

\$1,200 or more. This definition was changed from that used for census year 1971 when a sales figure of \$50 was used instead of \$1,200. Census data for 1971 are given here to correspond with the 1976 definition of a census-farm. The total number of census-farms in Canada in 1976, at 300,118, was almost the same as in 1971 when there were 299,868 census-farms (Table 11.27).

**Farm areas.** Total area of census-farms in 1976 was 67.2 million hectares (166.0 million acres), a 3.4% increase from the 64.9 million hectares (160.5 million acres) recorded in 1971 (Table 11.28). Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec reported decreases in farm areas. All other provinces reported increases. For Canada as a whole, the 43.7 million hectares (108.0 million acres) of improved land for 1976 increased 4.1% from the area recorded in 1971. The area of unimproved land increased 2.2% to 23.5 million hectares (58.0 million acres) in 1976 from 23.0 million hectares (56.7 million acres) in 1971. The area under crops, increasing by 4.8%, accounted for the majority of this increase.

**Economic classification of census-farms.** All census-farms in 1976, except institutional farms, such as experimental farms, community pastures and Indian reserves (but including Hutterite colonies), were classified as one of the four major historically comparable economic classes with a total of 10 breakdowns (Table 11.29). Economic classification of census-farms presents a measure of the productive size of the holding. The method of collecting sales information in the 1976 Census differed from previous censuses. Historically, the sales were reported by commodity. In 1976, however, the operator was asked to indicate one of several ranges which corresponded to his total sales of agricultural products during 1975.

**Type of farm.** Since the sales information collected in 1976 was not detailed by commodity as in the past, the farm typing scheme was based on potential value of sales by commodities. Potential value of sales was imputed from the 1976 physical inventories reported for the census-farm. With the exception of farms classified as institutional, all census-farms in 1976 with \$2,500 or more of agricultural sales were classified as one of 10 major product types. Major differences in types compared with previous censuses are the deletion of the forestry type of farm and the division of the cattle-hog-sheep type into cattle and hogs. The small number of sheep farms is included in miscellaneous speciality. A farm was classified in a particular product type if 51.0% or more of the potential sales of this holding were obtained from this class of products.

**Size of census-farms.** In 1976, 43% of census-farms in Canada contained less than 97.1 hectares (240 acres) compared with 42% in 1971. This relatively small change in the proportion of such holdings suggests that the trend toward consolidation of farms into larger holdings may have moderated. However, the wide variation in distribution of farms by size between provinces continues. The proportion of farms under 97.1 hectares (240 acres) in the Atlantic provinces ranged from 50.2% in New Brunswick to 88.4% in Newfoundland; in Quebec 69.0%, Ontario 74.1%, Manitoba 20.7%, Saskatchewan 10.0%, Alberta 21.7% and British Columbia 70.6%.

**Age of census-farm operators.** The proportion of census-farm operators under 35 years of age in 1976 was approximately 19% of the total. Operators in the age groups 35-54 were 50% and those in the age groups 55 and over were 31% of the total. The corresponding percentages for 1971, at 15%, 53% and 32%, respectively, indicate a trend to younger farm operators.

**Farm machinery.** Table 11.36 indicates that between 1971 and 1976 forage crop harvesters increased by 25.9%, farm trucks by 25.5%, swathers by 13.1%, tractors by 12.0%, pick-up balers by 7.5%, automobiles by 5.4% and grain combines by 4.7%.

## Product and marketing controls

Governments in Canada at both federal and provincial levels have from the earliest years been concerned with the importance of encouraging and assisting in the development of a productive and efficient agricultural sector. To this end numerous