



# Poultry Facts



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Canada



# Poultry Facts

## Overview

The poultry sector in Canada is composed of a variety of commercial and non-commercial enterprises. From bird growers to egg processors, poultry also includes several different species.

## Chicken

In 2010, there were approximately 2,800 regulated chicken producers in Canada. (Results are not yet available from the 2011 Census of Agriculture.) Canadian consumption of chicken had increased approximately 50 per cent over the previous 20 years. With per capita annual consumption of 31.5 kilograms (kg) in 2010, chicken is Canada's favourite protein. It appears on restaurant menus more often than any other meat. Poultry production and processing are among the most highly mechanized sectors in agriculture. The chicken industry is a major force in the Canadian economy,

contributing 19,000 jobs on chicken farms and in processing plants.

## Eggs

The rate of lay by hens has increased due to production efficiencies, enabling farmers to produce more with less. In Canada, annual egg consumption has stabilized in recent years. Per capita consumption was 16.1 dozen per person in 2009, with 1,015 registered egg farms in Canada providing these eggs.

## Turkey

There were 548 turkey farmers in 2010 that produced 158 million kg of turkey. Canadian consumption per capita is 4.3 kg. More meat per bird has made increased production possible. Sales are shifting from whole turkeys to processed turkey products to meet consumer demand.<sup>1</sup>

## Canadian Poultry Operations (from the Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Agriculture)<sup>2</sup>

	B.C.	Alta.	Sask.	Man.	Ont.	Que.	N.B.	N.S.	P.E.I.	N.L.
Total chicken farms	311	196	64	95	834	405	11	67	9	7
Total turkey farms	59	35	9	22	116	48	2	8	3	1
Total egg production farms	627	138	53	127	599	158	29	49	15	16
Other poultry	55	25	5	12	93	68	1	1	1	0

Get more facts and statistics at:

[www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/prim55a.htm](http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/prim55a.htm)

[www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/index\\_eng.htm](http://www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/index_eng.htm)

[www.turkeyfarmersofcanada.ca/industrystatistics](http://www.turkeyfarmersofcanada.ca/industrystatistics)

<sup>1</sup> Source: Statistics Canada

<sup>2</sup> Source: 1-12 Statistics Canada; [www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/95-629-XIE/1/1.2.htm](http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/95-629-XIE/1/1.2.htm)

# Key issues and initiatives

## World Trade Organization (WTO)

The goal of Canada in the Doha round of trade negotiations is to achieve a fair, open and more level international platform for agricultural producers and processors. Canada is seeking a reduction of approximately US\$2 billion in domestic support, improved market access for export commodities and status quo tariff rate quota protection for supply management. This round of negotiations has not yet concluded. A draft modalities text on agriculture sets out proposed parameters for rules and commitments in the areas of domestic support, market access and export competition; however, it has been difficult for the 152 members to achieve consensus.

Agricultural groups across Canada continue to urge negotiators to recognize that agriculture cannot be treated like other commodities as it represents each country's own food security. In 2010, the government continued to pledge their support for the supply management system.

Learn more:

[www.international.gc.ca/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/index.aspx?lang=eng&menu\\_id=57](http://www.international.gc.ca/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/index.aspx?lang=eng&menu_id=57) or

[www.international.gc.ca/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/goods-produits/agri.aspx?lang=en](http://www.international.gc.ca/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/goods-produits/agri.aspx?lang=en)

[www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/agric\\_e/agric\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/agric_e/agric_e.htm)

## Avian influenza

Avian influenza is a contagious viral infection that is thought to affect all species of birds. Although rare, infection in humans can occur. The Canadian poultry industry remains concerned about the potential impacts of avian influenza on the industry and consumer demand. Given the Canadian disease containment response through the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

and the compressed production cycle of a poultry operation, it is expected that producers could recover relatively quickly from an outbreak similar in scale to the H7N3 outbreak that occurred in B.C. in 2004. The most recent incidence was in November 2010, when the CFIA confirmed the presence of H5N2 avian influenza in a commercial operation in Manitoba. With our safety, containment and risk mitigation programs – and following three months of enhanced surveillance by CFIA – by May 2011 Canada had regained its disease-free status for notifiable avian influenza, based on the standards of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). Surveillance for notifiable avian influenza is ongoing in Canada in compliance with OIE requirements. For events and news related to avian influenza in Canada, visit [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca).

The challenge of maintaining consumer demand following an outbreak remains. Regulated chicken farmers have a CFIA technically recognized on-farm food safety program, one of our best measures of protection. Adhering to a strict biosecurity program is an important practice for farmers, as it ensures they're vigilant about restricting access to their farms and only allow people on site who are necessary for the operation.

## Biosecurity

Biosecurity refers to protecting the health of poultry by preventing the transmission of disease. Any disease that could jeopardize the health of animals threatens the economic viability of the farm and the welfare of the flock. Canada is well known for its high quality food safety and, through various efforts, has managed to prevent diseases from entering the production system. Poultry producers have an important role in protecting Canada's poultry system from serious diseases often carried from wild birds. Biosecurity principles for poultry operations include isolation, sanitation, restricted access, flock health management and well-trained staff. For example, after each flock of birds is raised, barns are cleaned and disinfected for the next growing cycle to help prevent the spread of disease from one flock to another. CFIA develops the national biosecurity standards and strategies for poultry.

Learn more:

[www.inspection.gc.ca/english/toce.shtml](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/toce.shtml)

[www.ansci.umn.edu/poultry/index.html](http://www.ansci.umn.edu/poultry/index.html)

### **Animal welfare**

Animal welfare supports the principle that animals deserve the best care that can be given and that all attempts should be made to provide as high a quality of life as possible. Good animal welfare practices are increasingly perceived as important by consumers.

Learn more:

[www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/trans/infrac.shtml](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/trans/infrac.shtml)

[www.ansci.umn.edu/poultry/resources/animal\\_welfare.htm](http://www.ansci.umn.edu/poultry/resources/animal_welfare.htm)

### **Canada-EU trade talks**

In February 2011, the sixth round of trade talks on the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canadian and European negotiators stalled on a series of sensitive issues. A Canadian request for inclusion of a dispute settlement mechanism similar to NAFTA stalled talks; the European Commission must obtain agreement from individual member states. EU wants inclusion of a controversial provision that allows corporations to seek compensation from states if government policies hurt their business interests. Canada objects to such a provision that is also included in the North American Free Trade Agreement and has served as a source of controversy. Of concern to policy analysts are the possible impacts to Canada's agricultural system including supply management.

Learn more:

[www.canadians.org/trade/issues/EU/index.html](http://www.canadians.org/trade/issues/EU/index.html)

[www.meatradenewsdaily.co.uk/default.aspx?Country=Canada](http://www.meatradenewsdaily.co.uk/default.aspx?Country=Canada)

### **On-Farm Food Safety Program (OFFSaP)**

In 2002, the Chicken Farmers of Canada became the first national agricultural group to complete a technical review of their On-Farm Food Safety Program. The mandatory program, Safe, Safer, Safest, meets the requirements established by the

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). OFFSaP is based on hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) principles and covers the entire chicken production cycle. HACCP is an internationally recognized system in which points in a process are identified and controls are put in place to ensure that food safety hazards are eliminated. In 2008, chicken producers recommitted to the Safe, Safer, Safest program.

Learn more:

[www.chicken.ca/DefaultSite/index.aspx?CategoryID=7&lang=en-CA](http://www.chicken.ca/DefaultSite/index.aspx?CategoryID=7&lang=en-CA)

[www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/polstrat/haccp/haccpe.shtml](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/polstrat/haccp/haccpe.shtml)

[www.coffs-safc.ca](http://www.coffs-safc.ca)

### **Start Clean, Stay Clean Program**

Much like the On-Farm Food Safety program, Start Clean, Stay Clean is offered by the Egg Farmers of Canada and is mandatory for egg producers.

Learn more:

[www.eggs.ca/media/food-safety](http://www.eggs.ca/media/food-safety)

### **Environment and food safety**

Over the past decade, environmental and food safety issues have emerged as a top consumer concern. The evolution of the poultry industry towards more intensive structures has placed more responsibility on the individual producer to implement sound environmental management practices. Each province is responsible for implementing regulations.

### **Consolidation and succession**

The number of poultry and egg farms continues to decrease as production facilities increase in size. These larger units bring with them new challenges and opportunities for management. Today's producers are concerned about how to pass on their operations to the next generation, while the next generation is concerned about how to pay for them.



Learn more:

Transferring the Farm workshop from FCC Learning:

[www.fcc-fac.ca/en/LearningCentre/workshops\\_e.asp#transferring-the-family-farm](http://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/LearningCentre/workshops_e.asp#transferring-the-family-farm)

Succession planning from Farmcentre.com:

[www.farmcentre.com/Downloads/NewFarmer/Farm-Succession-Steps.pdf](http://www.farmcentre.com/Downloads/NewFarmer/Farm-Succession-Steps.pdf)

Succession planning from the Government of Ontario:

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/succession.html](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/succession.html)

### **Growing Forward**

Growing Forward is Canada's new vision for the future of the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based product sectors. Evolving from the current Agricultural Policy Framework (APF), Growing Forward guides federal, provincial and territorial governments with a common vision of a profitable and innovative industry that seizes opportunities, responds to market demands and contributes to the health and well-being of Canadians.

Learn more:

[www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1200339470715&lang=eng&src=hp](http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1200339470715&lang=eng&src=hp)

# Operating in the poultry sector

## Poultry basics

Chickens raised for meat are called broilers and those that produce table eggs are known as layers.

### The production cycle for producing meat chicken

<b>Step 1</b> Primary breeders → multiplier breeders	Primary breeders supply hatching egg producers with genetically improved multiplier breeder eggs.
<b>Step 2</b> Multiplier breeders → hatching egg producers	Multiplier breeder growers incubate the eggs for three weeks until they hatch.
<b>Step 3</b> Hatching egg producers → hatcheries	The hatched chicks are sent to pullet grower producers for 20 weeks. At 20 weeks, the birds are moved to a broiler breeder barn for 34 to 36 weeks. They'll produce 150 hatchable eggs during this time.
<b>Step 4</b> Hatcheries → chicken producers	The eggs are sent to hatcheries and incubated for 21 days until they hatch into broiler chicks. Chicks are delivered to the chicken producers, usually the same day they hatch.
<b>Step 5</b> Chicken producers → processing	Chicken producers grow the chicks for six weeks until they reach market weight of between 1.7 and 3.1 kg (weight can vary depending on the processor).
<b>Step 6</b> Processing → further processing	The broiler chickens are delivered to primary processing plants where chicken meat is prepared to be sold whole or in parts to the retail market.
<b>Step 7</b> Further processing	Primary processors may sell meat to other processors who add value by marinating, breading and cooking to make ready-to-eat meals, such as frozen chicken dinners.

Alternate methods of poultry production include free-run, free-range and semi-intensive production.

Learn more:

[www.agric.gov.ab.ca](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca)

[www.agmrc.org](http://www.agmrc.org)

[www.free-rangepoultry.com](http://www.free-rangepoultry.com)

## Egg basics

There are two types of eggs: table eggs that we eat and hatching eggs that turn into chicks.

### The production cycle

<b>Step 1</b> Breeders hatcheries	Breeders maintain and expand pure bloodlines and develop cross-breed bloodlines. They supply eggs to the hatcheries.
<b>Step 2</b> Hatcheries → pullet growers	Hatcheries incubate fertilized chicken eggs to produce chicks.
<b>Step 3</b> Pullet growers → egg producers	The day-old chicks are sent to pullet growers where they grow for 18 weeks.
<b>Step 4</b> Egg producers → grading stations	At 19 weeks, the pullets are placed in layer barns and begin to produce 25 to 26 dozen eggs per lay cycle.
<b>Step 5</b> Grading stations → table or processed eggs	Eggs are sent to grading stations and graded as table or breaker eggs. Table eggs are those you buy at the store and breaker eggs are the ones sent to processors.
<b>Step 6</b> Table or processed eggs → further processed products	Processors process the eggs into liquid, frozen or other egg products for sale to hotels, restaurants, institutions and further processors. Some portions of processed eggs are exported.
<b>Step 7</b> Further processing	Those who produce bakery goods, pasta, mayonnaise and frozen meals add value to processed eggs. These eggs may be used to make shampoo, pet foods and adhesives, or extra protein may be extracted for the pharmaceutical industry.

Alternate methods of poultry production include pasture, free-range and semi-intensive production.

Check these links:

[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex3442](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex3442)

[www.agmrc.org/commodities\\_products/livestock/poultry/pasturedfree\\_range\\_poultry.cfm](http://www.agmrc.org/commodities_products/livestock/poultry/pasturedfree_range_poultry.cfm)

[www.agmrc.org/commodities\\_products/livestock/poultry/organic\\_poultry.cfm](http://www.agmrc.org/commodities_products/livestock/poultry/organic_poultry.cfm)

[www.free-rangepoultry.com](http://www.free-rangepoultry.com)

## Processing

Federal and provincial regulations require that poultry intended for local human consumption must be slaughtered in facilities inspected by provincial or federal authorities. Large retail chains and food industry buyers require that all meat products be processed in federally approved

plants. Poultry that will be shipped between provinces or destined for export must be slaughtered in a federally inspected plant.

Learn more:

[www3.sympatico.ca/fppac/](http://www3.sympatico.ca/fppac/)

Poultry sector activities are carried out by a large number of individual farms serving a few large

buyers. There are 180 primary poultry processing plants in Canada. The five largest companies are la Coopérative fédérée de Québec, Lilydale Poultry Cooperative, Maple Leaf Poultry, Exceldor and Maple Lodge Farms. The top four firms (Coop fédérée, Maple Leaf/Prime, Lilydale and Maple Lodge) accounted for 55 per cent of the poultry processed in Canada.

Many processing plants use poultry meat in wieners, sausages, prepared dinners, and a variety of breaded, battered and marinated consumer products. Most of these plants are found in Ontario, where half of the further processing in Canada occurs.

Learn more:

[www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/prindc5\\_eng.htm#sec53](http://www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/prindc5_eng.htm#sec53)

Poultry production and processing are among the most highly mechanized sectors in agriculture. Larger plants can process up to 25,000 broiler chickens per hour for market.

Learn more:

[www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/prindc5\\_eng.htm](http://www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/prindc5_eng.htm)

### **Quota and supply management**

Canada's poultry industry is regulated by a supply management system that stabilizes price for producers and consumers and supply for processors. Domestic production is controlled by provincial governments, while the federal government manages inter-provincial and export trade. Producers purchase quota, a licence granted from their respective board to produce chicken or eggs. Each provincial board makes its own rules.

The price of quota is determined by supply and demand or bids and offers, with some jurisdictions having regulations that influence price. To expand operations, producers depend on purchasing additional quota, making the availability and price of quota critical factors.



Learn more:

Supply management:

[www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/96-328-m/96-328-m2004038-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/96-328-m/96-328-m2004038-eng.htm)

Supply management pricing mechanisms:

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/farmproducts/factsheets/pricing\\_mechanisms.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/farmproducts/factsheets/pricing_mechanisms.htm)

### **Market information**

Pricing on live chickens is negotiated between marketing boards and processors. The two factors that determine price are input costs for producers and wholesale market prices. Prices across Canada are determined by the price set in Ontario.

Learn more:

[www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/pri\\_eng.htm](http://www.agr.gc.ca/poultry-volaille/pri_eng.htm)

## Provincial boards

B.C. Chicken Marketing Board  
604-859-2868  
www.bcchicken.ca

B.C. Egg Producers  
604-556-3348  
www.bcegg.com

B.C. Turkey Marketing Board  
604-534-5644  
www.bcturkey.com

Alberta Chicken Producers  
780-488-2125  
www.chicken.ab.ca

Alberta Egg Producers Board  
1-877-302-2344 (toll-free) or  
403-250-1197  
www.eggs.ab.ca

Alberta Turkey Producers  
780-465-5755  
www.albertaturkey.com

Chicken Farmers of Saskatchewan  
306-242-3611  
www.saskatchewanchicken.ca

Saskatchewan Egg Producers  
306-924-1505  
www.saskegg.ca

Saskatchewan Turkey Producers  
Marketing Board  
306-931-1050  
www.saskturkey.com

Manitoba Chicken Producer Board  
204-489-4603  
www.chicken.mb.ca

Manitoba Egg Farmers  
204-488-4888  
www.mbeegg.mb.ca

Manitoba Turkey Producers  
204-489-4635  
www.turkey.mb.ca

Chicken Farmers of Ontario  
905-637-0025  
www.cfo.on.ca

Egg Farmers of Ontario  
905-858-9790  
www.getcracking.ca

Turkey Farmers of Ontario  
519-748-9636  
www.ont-turkey.on.ca

Les Éleveurs de volailles du Québec  
(both chicken and turkey)  
450-679-0530  
www.volaillesduquebec.qc.ca

Fédération des producteurs d'oeufs de  
consommation du Québec  
450-679-0530  
www.oeuf.ca

Chicken Farmers of New Brunswick  
506-452-8085

New Brunswick Egg Marketing Board  
506-458-8885

New Brunswick Turkey Marketing Board  
506-452-8103

Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia  
902-582-7400  
www.nschicken.com

Atlantic Provinces Hatchery Federation  
902-582-7400

Nova Scotia Turkey Producers Marketing Board  
902-582-7877  
www.nsturkey.ca

Prince Edward Island Poultry Meat  
Marketing Board  
902-838-4108

Egg Producers of Prince Edward Island  
902-892-8401

Chicken Farmers of Newfoundland and  
Labrador Board  
709-747-1493  
www.nlfa.ca/chicken\_farmers.php

Egg Producers of Newfoundland and Labrador  
709-722-2953  
www.nleggs.ca

## Egg grading

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada sets the regulations and standards for grading. There are three egg grades:

- Grade A, sold at retail markets for household use
- Grade B, used for commercial baking or further processing
- Grade C, sold to commercial processors for further processing

Learn more:

<http://206.191.7.239/prog/ProvincialGradingBySize.asp>  
[www.agr.gc.ca/poultry/pri\\_eng.htm](http://www.agr.gc.ca/poultry/pri_eng.htm)

## International poultry industry overviews

The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers excellent articles about poultry worldwide, including a summary of poultry industry data from the USDA FAS Poultry and Products Annual reports. View these at [www.thepoultrysite.com](http://www.thepoultrysite.com).

## National codes of practice

Codes of practice are nationally developed guidelines for the care and handling of different types of poultry.

Learn more:

[www.chicken.ca/DefaultSite/index.aspx?ArticleID=25&lang=en-CA](http://www.chicken.ca/DefaultSite/index.aspx?ArticleID=25&lang=en-CA)

## Inputs

Poultry producers use many types of equipment and technology in their operations, such as automatic feeding, watering and heating systems.

Learn more:

[www.thepoultrysite.com](http://www.thepoultrysite.com)  
[www.canadianpoultrymag.com](http://www.canadianpoultrymag.com)

## Genetics

Several commercial stocks are available for broiler production, including the Cobb breed, Ross breed and Hubbards breed, and account for almost 90 per cent of production. Egg-producing chickens, like White Leghorns or California Grey crosses, lay white eggs and can produce up to 300 eggs per year. Some dual-purpose chickens are raised in small flocks for both meat and egg

production. Dual breeds include Rhode Island Reds crossed with Barred Rocks, Columbian Rocks or Light Sussex. The use of hormones in Canadian chicken was banned in the early 1970s.

Learn more:

[www.poultryhelp.com/link-breeds.html](http://www.poultryhelp.com/link-breeds.html)

## Provincial and federal contacts

Provincial poultry producer associations provide leadership to poultry producers from all sectors of the industry.

Learn more:

[http://chicken.ca/for-farmers/codes\\_regulations](http://chicken.ca/for-farmers/codes_regulations)  
[http://chicken.ca/for-farmers/industry\\_terms\\_acronyms/industry\\_terms\\_and\\_acronyms/](http://chicken.ca/for-farmers/industry_terms_acronyms/industry_terms_and_acronyms/)

Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) represents the interests of Canadian chicken producers. Every eight weeks, CFC sets a production level based on demand estimates from provincial commodity boards and processors. The allocation decision provides each board with quotas for allotment to 2,800 registered producers. [www.chicken.ca](http://www.chicken.ca)

The Canadian Egg Marketing Agency (CEMA) became the Egg Farmers of Canada (EFC) in August 2008. They manage Canada's supply of eggs and set a national production level each year to meet domestic demand for the table and processing markets. EFC allocates the quota between provincial and territorial boards, who allot quotas to approximately 1,050 registered producers.

Learn more:

[www.eggs.ca/AboutUs/EggFarmers.aspx](http://www.eggs.ca/AboutUs/EggFarmers.aspx)

The Canadian Hatching Egg Producers (CHEP) represents 300 farmers across Canada who produce broiler hatching eggs. CHEP is a leader in food safety and is currently implementing a new food safety program. They also administer a producer-financed research fund that provides grants to Canadian researchers. CHEP represents the industry in developing trade and agricultural policies and oversees various regulatory issues such as delivering and monitoring quota allocations and inter-provincial movements of broiler hatching eggs. [www.cbhema.com](http://www.cbhema.com)

The Canadian Broiler Hatching Egg Marketing Agency (CBHEMA) represents poultry and egg producers, processors and hatcheries. CBHEMA estimates the national demand for broiler hatching eggs and allocates production among five member provinces: Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia. A marketing board within each province allots production to registered producers. The agency regulates the movement of hatching eggs and chicks between member and non-member provinces.

The Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council (CPEPC) represents poultry processors, egg processors and hatcheries. [www.cpepc.ca](http://www.cpepc.ca)

The Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency (CTMA) represents turkey producers and processors. The CTMA administers the quota system and is responsible for developing the domestic turkey industry. [www.canadianturkey.ca](http://www.canadianturkey.ca)

### **Looking for more information?**

We have financial guidelines for the poultry sector that can help you make decisions. If you're an FCC customer, simply visit [www.fcc.ca](http://www.fcc.ca), log into FCC Online Services and click Sector Guides in the Management Resource Centre.

If you're an FCC customer but not registered for FCC Online Services, you can register now at [www.fcc.ca](http://www.fcc.ca).

Want more management insight? Give us a call at 1-800-387-3232. Our Relationship Managers and subject matter experts can help.

### **Disclaimer**

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