

common around Winnipeg; poultry, hog and beef production are widespread.

Saskatchewan produces 60% of the Canadian wheat crop as well as large quantities of other grains. Canola/rapeseed, mustard and other oilseeds are popular. Livestock (especially hogs and beef cattle), dairy, poultry and egg, and specialty crop production are major contributors to Saskatchewan's agriculture economy. Irrigation is increasing and assists forage and vegetable crops.

Alberta, second to Saskatchewan in wheat production, is the major producer of feed grains and beef cattle. Alberta is also a leading producer of hogs and sheep. In the 1986 Census of Agriculture, Alberta farms reported about 12.5 million hectares under cultivation by approximately 58,000 farmers. About 22% of this land was in wheat, 21% in barley, 5% in oilseed crops and 25% in cultivated forage crops. About 400,000 ha were under irrigation. In the Peace River district, north of latitude 55°, about 8,000 farmers produce wheat, barley, canola/rapeseed, grass and legume seed plus about 4% of the provincial livestock.

The Pacific region. Only 2% of British Columbia's land area is agricultural. Farms, mostly small and highly productive, are concentrated in the river valleys, the southwestern mainland and southern Vancouver Island.

Dairying and livestock, in that order, account for most of the agricultural production. Beef cattle are raised on many farms, particularly in the central and southern interior areas. Dairying and poultry meat and egg production are mainly in the lower Fraser Valley where the population is concentrated. Mixed farming is scattered throughout British Columbia.

British Columbia is Canada's largest apple producer. The Okanagan Valley, where most apples are grown, 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. Vancouver Island's mild climate also permits the production of flowering bulbs.

The northern region. The agricultural area north of latitude 57° consists of parts of northern British Columbia, the Yukon, and the Mackenzie River Valley in the Northwest Territories. Commercial agriculture is not well developed because of the harsh climate and distance to markets. Precipitation varies from light in the northern Yukon to heavy on the mountainous coast of British Columbia. Frosts can occur in any month, but some crops can be grown on well-drained, south-facing slopes. 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 small local markets.

9.2.2 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 are hired 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.

9.2.3 Transportation

Railways are still the dominant means of transportation on the Prairies. Branch line abandonment has been slow and modest since most lines are guaranteed to the year 2000. As an alternative to the railways (especially for short hauls), many farmers utilize the truck mode to get their produce to market. 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. Since the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959, the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence system has facilitated the movement of bulk commodities by intermediate-sized vessels for eventual export by ocean-going vessels. Churchill is a seasonal port for Prairie grains; Vancouver and Halifax are year-round ports.

9.2.4 Marketing and supplies

Farm product marketing combines private trading, public sales and auctions, and sales under contract and through co-operatives or marketing boards.

Canada's principal livestock markets are at Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton. Most cattle and calves are marketed by auction at public stockyards; some are exported; hogs, sheep and lambs are sold directly to packing houses. Hog sales are usually handled by marketing boards. Canadian marketing