

Census of Agriculture

Statistics Canada conducts the Census of Agriculture and the Census of Population for Canada every five years. The Alberta statistics presented here are highlights from the latest Census of Agriculture, conducted on May 10, 2011, with comparison statistics from the 2006 Census of Agriculture.

Included is information on primary production, farm numbers, land use, operating arrangements, capital, operating expenses, and farm operators.

Since 1996, a census farm has been defined as an agricultural operation that produces at least one of the following products intended for sale: crops (hay, field crops, tree fruits or nuts, berries or grapes, vegetables, seed); livestock (cattle, pigs, sheep, horses, game animals, other livestock); poultry (hens, chickens, turkeys, chicks, game birds, other poultry); animal products (milk or cream, eggs, wool, furs, meat); or other agricultural products (Christmas trees, greenhouse or nursery products, mushrooms, sod, honey, maple syrup products).

Farm operators are those persons responsible for the day-to-day management and/or financial decisions made in the operation of a farm or an agricultural operation. Up to three farm operators could be reported per farm, including owners, tenants or hired managers, if they are responsible for management decisions for particular aspects of the farm, such as planting and harvesting, capital purchases, and marketing.

Census Farms and Land	2006	2011
Total Number of Farms	49,431	43,234
Number of Farms by Size		
Under 130 Acres.....	8,918	7,547
130 - 239 Acres.....	8,778	7,917
240 - 399 Acres.....	6,386	5,395
400 - 559 Acres.....	4,209	3,653
560 - 759 Acres.....	3,979	3,258
760 - 1,119 Acres.....	4,807	3,997
1,120 - 1,599 Acres.....	3,924	3,335
1,600 - 2,239 Acres.....	3,012	2,694
2,240 - 2,879 Acres.....	1,681	1,575
2,880 Acres and Over	3,737	3,863

	Acres	
Tenure of Farmland		
Owned.....	32,228,183	30,233,516
Total Rented, Leased, Crop Shared, or Used ⁽¹⁾	22,204,148	22,690,880
Less Total Area Used by Others	2,304,474	2,425,562
Total Area of Farms ⁽²⁾	52,127,857	50,498,834
Total Area in Crops.....	23,775,509	24,102,289
Total Area in Summerfallow.....	2,239,633	1,263,051
Total Area in Tame or Seeded Pasture	6,137,362	5,920,507
Total Natural Area for Pasture	16,135,646	15,903,273
All Other Land (incl. Christmas trees)	3,839,707	3,309,714
Average Farm Size	1,055	1,168

(1) Includes land used through other arrangements, such as land trading or rent free.

(2) The sum of all land tenures minus "Total Area Used by Others."

Crops	2006	2011
	Acres	
Selected Field Crops Grown		
Grains	12,327,276	11,483,988
Total Wheat.....	6,467,628	6,703,703
Spring Wheat (excl. Durum)	5,768,705	5,971,359
Durum Wheat.....	570,771	536,018
Winter Wheat.....	128,152	196,326
Oats for Grain.....	1,269,229	891,580
Barley.....	4,094,689	3,610,111
Mixed Grains.....	373,005	201,511
Corn for Grain.....	4,326	17,148
Total Rye.....	118,399	59,935
Fall Rye.....	105,059	50,616
Spring Rye.....	13,340	9,319
Oilseeds	4,133,352	6,151,215
Canola.....	4,068,511	6,071,744
Flaxseed.....	60,372	69,743
Soybeans.....	2,677	3,693
Sunflowers.....	1,792	6,035
Hay and Fodder Crops	6,066,400	5,219,532
Corn for Silage.....	70,411	95,861
Alfalfa and Alfalfa Mixtures	3,935,022	3,657,114
All Other Tame Hay.....	2,060,967	1,466,557
Other Field Crops	1,167,065	1,086,944
Forage Seed.....	244,615	131,933
Potatoes	54,759	53,440
Mustard Seed.....	62,538	62,958
Sugar Beets	38,803	33,314
Triticale.....	76,299	40,762
Dry Field Peas.....	587,263	706,726
Total Dry Field Beans (incl. chickpeas).....	102,788	57,811
Total Vegetable Crops (excl. greenhouse)	13,193	10,716
Total Fruit, Nut and Berry (incl. non-producing)	2,934	2,610
Total Nursery Products	8,955	9,755
Total Sod Under Cultivation	9,402	10,063
Total Irrigated Crops	1,325,929	1,241,411
Irrigated Field Crops	902,105	908,441
Irrigated Alfalfa, Hay and Pasture.....	406,257	314,423
Irrigated Vegetables.....	9,420	7,606
Irrigated Fruit.....	992	638
Other Irrigated Areas	7,155	10,303
	Square Feet	
Total Greenhouse Area	12,582,590	12,986,416
Total Greenhouse Area In Use	12,432,719	12,861,869
Flowers (cut, bedding plants, etc.).....	5,794,901	4,785,343
Vegetables	4,729,622	6,281,029
Other Greenhouse Products.....	1,908,196	1,795,497

Livestock on Farms	2006	2011
	Number	
Total Cattle and Calves	6,369,116	5,104,605
Total Cows.....	2,114,716	1,611,085
Dairy Cows.....	78,875	80,694
Beef Cows.....	2,035,841	1,530,391
Bulls - One Year and Over.....	109,753	90,813
Heifers for Dairy or Beef Herd Replacement.....	313,486	304,760
Heifers for Slaughter or Feeding.....	805,829	684,470
Steers - One Year and Over.....	974,559	819,409
Calves - Under One Year.....	2,050,773	1,594,068
Total Pigs	2,052,067	1,397,534
Boars.....	7,101	4,543
Sows and Gilts for Breeding	188,703	108,322
All Other Pigs.....	1,856,263	1,284,669
Total Sheep and Lambs	222,340	202,903
Ewes.....	103,603	92,427
Rams.....	5,134	4,995
Lambs.....	113,603	105,481
Selected Livestock		
Horses and Ponies	155,533	139,410
Bison (Buffalo).....	97,366	57,483
Deer and Elk.....	42,748	18,630
Llamas and Alpacas.....	14,734	11,740
Colonies of Honey Bees	230,894	235,951
Gallons of Other Pollinating Bees	89,580	189,510
Total Hens and Chickens	11,757,860	11,956,949
Broilers, Roasters and Cornish	8,546,758	8,717,694
Pullets, Under 19 Weeks, for Laying	983,648	823,934
Laying Hens, 19 Weeks and Over.....	2,227,454	1,896,008
Total Turkeys	703,462	706,902
Other Poultry ⁽³⁾	211,749	204,148
Chicks and Poultry Hatched ⁽⁴⁾	63,625,470	68,224,440
	Kilograms	
Poultry Production ⁽⁵⁾		
Broilers, Roasters and Cornish	115,766,269	124,468,680
Turkey.....	16,054,282	16,958,259

Organic Production	Number of Farms	
Certified Organic Production	230	290
Fruits, Vegetables or Greenhouse Products.....	31	21
Animal or Animal Products (milk, eggs, etc.)	84	66
Hay or Field Crops.....	193	256
Herbs, Spices or Garlic Products.....	—	9
Other Organic Products	—	2
Transitional Organic Production	26	42

(3) Includes geese, ducks, roosters, ostriches, emus, pheasants, quail, wild turkeys, etc.

(4) Hatched in commercial poultry hatcheries in calendar year prior to the Census.

(5) For calendar year prior to the Census.

Land Practices and Features	2006	2011
	% of Total Farms	
Soil Conservation		
Crop Rotation.....	59.3	56.6
Winter Cover Crops.....	3.9	2.7
Windbreaks or Shelterbelts.....	50.2	39.3
Green Crops for Plough-down	5.7	5.4
Manure Applied.....	37.6	49.7
Buffer Zones Around Water Bodies	18.5	19.0
Rotational Grazing.....	43.7	35.1
In Field Winter Grazing or Feeding.....	—	25.7
Nutrient Management Planning	—	16.8

	Acres	
Land Management Practices ⁽⁵⁾		
Commercial Fertilizer.....	17,211,462	17,571,243
Lime.....	29,942	25,757
Herbicides	15,858,085	17,658,829
Insecticides and Fungicides.....	2,832,747	4,480,268
Tillage Incorporating Crop Residue	4,589,714	2,543,229
Tillage Retaining Crop Residue on Surface.....	5,185,594	4,477,959
No-till or Zero-till Seeding	8,950,836	12,924,625
Crop Residue Baled.....	—	2,236,814

Farm Operating Arrangements	Number of Farms	
Sole Proprietorship.....	27,815	24,459
Partnership With Written Agreement	1,458	1,239
Partnership Without Written Agreement	12,462	9,708
Corporation - Family.....	6,714	6,821
Corporation - Non-Family	697	771
Other (institution, community pasture, etc.)	285	236

Farm Capital	Millions of Dollars	
Total Farm Capital (market value)	71,781.2	95,571.9
Farm Machinery and Equipment	9,680.1	10,933.2
Livestock and Poultry.....	4,999.7	4,267.6
Land and Buildings.....	57,101.3	80,371.1
Owned.....	41,405.9	57,050.5
Rented or Leased.....	15,695.5	23,320.6

Farms Classified by Total Farm Capital	Number of Farms	
Under \$100,000.....	593	361
\$100,000 - \$199,999	2,326	1,032
\$200,000 - \$349,999	6,615	3,101
\$350,000 - \$499,999	6,639	4,203
\$500,000 - \$999,999	13,776	11,966
\$1,000,000- \$1,499,999	6,666	6,459
\$1,500,000 - \$1,999,999	3,810	3,762
\$2,000,000 - \$3,499,999	5,135	5,894
\$3,500,000 and Over	3,871	6,456

(5) For calendar year prior to the Census.

2011 Census of Agriculture for Alberta Provincial Highlights



Gross Farm Receipts⁽⁵⁾ 2006 2011

	Millions of Dollars	
Total Gross Farm Receipts⁽⁶⁾	9,889.0	11,436.2
	Number of Farms	
Farms Classified by Gross Farm Receipts		
Under \$50,000	25,681	21,620
\$50,000 - \$99,999	7,448	5,934
\$100,000 - \$249,999	8,805	7,015
\$250,000 - \$499,999	4,333	4,211
\$500,000 - \$999,999	1,871	2,494
\$1,000,000 to \$1,999,999	688	1,175
\$2,000,000 and Over	605	785

Farm Business Operating Expenses⁽⁵⁾ Millions of Dollars

Total Farm Operating Expenses	8,791.6	9,710.7
Farm Interest Expenses	441.2	402.9
Electricity and All Telecommunications	211.7	222.3
Rental and Leasing		
Land and Buildings	260.8	343.4
Machinery, Equipment, Vehicles	65.1	84.7
Total Wages and Salaries	537.1	600.1
Paid to Family Members	263.2	287.9
Paid to All Other Persons	273.9	312.1
Custom and Contract Work	446.1	491.1
Repairs and Maintenance		
Machinery, Equipment, Vehicles	479.5	514.5
Buildings and Fences	154.6	164.2
All Fuel (machinery, vehicle and heating)	566.7	564.0
Fertilizer and Lime	613.4	900.8
Herbicides, Insecticides, Fungicides, etc.	384.0	474.7
Seed and Plant Purchases (not for resale)	202.8	345.1
Livestock and Poultry Purchases	2,235.3	2,000.9
Feed and Supplement Purchases	1,260.8	1,376.9
Veterinary Services, (incl. semen, breeding fees)	147.0	143.4
All Other Expenses ⁽⁷⁾	785.5	1,081.6

Paid Agricultural Labour Number of Farms

Total Farms Reporting Paid Labour	17,195	12,798
Year Round Paid Labour (full or part-time)	8,754	6,467
Seasonal/Temporary Paid Labour	10,872	8,687

(5) For calendar year prior to the Census.

(6) Excluding sales of forest products.

(7) Excluding depreciation and capital cost allowance.

Paid Agricultural Employees 2006 2011

	Number	
Total Number of Agricultural Employees	-	37,852
Year Round Employees	-	15,598
Seasonal/Temporary Employees	-	22,254
Total Weeks Worked by All Employees	959,231	898,452
Weeks Worked by Year Round Employees	-	657,073
Weeks Worked by Seasonal/Temporary Employees ..	-	241,379

Types of Farms⁽⁸⁾ Number of Farms

Classified by Gross Farm Receipts	2006	2011
Dairy	605	485
Cattle (beef, incl. feedlots)	20,494	12,022
Hog	598	193
Poultry and Egg	416	339
Sheep and Goat	558	490
Other Animals	7,414	6,374
Grain and Oilseed	12,562	12,692
Fruit and Tree Nut	227	151
Vegetable and Melon	286	277
Greenhouse, Nursery and Floriculture	910	826
Other Crop Farming	5,361	9,385

Use of Personal Computers 2006 2011

	Number of Farms	
Total Farms Using Computers for Farm Mgmt	23,410	26,673
Farms Using Internet for Farm Business	-	24,928
Farms with High Speed Internet Access	-	20,097

Farm Operators⁽⁹⁾ Number

Total Farm Operators	71,660	62,050
<i>Per cent of Canada</i>	<i>21.9%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>
Total Farms Reporting	49,431	43,234
<i>Per cent of Canada</i>	<i>21.6%</i>	<i>21.0%</i>

Farm Operators by Sex Number of Operators

Male	50,190	44,075
Female	21,470	17,975
On Farms With One Operator	28,045	25,155
Male	25,670	23,010
Female	2,370	2,145
On Farms With Two or More Operators	43,620	36,890
Male	24,525	21,065
Female	19,095	15,830

(8) Farms classified by the commodity or group of commodities that make up the majority of total receipts; based on the North American Industry Classification System.

(9) Up to three operators can be reported per farm. As this is a count of distinct operators, operators of two or more separate farms are included only once.

Average Age of Farm Operators 2006 2011

	Years	
All Farm Operators	52.2	54.5
On Farms With One Operator	53.8	56.2
On Farms With Two or More Operators	51.2	53.3

Farm Operators by Age Group Number of Operators

All Farm Operators		
Under 35 Years	6,290	4,550
35 - 54 Years	35,935	26,720
55 Years and Over	29,440	30,785

Farms With One Operator		
Under 35 Years	2,045	1,370
35 - 54 Years	13,335	10,125
55 Years and Over	12,665	13,665

Farms With Two or More Operators		
Under 35 Years	4,245	3,180
35 - 54 Years	22,605	16,595
55 Years and Over	16,780	17,120

Farm Operator Labour Number of Operators

Farm Operators by Hours of Farm Work⁽¹⁰⁾		
Less Than 20 Hours per Week	20,465	19,660
20 - 40 Hours per Week	19,970	18,905
More Than 40 Hours per Week	31,225	23,480
Farm Operators Reporting Paid Non-Farm Work	39,105	32,245
Less Than 20 Hours per Week	7,560	5,860
20 - 40 Hours per Week	14,190	13,520
More Than 40 Hours per Week	17,355	12,865

(10) Average number of hours per week worked for the agricultural operation.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding

- Figures not comparable or questions not asked on 2006 Census form

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture, 2006 and 2011

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For more Census information visit the Statistics Canada website at www.statcan.gc.ca