

# ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN CANADA: BY THE NUMBERS

According COTA's\* estimates, there were **5,053** organic operations\*\* in Canada in 2015, including:

**4,045** primary producers  
+ **294** in-transition



**618** livestock operations



**1,542** processors, manufacturers & retailers



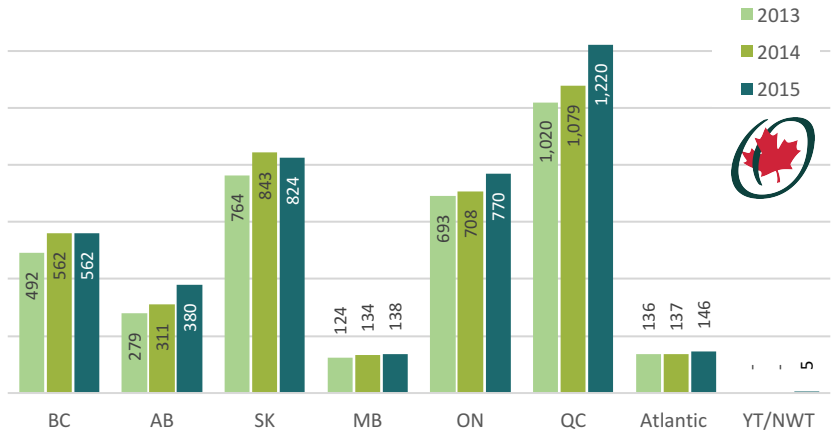
\*Canada Organic Trade Association (COTA)

\*\*The number of organic operations is not an aggregate of the other categories since many operations fall into multiple categories (e.g., an operation may be a primary producer and a livestock operation).

## Organic Primary Producers



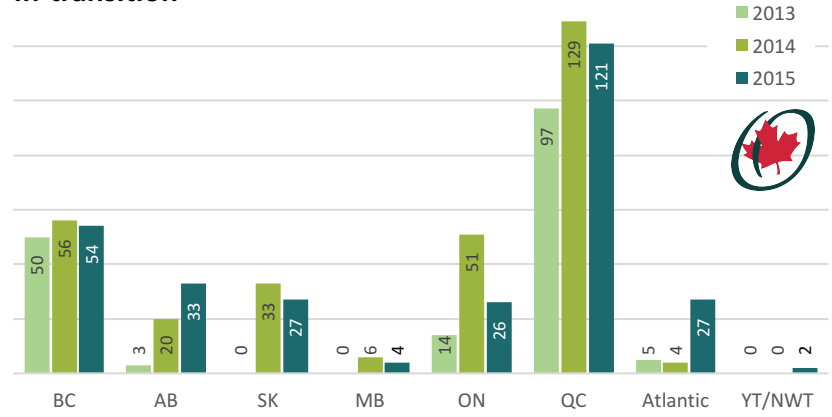
### Certified



In 2015 there were 4,045 certified producers concentrated in Quebec, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

Following a post-recession dip, it has taken 6 years for the number of organic producers to surpass its previous peak in 2009 (3,914).

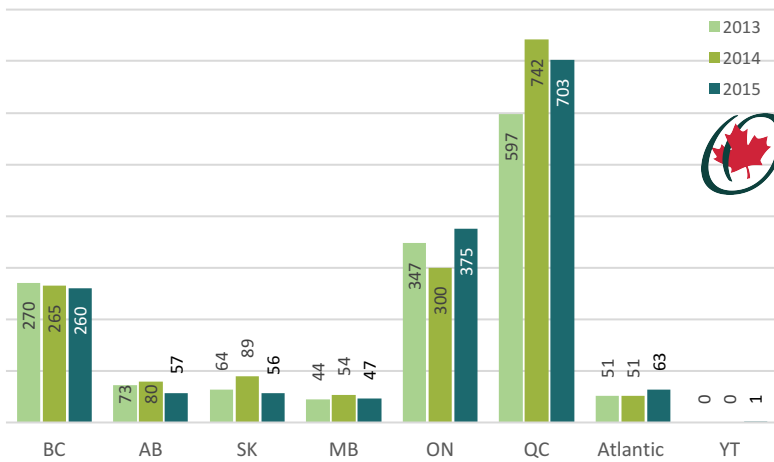
### In-transition



Revealing strong support and steady demand for organic, Quebec and BC are home to the largest number of in-transition producers. The Atlantic provinces had the greatest increase in transitional producers with 23 added in 2015.

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## Organic Processors, Handlers and Retailers



There has been a general reduction in the number of certified processors, handlers and manufacturers in 2015 estimates. COTA suspects that this drop is attributed to gaps in the data due to changes in the certification body landscape in 2015. This will be a trend to watch for in the analysis of 2016 data.

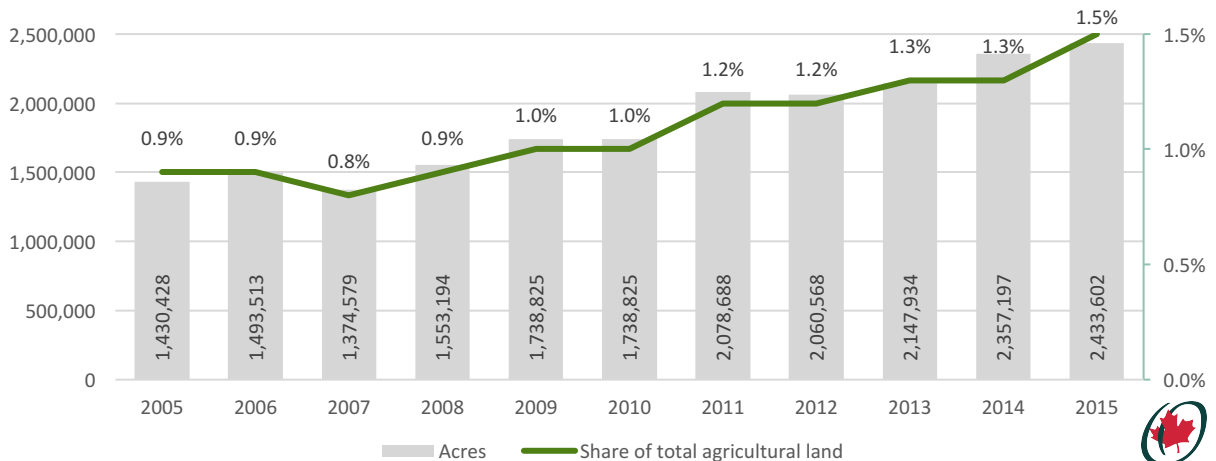
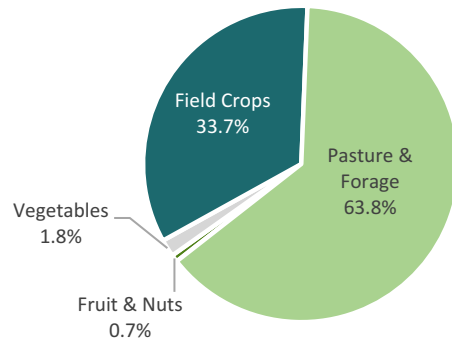
The Yukon reported its first certified processor in 2015.

## Organic Acreage

Organic acreage in Canada increased by over 70,000 acres between 2014 and 2015 to 2.43 million acres. Organic areas now account for approximately 1.5% of total agricultural land in Canada.


While pasture still occupies the largest share of all organic acreage, its proportion has decreased from 65% to 63.8% primarily due to significant increases in vegetable & root crop acreage, as well as fruit & nut acreage.

### Share of organic acreage:



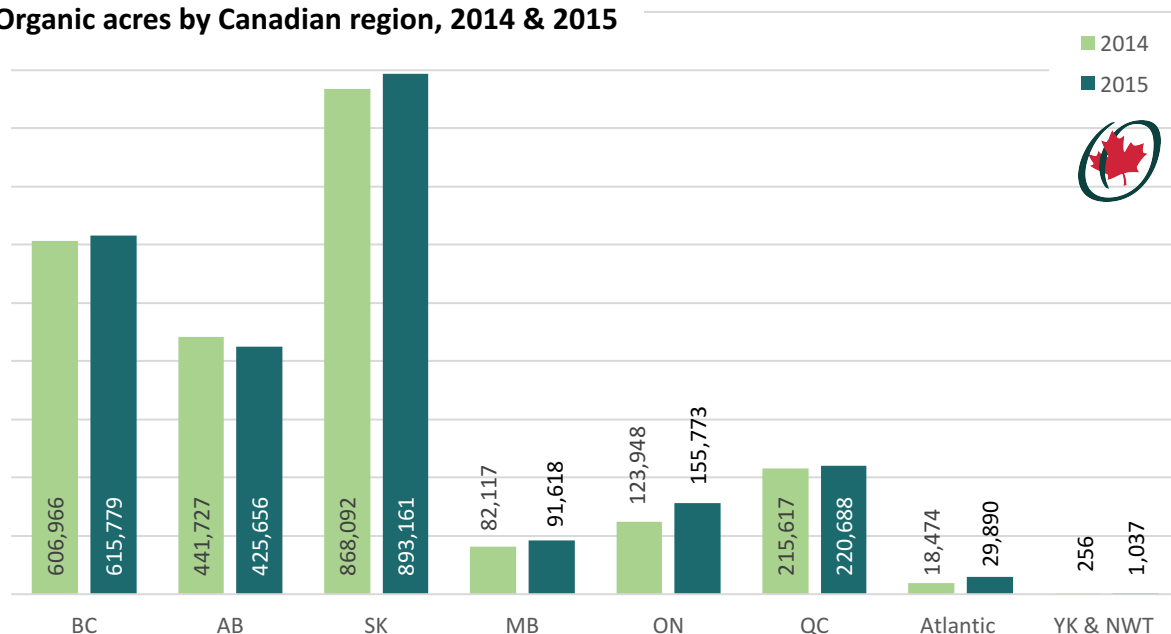
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## Organic Acreage by Region

	Fruit & Nuts		Fresh Vegetables & Root Crops		Field Crops		Pasture & Forage		TOTAL	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
BC	2,300	2,380	4,012	8,445	13,398	15,981	587,255	588,973	<b>606,966</b>	<b>615,779</b>
AB	54	795	1,579	6,286	117,241	137,216	322,854	281,359	<b>441,727</b>	<b>425,656</b>
SK	116	221	598	5,383	499,982	490,893	367,396	396,663	<b>868,092</b>	<b>893,161</b>
MB	46	109	2,379	1,160	29,711	34,134	49,981	56,215	<b>82,117</b>	<b>91,618</b>
ON	1,352	3,255	5,181	15,963	64,344	78,611	53,072	57,944	<b>123,948</b>	<b>155,773</b>
QC	8,152	9,847	2,027	3,087	56,462	53,761	148,976	153,993	<b>215,617</b>	<b>220,688</b>
Atlantic	268	1,365	1,177	2,346	7,790	8,678	9,239	17,501	<b>18,474</b>	<b>29,890</b>
YK & NWT	2	66	15	332	8	240	231	399	<b>256</b>	<b>1,037</b>

Overall, the Atlantic provinces saw the greatest increase in organic acreage between 2014 and 2015, with an addition of over 10,000 acres. This reflects the addition of 23 new certified producers during that timeframe. Saskatchewan is home to over 1/3 (37%) of Canada's organic lands, followed by BC (25%) and Alberta (17%).

### Organic acres by Canadian region, 2014 & 2015

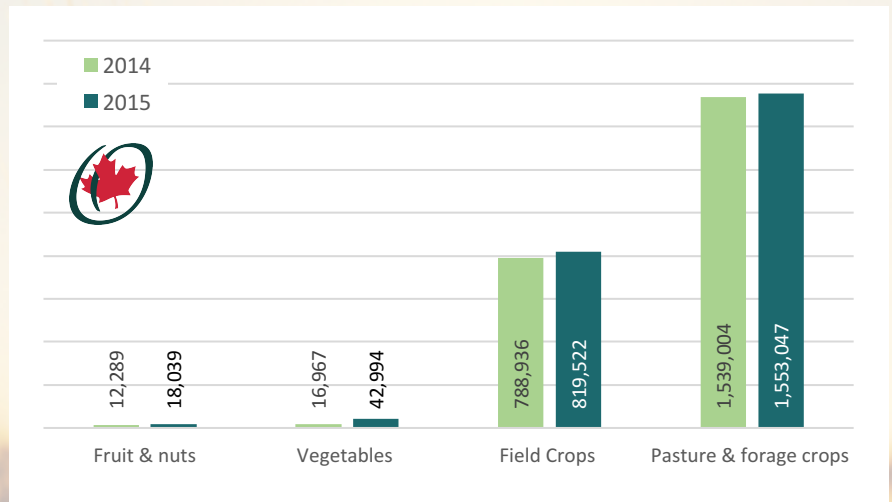


Source: Canada Organic Trade Association Annual Canadian Organic Production Statistics (2017)

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## Organic Acreage by Crop Types

Field crop and pasture & forage crop acreage increased slightly between 2014 and 2015. Though much smaller areas in total, fruit & nut acreage increased by nearly 50 percent, while fresh vegetable and root crop acreage tripled between 2014 and 2015.



## Organic Trade

In 2015, Canada imported \$652 million CAD worth of the 65 tracked organic products, representing a 37% increase from 2012. There are 127 countries that have provided organic products to Canada between 2012 and 2015. The top 5 countries of origin have supplied nearly three-quarters of all tracked imports (by value) since 2012.

### Value and volume of tracked organic imports:

	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Value</b> (million CAD)	\$476.8	\$505.0	\$576.6	\$652.4
<b>Volume*</b> (millions)	181.1 kg	194.0 kg	194.1 kg	197.9 kg

\*Excluding milk

Source: Statistics Canada, CATSNET Analytics, 2016

The Canada Organic Trade Association (COTA) would like to sincerely thank all of the organic Certification Bodies & organic associations that provided the data used in this analysis. Their voluntary participation plays a valuable role in understanding and supporting the organic sector in Canada.

### A big thank you to:

Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network (ACORN)  
 Atlantic Certified Organic Co-op (ACO)  
 BC Association for Regenerative Agriculture (BCARA)  
 CARTV  
 CCOF  
 CCPB SRL  
 Centre for Systems Integration (CSI)  
 Certified Organic Association of BC (COABC)  
 Ecocert  
 Fraser Valley Organic Producers Association (FVOPA)

Global Organic Alliance (GOA)  
 International Certification Services, Inc. (ICS)  
 LETIS  
 Oregon Tilth  
 Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA)  
 Organic Producers Association of Manitoba (OPAM)  
 Pacific Agricultural Certification Service (PACS)  
 Pro-Cert Organic  
 QAI  
 TCO Cert