Facts* also offers an inside look at what Canadians are eating, based on data from Agriculture Division's *Canada Food Stats* CD-ROM. Other interesting information comes from the Farm Income and Prices Section, the Whole Farm Data Projects Section and the Research and Rural Data Section of the Agriculture Division.

The puzzles at the end of the booklet are a fun way to explore *Farming Facts*. All the answers are in the booklet, and solving the puzzles lets young Canadians practise their reading and research skills while learning about agriculture. Teachers are welcome to use this free booklet as a teaching tool.

Farming Facts and many other products and services offered by the Agriculture Division are available on request by calling 1 800 465-1991, by fax at 1 (613) 951-3868, or by e-mail at <u>agriculture@statcan.ca</u>. You can also visit the Statistics Canada Web site at <u>www.statcan.ca</u> to download your free copy of *Farming Facts* and try the interactive online crossword.

2001 farm numbers decrease in every province

The definition of a census farm remains the same: all farms — from very small operations just starting up, to the more traditional family farms and very large corporate farms — are counted as long as they sell, or intend to sell, agricultural products. On May 15, 2001, approximately 247,000 farms met this definition, an 11% decline from 1996. In absolute numbers, nearly 30,000 fewer farms were counted in 2001 than in 1996.

Although this percentage decline is the most rapid between censuses since 1971, censuses during the 1950s and 1960s actually recorded bigger percentage declines. The largestever drop in farm numbers was between the 1956 and 1961 censuses, when 94,116 fewer farms were tallied.

2001 farm numbers by province (percentage change, 1996–2001)



Number of farms (thousands)

Source: 1996 and 2001 Census of Agriculture

Average farm area increases

There are two ways to measure farm size: by area and by gross farm receipts. Canadian farms are getting larger either way you look at them.

Average farm size grew from 608 acres to 676 acres between the two censuses, an 11% increase. Saskatchewan had the biggest farms in terms of average land area, at 1,283 acres, up from 1,152 acres five years earlier. Newfoundland and Labrador farms were the smallest, at 156 acres compared with 146 acres.

Total farmland remained relatively stable, dropping only 1% from 1996 to 166.8 million acres in 2001. Cropland area, at 90 million acres in 2001, was up 4% from 1996.

The 25% decline in summerfallow since 1996 reflects farmers' move to no-till seeding and conservation tillage, prac-

tices that, like summerfallow, retain moisture in the soil but don't require leaving the land idle for a season. Nationally, pastureland and other land have stayed relatively stable over time, rising just 1% since 1996.

And who owns all this land? Although tenure is slowly shifting from owned to rented, it has changed little since 1986, with farmers working over 62 million acres of rented, leased or sharecropped land, and slightly over 104 million they own themselves.

Measuring farms by gross farm receipts tells a similar story: even when inflation is taken into account, more farms (14% of the total) reported receipts greater than \$250,000 in 2001 than in 1996, when just over 9% were in that sales category. The number of farms in the lowest receipts category (under \$25,000) decreased by 18%.



Average farm area, 1996 and 2001

Source: 1996 and 2001 Census of Agriculture

Wheat still dominant Canadian crop

Wheat (excluding durum) is still the dominant crop in Canada with over 21 million acres, and Saskatchewan grows almost 51% of it. With 30% of total field crop area, wheat still has the largest area, despite showing the biggest decline of all field crops since 1996. Other traditional grains such as barley and oats are also declining.

Hay, the second largest crop in Canada, is gaining on wheat and increased almost 18% since 1996. Western Canada now has about 73% of the total hay area, up from 66% in 1996. Hay and other fodder crops have increased 36% since 1986, keeping in step with the increasing numbers of livestock that require feed.

Farmers are expanding their crop area and are switching to different crops for economic reasons. In 2001, for every acre in wheat, 2.3 acres were in other field crops, compared with 1.8 in 1996. Wheat still represents the largest crop area but has declined 12.6%.

Pulses make gains

In 1976, when oilseeds were establishing a foothold as important crops, pulses — which include crops such as dry field peas, lentils and field beans — would have been considered unusual. The 2001 census shows that they have moved in on more "standard" crops such as grains, and now account for almost 8% of national crop area.

Only dry field peas could have been considered a major crop in 1996. However, both field beans and lentils can now also be considered significant. Dry field peas, once the 10th largest crop in area, now ranks 7th behind oats, while field beans have gone from 19th to 12th largest crop area.

Eastern Canada's major crops, soybeans and grain corn, also posted impressive gains since the last census. Eastern Canada currently grows about 98% of Canada's soybean area and 96% of Canada's corn area. Soybeans are the second largest oilseed crop grown in Canada, after canola.



Major field crops, 1996 and 2001

Source: 1996 and 2001 Census of Agriculture

Record levels of cattle and calves

The number of cattle and calves on Canadian farms rose over 4% between 1996 and 2001, to a record 15.6 million head. The beef, not the dairy sector, has been driving the increase in the cattle and calf herd since 1986.

While farms reporting cattle decreased over 14% since 1996, the average number of cattle and calves reported per farm increased from 104 to 127.

The east-to-west shift in cattle that started in 1991 continued during the last census period, but at a slower rate. In 2001, the West accounted for over three-quarters of total cattle and calves in Canada, a slight increase since 1996. Most of the increase was in Alberta, which counted nearly 673,000 more cattle in 2001 than in 1996. Alberta accounted for 43% of the national herd. Exports to Asia and to countries such as the United States, Mexico and Argentina account for the increase in beef production.



Number of cattle and calves, 1996 and 2001

Poultry becoming the meat of choice

Canada is still a nation of meat-eaters, although tastes are moving away from beef and more to chicken and pork. Canadians consumed 63 kg of red meat per person in 2001, down from 64 kg the year before. (Red meat includes beef, pork, mutton and lamb, veal and offal. Offal includes variety meats such as liver, heart, kidney, tongue, sweetbreads, oxtail and edible tripe).

In fact, people are putting almost as much pork on their plates as beef. Pork edged up to nearly 29 kg per person in 2001, compared with 31 kg of beef, another decline in what has been a long-term trend of falling beef consumption.

But poultry tops both beef and pork. Every person ate 36 kg on average in 2001, over a kilogram more than they had in 2000 and more than 30 kg of it was chicken. Convenient and easy-to-prepare chicken products continue to sway timepressed consumers to make chicken a contender to beef.



cource: Canada Food Stats CD-ROM (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 23F0001XCB) and Food Consumption in Canada, Part I (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 32-229-XIB)

Consumption of red meat and poultry

Poultry production rises to keep pace with consumption

With poultry becoming the meat of choice, it is not surprising that the poultry sector has experienced significant growth since 1996. Most production is in Eastern Canada, with Ontario and Quebec producing 58% of all the chickens in Canada in 2001. Poultry and egg production, like dairy, is supply-managed in Canada.

Sixty-nine percent of the 126 million hens and chickens reported by farmers on Census Day in 2001 were destined for meat as broilers, roasters, and Cornish hens. The rest were laying hens and pullets intended for laying. Production of chickens for meat has jumped 35% since 1995, to 1.1 billion kg in 2000.

Turkey production was up over 13% since 1996, although the number of birds on Canadian farms was down 5.5%. This suggests that the average turkey weighs more than ever before.





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Canadians reach for more eggs

Canadians, who have steadily been increasing their consumption of eggs since 1995, ate 16 dozen eggs per person in 2001, up slightly from last year. Public education campaigns outlining their nutritional benefits have brought eggs back into favour, and they are used increasingly by the food service sector and in processed egg products.



Source: Canada Food Stats CD-ROM (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 23F0001XCB) and Food Consumption in Canada, Part I (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 32-229-XIB)

Fewer farms but more pigs

Fewer farms — 27% fewer since 1996 — reported pigs in 2001 than in 1996, but the total number of pigs in Canada rose sharply. Just under 14 million were counted — a 26% jump since the last census. Demand for exports, more liberal trade agreements, the relative advantage of the low Canadian dollar, and abundant supplies of low-cost feed, have pushed hog numbers to an all-time high. The average number of pigs per farm almost doubled since 1996, from 523 pigs to 902.

Between them, Quebec and Ontario had more than half of all the pigs in Canada on May 15, 2001. New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba all showed gains since 1996.



Source: 1996 and 2001 Census of Agriculture

Sheep and lambs different from traditional livestock sector

The sheep industry was different than other traditional livestock sectors. It not only reported increases in animal numbers and in average flock size, but also in the number of farms reporting. Farmers reported almost 1.3 million sheep and lambs in 2001, a 46% increase since 1996, but still well below the 3.6 million reported in 1931. Meat has replaced wool as the primary product, and an increasingly diverse population whose diet regularly includes lamb is driving the resurgence of the industry.

Ontario has taken over from Alberta as the province with the most sheep. Ontario had 338,000 sheep in 2001, 46% more than in 1996. Manitoba and Saskatchewan both doubled their inventories since 1996.

While sheep numbers in Canada are split almost equally between the East and the West, both Ontario and Quebec have increased their share of the total since 1996.



Source: 1996 and 2001 Census of Agriculture

Organic farms on the census for the first time

For the first time on the Census of Agriculture, farmers were asked to report if they produced any certified organic products and, if they did, what kinds of products they were.

In Canada, a farmer who wishes to become a "certified organic" producer must apply to a recognized certifying agency. Although slightly different from province to province, organic certification is based on the Organic Agriculture Standard put out by the Canadian General Standards Board. The census enumerated over 2,200 farms, or just less than 1% of the total, that produced at least one category of certified organic agricultural products.

Saskatchewan had the most farms certified by an agency, with 773. Ontario ranked second, followed by Quebec and British Columbia.



Certified organic farms, 2001 (percentage of total farms reporting)



Source: 2001 Census of Agriculture

Source: 2001 Census of Agriculture

Although the popular impression of organic farming probably involves fruit and vegetable production, organic field crops actually represented almost two-thirds of the farms reporting organic production in Canada. Field crops were the most common organic products in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

About 28% of the organic farms reported growing either fruits, vegetables or greenhouse products organically. They

were the most common organic products in Atlantic Canada and British Columbia. Less than one in five certified organic farms in Canada reported organic animals or animal products.

Quebec had a broader mix of certified organic products. About 41% of Quebec organic farms reported "other certified organic products," primarily maple products.



Certified organic products, 2001

Source: 2001 Census of Agriculture

Computer use is growing

Since 1986, the census has collected data on how many farms had computers as a management tool on their farms. For the first time in 2001, the census also collected information on the kinds of computer applications used.

The share of farms using a computer to help manage the farm has doubled every five years since 1991. In 2001 it stood at almost 40%, compared with 21% in 1996. This proportion may seem low when compared with the 54.9% of all Canadians who had a computer in 2000, but until recently rural areas have lacked the infrastructure that makes computer "connectivity" as attractive or practical as in urban Canada.

In some cases, such as bookkeeping, farmers are simply transferring paper functions to the computer. Bookkeeping was the most common application on almost eight out of 10 computers. Others, such as the Internet, have brought the world to the farm office. Seven out of 10 farmers surfed the Internet for such information as commodity prices or weather reports.

Word processing, use of e-mail, and livestock and crop record keeping followed, in that order. Computers were also used for other purposes such as banking.



Computer applications most commonly used on farms



Source: 1986 to 2001 Census of Agriculture

Source: 2001 Census of Agriculture

Regardless of size, farmers spent more to make a dollar in 2000

Whether or not a farm's gross farm receipts exceed, meet or fall short of its operating expenses, differs, according to the receipts category it falls into.

The smallest farms, those with receipts less than \$25,000, spent \$1.68 in operating expenses for every dollar in receipts. Many farms in this category are hobby farms. Those in the largest receipts category (\$250,000 and over) spent 85 cents

for every dollar they received. However, farmers in all receipts categories spent more to earn a dollar in 2000 than they did in 1995.

In terms of farm numbers, only farm operations with receipts of \$250,000 and over were more numerous in 2001 than in 1996. They represented 34,139 farms, an increase of 32% from 1995. They accounted for only 14% of all farms in Canada.



Source: 1996 and 2001 Census of Agriculture

On the Prairies, a shift from crops to livestock

In 2001, two of the three Prairie provinces earned more gross farm receipts from livestock than from crops.

Livestock accounted for just over half of Manitoba's market revenue — the combined sales of both crops and livestock — and two-thirds of Alberta's in 2001. Most of the livestock sales in Alberta were cattle.

Only in Saskatchewan did farmers earn more in 2001 from selling crops than livestock — primarily wheat. Strong prices for major grains and oilseeds in the mid-nineties pushed crop receipts to 80% of Saskatchewan's market revenue.

Of course, the 2001 data offer only a snapshot of market revenues. The relative importance of crops and livestock varies over time depending on market conditions, weather, the introduction of new commodities and other factors. Livestock represented 67% of market receipts for the eastern provinces in 1991 but only 64% a decade later, despite strong growth in the hog and cattle sectors. During the same period, receipts from floriculture and nurseries, vegetables and soybeans almost doubled in this region, helping crops maintain their share of receipts.

The western provinces have been trying to diversify their farm economy by growing more pulse crops and expanding their cattle and hog sectors. Receipts from cattle and hogs alone grew two-and-one-half times from 1991 to 2001, pushing crop receipts down to 47% of market revenue from 55% in 1991.



Source: Agriculture Economic Statisitics (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 21-603-XPE)

Farm prices fluctuating

Prices farmers receive can vary tremendously from one year to the next and are affected by many factors, both domestic and international. Crop prices, for example, began rising in 2001 after dropping since October 1996, while livestock prices moved in the opposite direction, starting to fall in September 2001 after increasing since January 1999.

The Farm Product Price Index (FPPI) measures the change in prices for agricultural products over time. The annual FPPI showed that prices were up 6% in 2001 from their 2000 level.

Low world stocks drove indexed grain and oilseed prices to record levels at the beginning of 1996. Shortly afterwards, when abundant world supplies drove prices for grains and oilseeds down, the index was at its lowest level in almost 10 years.

December 1998 marked the lowest level for the livestock index in several years, mostly because of plummeting hog prices. Although hog prices have remained somewhat volatile since then, they have recovered much of their lost ground. Strong international and domestic demand for beef pushed cattle prices to record levels in 2001, helping bring the livestock index back to its peak in March 2001.



Farms income comes up short

Since 1946, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (formerly known as Revenue Canada) has used income information from individual tax forms to classify tax-filers according to their major source of income. Individuals whose major source of income is "gross farm receipts" are classified as farmers.

Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, farmers' average total

income from all sources was between 60% and 80% of that of all tax-filers. A tremendous spurt in the price of grain in the early 1970s brought the two more into balance. But during the 1980s and the 1990s, farmers' relative income declined, and by the end of the 1990s they were in the same position as they had been in the 1950s and the 1960s — with total income between 60% and 80% of that of all tax-filers.



Source: Revenue Canada, Income Statistics, 1962 to 2002

Small in number but big in impact

Although only 2% of all farms in Canada have gross farm receipts over \$1 million, their relative importance to total agricultural receipts is much greater. According to 2000 taxation records, these million-dollar farms accounted for nearly 35% of all agricultural receipts in Canada.

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Source: Taxation Data Program, 2000

OTHER INTERESTING FACTS Your share of fat and calories

Although more people are active, the proportion of people who are obese is on the rise according to data recently released from Statistics Canada. After being stable for nearly 20 years, the level of calories available per Canadian jumped 16% between 1991 and 2000. Rising consumption of oils followed by escalating wheat flour – used in baked goods – consumption were the major factors in the substantial increase.

Total fat available from the food supply climbed by 22% per person after 1991, with the biggest contribution to the increase coming from the oils and fats category. Its 49% jump is due partly to the increased use of oils and fats throughout the 1990s in salad dressings, fried foods and other commercial food products at home, in fast food restaurants and in other food service outlets.

Carbohydrates, the main energy source, have followed a similar pattern. Consumers are eating more complex carbohydrates as they reach for pasta, specialty breads and cereal-based snacks in growing numbers. Wheat flour accounted for almost 80% of all the cereal products Canadians eat. Other groups contributing carbohydrates include beverages, potatoes, fruits and dairy products. We are also consuming more simple carbohydrates, such as sugars and syrups.

On the other hand, the combined contribution of red meat, poultry and fish to total fat dropped by almost 8 percentage points from 1976 to stand at 24% in 2000. On its own, red meat has dropped from just over 26% of total fats in 1976 to 16% in 2000, mostly because we are eating less beef. Consumers have turned instead to poultry, a naturally leaner meat, along with leaner cuts of beef and pork.

About 15% of our total fat comes from dairy products. Although the proportion has been constant, the products themselves have changed. We are drinking less milk — and what we do drink is more often lower fat milk — but the fat portion is being offset as cheese and cream appear more often in our diets.

Source: Canada Food Stats CD-ROM (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 23F0001XCB) and Food Consumption in Canada, Part I (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 32-229-XIB)

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Employment characteristics of Rural and Small Town (RST)* areas and Larger Urban Centres (LUCs), 1996 to 2000										
Population aged 15 years and older										
8	MALE					FEMALE				
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
RST areas	-	The second second second	100	1.30		1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1			10 10	
Population	2,401,000	2,428,000	2,449,700	2,486,000	2,515,300	2,358,600	2,413,100	2,430,800	2,460,300	2,493,400
Labour force	1,657,900	1,683,400	1,708,800	1,756,700	1,755,500	1,247,600	1,287,000	1,310,600	1,357,200	1,378,000
Employed	1,494,200	1,516,900	1,548,400	1,601,000	1,609,700	1,126,500	1,159,700	1,192,500	1,244,000	1,266,900
Unemployed	163,800	166,400	160,400	155,700	145,800	121,100	127,300	118,100	113,200	111,100
Not in labour force	743,000	744,700	741,000	729,200	759,800		1,126,100	1,120,200	1,103,100	1,115,400
Participation rate (%)	69.1	69.3	69.8	70.7	69.8		53.3	53.9	55.2	55.3
Employment rate (%)	62.2	62.5	63.2	64.4	64		48.1	49.1	50.6	
Unemployment rate (%)	9.9	9.9	9.4	8.9	8.3	9.7	9.9	9	8.3	8.1
	1.1					1000		27 HANS .	Sec. 20	
LUCs								Constant St.	And St.	11. 11. 11. 11. V
Population	8,900,800	9,036,900	9,170,400	9,282,300	9,412,600	9,370,400	9,481,300	9,620,100		9,863,600
Labour force	6,499,500		6,671,500	6,777,300	6,893,800	5,494,500	5,588,500	5,726,900		5,972,000
Employed	5,851,800	5,991,300	6,113,000	6,264,800	6,439,600	4,990,100	5,106,500	5,286,400	5,421,300	5,593,500
Unemployed	647,700	602,800	558,400	512,500	454,100	504,400	482,100	440,400	408,700	378,400
Not in labour force	2,401,300	2,442,700	2,499,000	2,505,000	2,518,800	3,875,900	3,892,700	3,893,300	3,910,500	3,891,600
Participation rate (%)	73	73	72.8	73	73.2	58.6	58.9	59.5	59.9	60.5
Employment rate (%)	65.7	66.3	66.7	67.5	68.4	53.3	53.9	55	55.7	56.7
Unemployment rate (%)	10	9.1	8.4	7.6	6.6	9.2	8.6	7.7	7	6.3
								and the second	10.000	

* RST includes all municipalities with urban populations of 1,000 to 9,999, and rural areas where less than 50% of the employed individuals commute to an urban core.

Source: Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin, Vol. 3, No. 4 (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 21-006-XIE)

Agriculture in the North

In 2001, the Census of Agriculture enumerated 200 farms in the territories: 170 are in Yukon Territory and 30 are in the Northwest Territories. There are no farms in Nunavut.

Farms in the territories are smaller than in the rest of the country, averaging just under 150 acres. Some farm operations in the Northwest Territories are unique in that they commercially harvest wild animals. The Yukon, a prime tourist destination, has many outfitting businesses that run agricultural operations. These operations tend to grow hay and have horses to augment the business. Hay accounts for three-quarters of total field crops in the territories. Reindeer, musk-oxen and horses are the most common animals found on territory farms.



Crossword Puzzle

11

18

Across

10

- 2. Canada's dominant crop
- 7. Animals that represent most of the livestock sales in Alberta
- 12. Manitoba's most common organic product
- 13. Eastern Canada grows about 98% of this major field crop
- 14. The primary product of sheep
- 15. Chicken type destined for meat
- 17. An animal common to territory farms
- 18. A measurement for eggs
- 19. A type of "other" poultry

Down

- 1. A type of complex carbohydrate
- 3. Canada's fourth major field crop
- 4. Sector driving the increase in cattle herd
- 5. What farm prices are doing
- 6. Lentils are this type of crop
- 8. One way to measure farm size
- 9. A type of "small" farm
- 10. Becoming Canada's meat of choice
- 11. Most common computer application used by farmers
- 16. A type of alternative livestock
- 19. Province with the largest number of pigs

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Anagram



Can you find 20 words related to agriculture in this title?

Try to make words of four letters or more (some possibilities are listed on page 20) by rearranging the letters in the words "Agriculture Division".

For each word, you can only use a letter as many times as it occurs in the title. For example, you can only use the letter "G" once per word because it only appears once in the title; you can use the letter "I", however, four times in any word because the title contains four "I's".

Example: AGRICULTURE DIVISION EDUCATION

<u>1.</u>	6.		<u>16.</u>
<u>2.</u>	7.	<u>_12.</u>	<u>17.</u>
<u>3.</u>	8.	13.	18.
<u>4.</u>	9.	<u>14.</u>	19.
5.	10.	15.	20.



Possible solutions

1. acres	6. grains	<u>11. oats</u>	16. silage
2. calves	7. ground	12. organic	17. soil
3. corn	8. idle	13. record	18. tongue
4. diet	9. land	14. region	19. trade
5. goats	10. liver	15. rural	20. veal

Crossword Puzzle Answers

1	PASTA	8. AREA	15. ROASTERS
	WHEAT	9. HOBBY	16. ALPACAS
	CANOLA	10. POULTRY	17. REINDEER
	BEEF	11. BOOKKEEPING	18. DOZEN
	FLUCTUATING	12. FIELDCROPS	19. OUAIL, OUEBEC
			19. QUAIL, QUEBEC
	PULSE	13. SOYBEANS	
1.	CATTLE	14. MEAT	

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