

largest single crop. Rangeland and pasture support a large number of cattle. Livestock rearing is a major industry.

Manitoba, with the highest prairie rainfall and an average of 100 frost-free days, has more varied farming. Wheat and other grains predominate but canola/rapeseed and flax are also grown extensively. There is considerable mixed farming with emphasis on beef cattle. Vegetables, sugar beets and sunflowers are grown in south central Manitoba and processed locally. Dairy farms are common around Winnipeg; hog production and beef production are widespread.

Saskatchewan grows approximately 60% of Canadian wheat and large quantities of other grains, aided by light spring rainfall and long sunny days. Canola/rapeseed and other oilseeds are popular. Irrigation is increasing and assists vegetable and forage crops. Mixed farming is common in the north where rainfall is higher. Poultry and egg production as well as livestock production such as hogs, beef and dairy cattle are major contributors to the Saskatchewan agriculture economy.

Alberta, second to Saskatchewan in grain production, has more beef cattle ranches than any other province, mainly in the south and in the Rocky Mountain foothills. Cattle-feeding operations are expanding and Alberta is a leading hog and sheep producer. In the 1981 Census of Agriculture Alberta farms reported about 400 000 hectares under irrigation, accounting for \$665 million in sales of agriculture products, roughly half the irrigated land producing cereal crops and oilseeds, one-third tame hay, pasture and fodder crops and the remainder, specialty crops. Dairy and poultry products are prominent in the mixed-farm economy. In the Peace River district north of 55° latitude, more than 8,000 farmers produce over 1.6 million tonnes of wheat, oats, barley and canola annually; livestock producers maintain large numbers of cattle, hogs and sheep; honey produced exceeded 8 000 t in 1982.

**The Pacific region.** Only 2% of British Columbia is agricultural. Farms, mostly small and highly productive, are concentrated in the river valleys, the south-central mainland and southern Vancouver Island.

Livestock and dairying account for most of the agricultural production. Hogs and beef cattle are raised on many farms, beef particularly in the central and southern interior areas. Dairying and poultry meat and egg production are concentrated in the lower Fraser Valley where the population is large. Mixed farming is scattered throughout British Columbia.

British Columbia is Canada's largest apple producer. The Okanagan Valley is also noted for peaches, plums, apricots, cherries and grapes. Raspberries and strawberries are grown in the Fraser Valley and on Vancouver Island along with other horticultural crops such as tomatoes, sweet corn and

potatoes. The processing industry is well developed. Vancouver Island's mild climate also produces flowering bulbs.

**The northern region.** The agricultural area north of latitude 55° consists of parts of northern British Columbia, Yukon, and the Mackenzie River Valley in the Northwest Territories. Agricultural settlement is not encouraged because of the harsh climate and small population. Precipitation varies from light in the northern Yukon to heavy on the mountainous coast of British Columbia. Frosts can occur in any month, but crops grown on northern slopes escape some damage. The North is estimated to have 1.3 million hectares of potentially arable land and large expanses of grazing land, but there are probably fewer than 30 commercial farms in the region. Dairy products, beef cattle, forage crops, feed grains and vegetables are produced for the small local market.

### 9.3.2 Farm ownership and labour

Most farms are owned by the operating farmers but as farms increase in size more land is being rented. Payment is usually cash or a share of crops or receipts.

Farm families provide most of the labour but experienced workers are often employed on dairy farms, and seasonal workers for harvests. In the West, combine operators often move their machinery with the harvest, starting in the United States and moving into Canada later in the season. Potato harvesters follow the same pattern in the East.

### 9.3.3 Transportation

On January 1, 1984 the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement was replaced by the Western Grain Transportation Act. It provides that producers of grain will pay a fixed share of the freight rates to move their grain to port. Railways will undertake an investment program to expand western railway capacity and expenditures for adequate branch line maintenance. Freight rates will be determined by the Canadian Transport Commission. Railways have been the traditional means of transporting agricultural products to large markets and ports. Trains move wheat and livestock to Canadian markets and to elevators in Vancouver, Churchill and Thunder Bay for shipment abroad. Bulky products such as sugar beets are usually shipped by rail.

Although railways have retained their importance on the Prairies, many branch lines have been abandoned and farmers now ship their produce at least part way in their own trucks. Eggs, poultry, cream, fruits and vegetables go to local markets by road, and milk is generally collected at farms by tank trucks. Commercial farms and co-operatives use trucks for marketing and distributing agricultural products and in delivering supplies.

Water routes supplement these means. The Great Lakes have long been used to ship grain from Thunder Bay to Eastern Canada and since the opening