

2012 Canadian Organic Production Statistics
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With excerpts from the report provided by Matthew Homes (COTA) and Anne Macey (COG) for IFOAM's The WORLD OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE 2014

Data collection system

Canada's organic sector continues to rely on voluntary disclosure of data by certifiers, provincial organizations and some governments to get a statistical portrait of the sector in the country. This year, voluntary participation was significant, making 2012 the year with the most comprehensive data since 2005. However, until there is a mandatory, coordinated national data collection system, this method will remain open to inconsistencies and year-over-year change. Quebec is the only province systematically collecting data from year to year. Detailed information for Quebec can be obtained from:

http://www.cartv.gouv.qc.ca/sites/documents/file/statsbio/CARTV_StatistiquesBIO2012.pdf

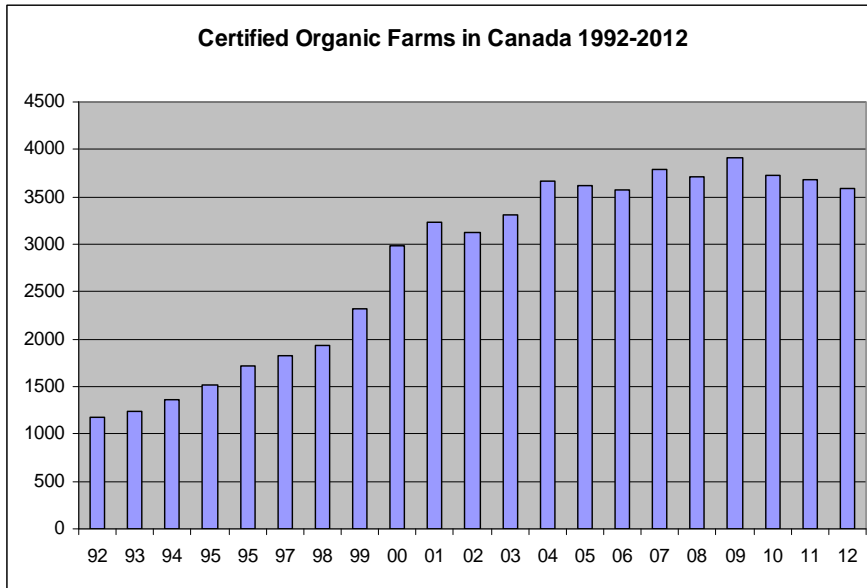
Producers

There were 3590 organic farms reported in Canada in 2012. The number of primary producers declined slightly (2.8%) since the previous year. This is primarily due to a continuing trend observed for the past three years caused by the decline of producers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Since 2011, Saskatchewan has seen its number of producers drop by 18%, and Manitoba by 22%. One possible factor being high conventional commodity prices although an aging farm population might have contributed. The number of producers in Quebec (1,039 producers) now surpasses the number in Saskatchewan; it increased by 3.6% compared to 2011. British Columbia's organic sector is steadily growing; 2012 was not an exception, with a 7.3% increase. The number of producers remained stable in the Atlantic Provinces and Ontario. Primary producers include those with the following types of enterprises: crops of all kinds including mushrooms, livestock operations, bees and wild harvests.

Table 1: Organic operators

	Farms Census 2011	Farms Dec 2012	Trans.	Processors & Handlers
BC	470	504	34	213
AB	290	280	17	38
SK	1015	832	26	67
MB	169	131	4	28
ON	674	667		282
QC	963	1039	38	578
NB	39	46	2	11
NS	44	48		14
PEI	48	37		5
YK	5	5		
NFL	1	1		1
	3718	3590	121	1237

Figure 1: Certified Organic Farms 1992-2012



Organic agricultural land

The total landbase in organic production, including both annual and perennial crops, forages and pasture, and 2,717ha of land in conversion is estimated at 825,070 hectares. Wild rice lakes, areas used for wild collection and crown land leases used for grazing of organic livestock are included in the total as is agricultural land listed as "fallow" in the 2012 crop year. The total is approximately 19,000 hectares lower than reported in 2011, but with insufficient data in 2011 to make comparisons for different crop types it is impossible to attribute the loss to any particular type of production. Acreage increased in BC (20.9%), Alberta (13.6%), Ontario (13.1%) & Quebec (16.8%), but declined in Manitoba (-14.1%) and Saskatchewan (-12.3%). In addition there is considerable acreage of maple forest in Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick (49,871 hectares).

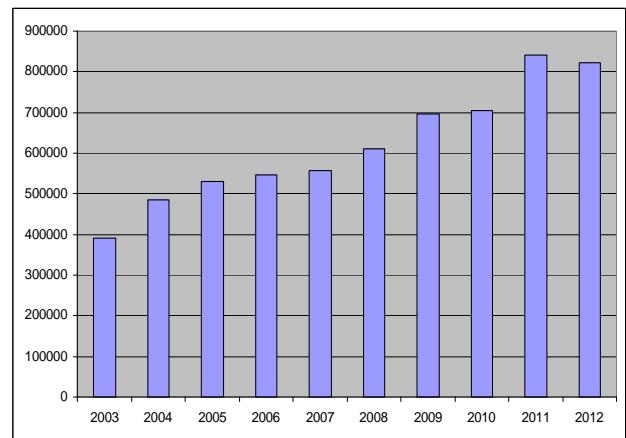
Table 2: Land used for organic production 2012

Province	Acres	Hectares	Trans ha	Maple ha
BC*	517935	209608	2088	
AB	364382	147465		
SK	780509	315872		
MB	85933	34777	629	
ON	141348	57203		22
QC	132965	53810		47071
NB**	1853	750		2778
NS**	1185	480		
PEI**	5690	2303		
YK	231	93		
NFL	?			
	2032030	822362	2717	49871

* Includes 180045ha crown land used for grazing

** Missing acreage data from approximately 50% of certified farm operations in Atlantic Canada

Figure 2: Ha in organic production 2003-2012



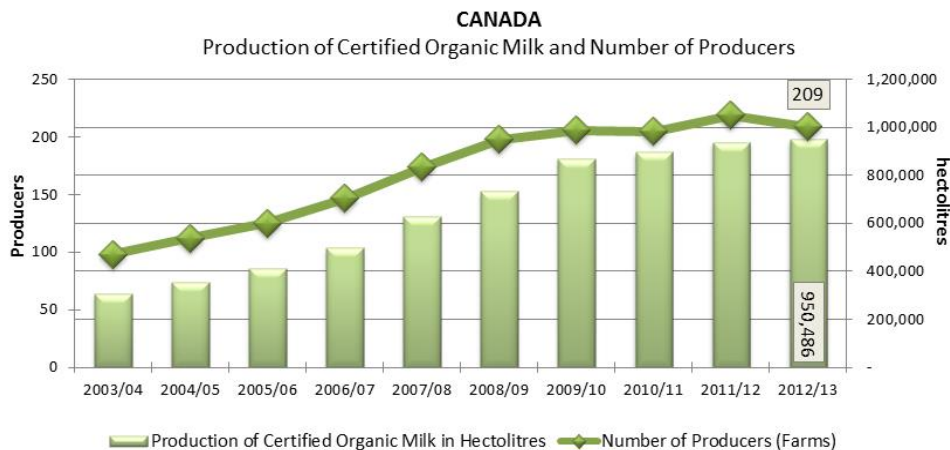
Livestock production

Livestock data for 2012 was inconsistent and did not provide adequate information to compare to previous years; some data provided included all age classes, other data included breeding animals only. The numbers provided below should be considered a minimum only. For example, the number of chickens reported in BC does not reflect the quantity of organic chicken reported by the Chicken Marketing Board for 2012 (1,205,102 kg).

Table 6. Numbers of organic livestock reported – data is incomplete.

Type	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	YK	Canada
Beef cattle	5349	10648	3570	4734	2373	475			27149
Bison	286	78		117					481
Dairy cattle	4839	102		177	943	5965			12026
Dairy goats						511			511
Goats	406	16		18					440
Sheep	2152	59			869	1852			4932
Pigs	212	266		128	14137	?		12	14755
Sows						263			263
Bee hives	?				85				85
Poultry			2180				400		2580
Layers	99773	41280	1428	65	24967	62066		114	229693
Pullets	13861	1000			?	?			14861
Meatbirds/Broilers	216565	3600	400	63	1112363	?		400	1333391
Turkeys	15208	540			13528	?			29276

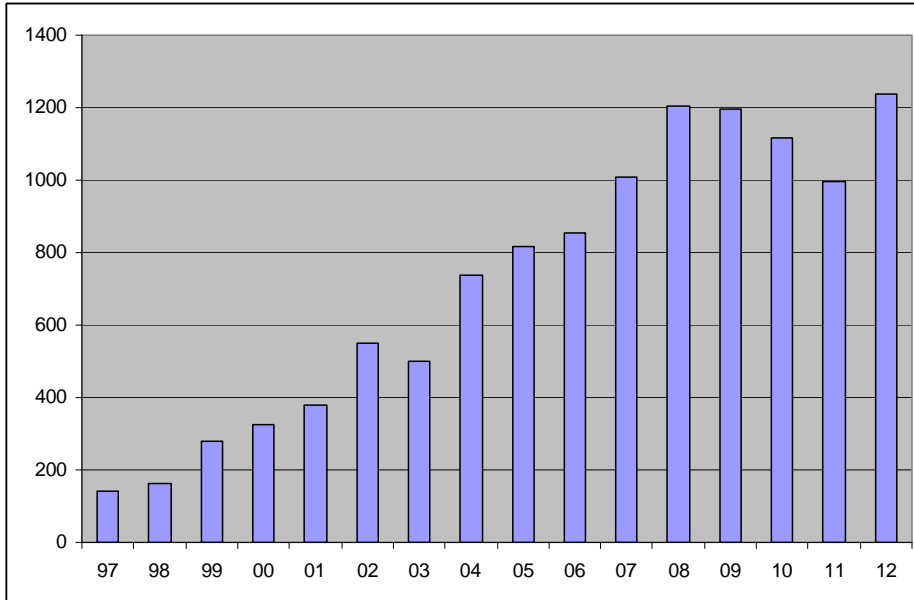
The 2011/12 dairy year saw 218 farms produce 937,137 hectolitres of organic milk which represents 1.19% of total Canadian dairy production. It is estimated that dairy products make up 11% of all organic sales in Canada. (Source: Canadian Dairy Information Centre, Agriculture & Agri- Food Canada, Organic Dairy Industry in Canada, 2012 Edition).



Processors and handlers

A total of 1,237 certified operators are manufacturing, handling or distributing organic products in the Canada. This is 24% higher than reported in 2011; some of this dramatic increase may be attributed to partial data reported in 2011. Quebec counts for 48% of all the processors and handlers in the country (578), followed by Ontario (282) and British Columbia (213).

Figure 2: Certified Organic Processors & Handlers in Canada 1997-2012



New insights from the 2011 Census of Agriculture

The 2011 census of Agriculture classified farms by eleven production groups. The largest organic farm groups are concentrated in two categories, with 31% of organic farms in oil seed and grain farming, and 26% in general crop farming, which includes mixed production and specialty crops. Dairy production, beef cattle, fruit and nut production and vegetable production account for 7-8 % each, with greenhouse and non- traditional livestock production (such as bison) both at 5%. Hog, poultry and egg production, and sheep round out the total.

The Census research has also offered new insights into organic farmers in Canada, particularly along labour and demographic lines: For example, thirty percent of organic farm operators are women, a proportion slightly higher than in conventional farming (27%). Organic farmers also tend to be younger: the percentage of farm operators over 55 years old is lower in the organic sector (41%) compared with conventional farmers (48%). Although organic farms represent 1.8% of total farms in Canada, the organic sector employs 3.75% of the total farm workforce. Organic greenhouse establishments employ one fifth of this total, followed by fruit & tree nut and horticultural farms.

The Census also suggests that organic farming is able to support more farm families, who are able to earn more than their non-organic neighbours. The concentration of Canada's organic farms are found in the middle and higher gross farm receipt categories, whereas most conventional farms are in the lowest category, or operate as large-scale operations.

Table 7: Operators on organic farms: (Census 2011 data)

Region	Total # operators	on farms with 1 operator	on farms with 2 or more operators	Male	Female	under 35	35-54	older than 55	Average age
Canada excluding Territories	5,585	1,995	3,595	3,895	1,685	675	2,590	2,310	55

Region	Hours Worked on Farm				Non-Farm Work				
	>40hrs	30-39 hours	20-29 hours	<20 hours	none Paid	<40 hrs paid	30-39 hours paid	20-29 hours paid	<20hrs paid
Canada excluding Territories	2,760	820	725	1,280	3,180	750	680	370	600

Table 8: Farm type, farm receipts and numbers of employees (Census 2011 data)

Type of Organic Farm	# reporting	Gross income	Total expense	Farms with employees	# employees	Year Round	Seasonal
All organic farms Canada	3,713	962,547,202	791,396,146	1,774	11,167	4,450	6,717
Dairy cattle and milk production	279	133,846,053	97,903,670	235	925	625	300
Beef cattle ranching and farming, including feedlots	295	50,817,663	44,647,603	104	218	83	135
Hog and pig farming	51	23,359,776	19,850,341	29	77	41	36
Poultry and egg production	63	116,884,127	96,281,761	48	802	746	56
Sheep and goat farming	34	4,637,870	3,801,313	13	47	13	34
Other animal production	176	18,959,244	16,171,922	66	224	69	155
Oilseed and grain farming	1,161	177,006,200	136,827,567	413	963	359	604
Vegetable and melon farming	255	89,706,740	78,569,347	144	1,794	358	1,436
Fruit and tree nut farming	269	52,761,295	48,725,843	167	1,864	201	1,663
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production	170	178,498,250	158,212,224	119	2,439	1,537	902
Other crop farming	960	116,069,984	90,404,555	436	1,814	418	1,396