



B.C. Farmers, Food and Markets at a Glance

Farming and Food in B.C.

Sources: (1) B.C. Ministry of Agriculture's [Sector Snapshot: B.C. Agriculture - 2014](#); and (2) B.C. Government's media release, [2015 sets another records for B.C. agrifood revenues](#)

- Approximately 20,000 B.C. farmers use about 2.6 million hectares of farmland and green space - less than 3 per cent of the provincial land base – to produce more than 200 agriculture products for British Columbians to eat and enjoy (1)
- B.C. producers led the nation in sales of blueberries, cranberries, sweet cherries, raspberries, and apricots in 2014 (1)
- Net cash income for primary agriculture production increased 21.5% in 2015 to \$440 million (2)

B.C.'s Farmers

Source: [2011 Census of Agriculture: British Columbia Highlights](#)

- Of the 20,000 farms in the province, 98% are family farms. Agriculture is not just a business, but a way of life for many B.C. families
- Although the average age of farm operators has increased in every Canadian province, B.C. continues to have the oldest operators with an average age of 55.7 years
- British Columbia has the highest share of female farm operators in the country at 37%

B.C. Farmers' Markets

Source: [Economic and Social Benefits Assessment of BC Farmers' Markets](#)

A 2012 report by the BC Association of Farmers' Markets and the University of Northern B.C. states that B.C. farmers' markets contribute substantially to the provincial economy.

- As one of the most visible components of B.C.'s food system, farmers' markets provide unique places for local food producers and consumers to connect
- Consumer demand for locally produced, fresh, and nutritious food has grown rapidly over the past decade, and so too have the number of farmers' markets
- The BCAFMs represents 135 farmers' markets across the province
- BC farmers' markets are important to local economies. In 2012 the estimated total annual economic benefits of B.C. farmers' markets was \$170.54 million
- The five most important factors to B.C.'s farmers' market customers are: nutritional content, grown/produced in B.C., in season, grown/produced locally, and animal welfare
- The total direct sales at farmers' markets increased by 147 per cent between 2006 and 2012, from \$46 million to \$113 million

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THE SOURCE FOR LOCAL FOOD