

FARMING IN ALBERTA

As of 2006 there are 49,431 farms in Alberta growing food for us and the world. There is 23.8 million acres of cropland in Alberta and we account for 26.8% of total cropland in Canada. Cropland can be field crops (like wheat and barley), fruits, vegetables, sod and nursery.

The four major crops grown in Alberta are Wheat, Barley, Canola and Alfalfa.

Wheat is the most important crop grown in Alberta and we grow some of the best wheat in the world! Over the next 40 years the worldwide demand for wheat is predicted to increase from 660 million tonnes to 880 million tonnes!

Alberta farmers also produce specialty crops. Specialty crops include dry peas, chick peas (what hummus is made out of), dry beans, fababeans, lentils, mustard seed, sunflower seed, grain corn, silage corn, triticale, canary seed, sugar beets, potatoes, and forage seed just to name a few!

Wheat

Wheat is a favorite amongst farmers in Alberta as it is the most planted every year! One reason it's a favourite is because it is suited to Alberta's climate and types of soil. Some end uses for wheat are flour, an ingredient for certain types of alcohol, biofuel and to feed livestock. There are 8 different wheat classes. Each variety has its own growing specifications, and physical characteristics. Each plant looks different than the other including the seed. There is also wheat that is planted in the spring time, harvested in the fall and wheat planted in the fall harvested in the following spring (this is known as winter wheat). Spring wheat is the most popular wheat grown in Alberta.



1. Canadian Prairie Spring Red: Mainly used in flat breads, steamed breads and noodles.
2. Canadian Prairie Spring White: Mainly used in flat breads and noodles.
3. Canadian Western Amber Durum: Perfect for pasta and couscous! Italian pasta makers are the top buys of Amber Durum from Canada.
4. Canadian Western Extra Strong: Used where high gluten is needed and great for blending with other flours.
5. Canadian Western Hard White Spring: Used for flour and making breads.
6. Canadian Western Red Spring: Used in making high volume breads and pasta, very versatile.
7. Canadian Western Red Winter: Winter wheat used in many different flours, French bread, flat bread, and even noodles.
8. Canadian Western Soft White Spring: Cookies, cakes pastry and flat breads are just a few this type of wheat is used for.