

Canada's

Agriculture, Food and Beverage INDUSTRY

Canada's Potato Industry

Canada has a long history of supplying top quality table potatoes to customers and is widely recognized as an international leader in seed potato production. Canada is a world leader in producing, storing and processing a wide variety of potatoes in innovative and environmentally responsible ways.

The potato is the most valuable vegetable crop in Canada, accounting for 33 per cent of all vegetable farm cash receipts or \$793 million in the 2005 calendar year.



In 2005, Canadian potato farmers planted 161,500 hectares and harvested 153,800 hectares. Potato production was more than 4.2 million metric tonnes and was concentrated in Prince Edward Island (26 per cent), Alberta (19 per cent), Manitoba (17 per cent) and New Brunswick (15 per cent). The Atlantic region represented 42 per cent of Canadian production, the Western region 41 per cent and the Central region 17 per cent.

Canada produces about 150 registered seed potato varieties. The top ten planted varieties are Russet Burbank, Shepody, Superior, Atlantic, Yukon Gold, Chieftain, Russet Norkotah, Kennebec, Ranger Russet and Norland.

Potatoes have a wide variety of uses: fresh, processed and snack food. About 55 per cent of potatoes grown in Canada are processed, mostly into French fries, and about 10 to 15 per cent of the crop is utilised for chips and dehydration. Frozen French fry production was estimated at 1.365 million tonnes in 2004-2005, down 2 per cent from 2003-2004. The rate of expansion has averaged about 9 per cent annually since 1995.

In 2004-2005, 112,000 tonnes of seed potatoes valued at \$30 million and 316,000 tonnes of table potatoes valued at \$91 million were exported. That same period, 967,000 tonnes of frozen French fries worth \$832 million were also exported, making Canada the second largest French fry exporter after the Netherlands. The United States is Canada's main market for potatoes and potato products; 84% (by value) of Canadian potato exports were destined for the United States in 2005.

Potatoes account for about 39 per cent of all fresh and processed vegetables consumed in Canada. Despite the potatoes' popularity, total consumption has declined from 76.12 kg per person in 1994 to 72.67 kg in 2003. This decrease in potato consumption is a result of various dietary trends and negative consumer perceptions about its nutritional value, even though potatoes remain a healthy food product.

Additional Information

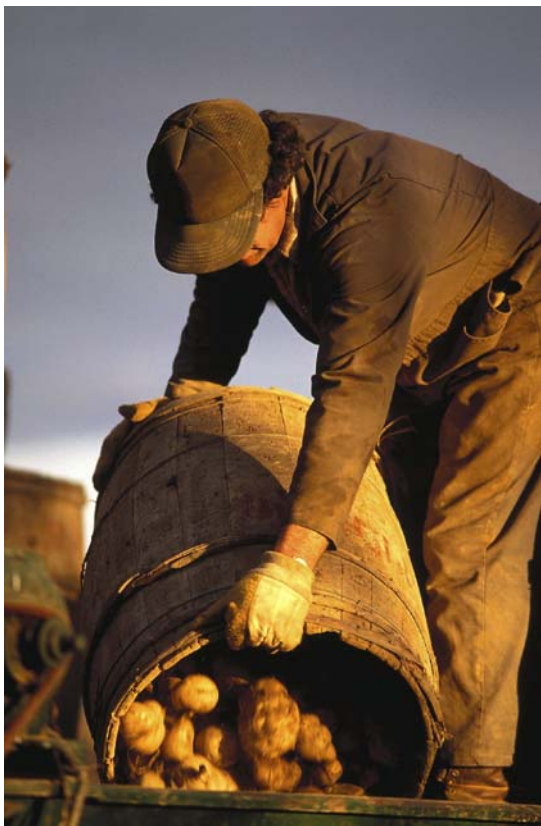
The Northern Vigor phenomenon makes seed potatoes grown in Canada very interesting for southern latitude countries.



Quality

is in our nature

Plants grown at Northern locations – higher latitudes, colder soil, longer day length – produce progeny that have enhanced growth characteristics when grown in southern locations. Scientists say the long summer days in the north produce seed potatoes with more energy and vigor resulting in even crop development, higher yield and superior grades. This vigor carries over through several generations of seed.



Scientists are also introducing new varieties to Canada and maintaining a gene bank of distinctive potato varieties.

Potatoes are graded according to size, shape, maturity and relative freedom from soil, injuries, blemishes and disease. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration is helping develop the potato industry on the Prairies. Growers are being assisted through

the development of a record of past production, identification and mapping of suitable lands and available water supplies, location of potato storage sheds, and analysis of how water is currently delivered to the land.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) inspectors across Canada monitor operations and take random samples from establishments to verify compliance with grade standards and safety regulations. CFIA also monitors incoming shipments of imported food products. Imported products must meet the same requirements for safety, quality, labeling and packaging as domestic products. Producers and packagers must conform to very specific regulations about labels they put on their products. CFIA inspectors ensure labels are accurate.

Potatoes are very nutritious, containing high amounts of carbohydrates, potassium, iron, protein, fiber, phosphorous, and vitamins B1, B6 and C. Based on a 100-gram weight, potatoes are low in calories at 77, compared to rice and pasta with 138 and 129 respectively.

Potatoes are used as ingredient with meats or in soups, salads and bakery products. They can also be mashed, hashed, minced, boiled or roasted. Potatoes are processed mostly into french fries, chips, flakes or starch for use by textile, soap and paste companies. Other products derived from potatoes are sugar, for pharmaceutical preparations; and vinegar, alcohol, and wine for beverages. The potatoes' versatility has contributed to its marketability and widespread use.

For More Detailed Information

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Other Links:

Potatoes – Situations and Trends
www.agr.gc.ca/misb/hort/index_e.cfm?s1=sit&page=potato-patate

Canadian Food Inspection Agency –
Potatoes
www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/potpom/potpome.shtml

Infohort
<http://infohort.agr.gc.ca>

Global Potato News
www.potatonews.com

Further information on products, suppliers and investment opportunities in the Canadian agri-food industry is available on the Agri-Food Trade Service Web site at: www.ats.agr.gc.ca

Canada's food and agricultural products reflect our dedication to excellence, and our deep commitment to safety, quality, environmental responsibility, innovation and service.

In every facet of our industry, we seek to earn the trust of our customers by answering their needs and exceeding their expectations. Those values along with our belief in building strong relationships, have given Canadian agriculture and food products an international reputation for excellence. Customers around the world know that they can trust the goodness of Canada.