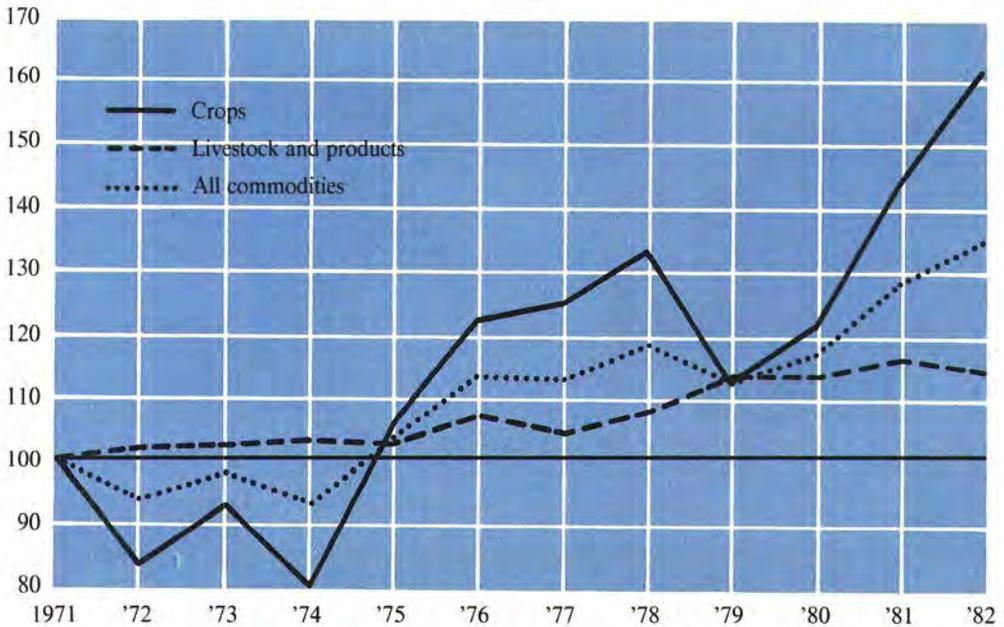


Chart 9.2
Indexes of farm production
 (1971=100)



1976 given here represent holdings of one acre or more with annual sales of \$50 or more. On this basis the total number of census-farms in Canada in 1981, at 318,361, was less than in 1976 when there were 338,578 (Table 9.32).

Improved land areas. All provinces except Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and Quebec reported increases in improved land areas. For Canada as a whole, the 46.1 million hectares of improved land for 1981 increased 4.3% from that recorded in 1976. The area under crops, increasing by 9.3%, accounted for the majority of this increase.

Size of census-farms. In 1981, 49% of census-farms in Canada contained less than 97.1 hectares compared with 48% in 1976. This relatively small change suggests that the trend toward consolidation into larger holdings may have moderated. However, wide variation among provinces continues. The proportion of farms under 97.1 hectares in the Atlantic provinces ranged from 36% in New Brunswick to 87% in Newfoundland; in Quebec 43%, Ontario 52%, Manitoba 27%, Saskatchewan 14%, Alberta 29% and British Columbia 71%.

Sales class. Each census-farm in 1981 reported its sales for the calendar year 1980 (Table 9.34).

Product type. Since the sales information collected in 1981 was not detailed by commodity, the farm

typing scheme was based on potential value of sales by commodities. This value was imputed from the 1981 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 12 product types if 51.0% or more of the potential sales were obtained from this type.

Farm machinery. Table 9.36 indicates that between 1976 and 1981 the number of swathers increased by 7%, farm trucks by 7%, tractors by 4%, automobiles by 3%, pick-up hay balers by 3%, forage crop harvesters by 2% and grain combines declined by 2%.

Age of census-farm operators. About 21% of census-farm operators were under 35 in 1981, 48% were in the 35-54 age group and 31% were over 55 showing a trend to younger operators. Corresponding percentages for 1976 were 19%, 49% and 32%.

Farm capital. Farm capital is composed of the following three items: land and buildings (80%), machinery and equipment (13%), and livestock and poultry (7%). The 1981 total capital value is about 14 times the 1951 value (Table 9.38).

9.5 Trends in the decade 1972-82

International influences. Canada is a net exporter of agricultural products, so world events which affect