

## Cow numbers hold steady, milk production increases

Progressive Dairy Managing Editor **Karen Lee**

Milk production increased in 2023, up 1.5% (1,396,883 hectolitres) from 2022. More milk production came from the P5, up 1.8%, over the Western Milk Pool, which increased 0.5% for the year.

Cow numbers held steady at 969,500, up 100 from the year before. With little change in cow numbers, the increase in overall milk production can be attributed to more milk per cow. Canada's average milk per cow rose 1.5% or an additional 143 litres per cow. Largest gains were seen in Prince Edward Island (9.9%), Nova Scotia (7.9%) and Ontario (5%).

Nearly 300 farms stopped shipping milk in 2023. With the minimal change in total cow numbers, the result was an increase in the average herd size. Farm size continues to grow more in the west with Alberta's average herd size up an additional 18 cows and Manitoba up 11 cows. Across the four western provinces, average herd size is 184 cows, while the P5 average herd size is 89 cows.

Total dairy cash receipts came in at \$8.5 billion, up 9% from 2022. The increase in farm input prices slowed in 2023. Total farm input prices were up 3.8% last year. A drop of 20.6% in the cost of machinery fuel helped to lower the total cost of inputs.

The dairy trade balance widened to more than -\$1 billion. This deficit has been increasing over the past three years, and the net trade difference is now twice the size it was from 2017-20. Dairy product exports by value were down 3%, while dairy product imports increased 10% from 2022.



- Specialty cheese 33.1%
  - Butter 19.4%
  - MPS<sup>1</sup> 7.1%
  - Milk and Cream 6.1%
  - Cheddar 6.0%
  - Whey 5.5%
  - Processed cheese 3.5%
  - Casein 3.0%
  - NMC<sup>2</sup> 2.4%
  - SMP/WMP<sup>3</sup> 1.5%
  - Others<sup>4</sup> 12.4%
- <sup>1</sup>Milk protein substances  
<sup>2</sup>Natural milk constituents  
<sup>3</sup>Skim milk powder and whole milk powder  
<sup>4</sup>Lactose and lactose syrup, ice cream, evaporated milk, condensed milk, yogurt, buttermilk, dairy spreads, curdled milk and cream, kefir, etc.

## Top 10 countries selling dairy products to Canada

Rank	Country	2023 Imports (in dollars)	Percent change from 2022
1	U.S.	\$756,195,961	6%
2	New Zealand	\$216,150,969	38%
3	Italy	\$140,730,068	1%
4	France	\$87,814,167	12%
5	Netherlands	\$42,972,927	-2%
6	Switzerland	\$39,414,195	1%
7	United Kingdom	\$38,285,970	25%
8	Ireland	\$32,666,327	39%
9	Denmark	\$32,022,117	15%
10	Germany	\$27,733,257	-1%

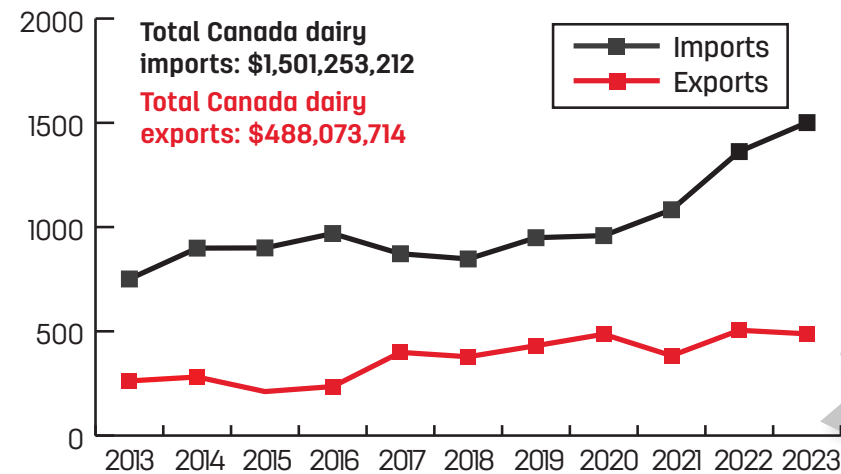


- SMP/WMP<sup>1</sup> 19.7%
  - Yogurt 17.3%
  - Specialty cheese 16.7%
  - NMC 15.9%
  - Whey 12.4%
  - Milk & cream 3.8%
  - Lactose 3.4%
  - Ice cream 3.4%
  - Processed Cheese 2.9%
  - Cheddar cheese 1.7%
  - Butter 0.5%
  - Others<sup>2</sup> 2.4%
- <sup>1</sup>Skim milk powder and whole milk powder  
<sup>2</sup>Natural milk constituents  
<sup>3</sup>Buttermilk, evaporated milk, condensed milk, milk albumin, casein, dairy spreads, etc.

## Top 10 countries buying Canada dairy products

Rank	Country	2023 Exports (in dollars)	Percent change from 2022
1	U.S.	\$293,253,383	21%
2	Egypt	\$40,607,097	-49%
3	Algeria	\$26,300,958	-18%
4	United Arab Emirates	\$16,432,497	68%
5	Philippines	\$12,886,734	-41%
6	Japan	\$11,740,162	-24%
7	Greece	\$7,469,292	739%
8	Mexico	\$6,003,587	2%
9	India	\$5,914,040	-14%
10	South Korea	\$5,290,807	-39%

## Canada dairy exports/imports (in millions of dollars)



Imports

Exports

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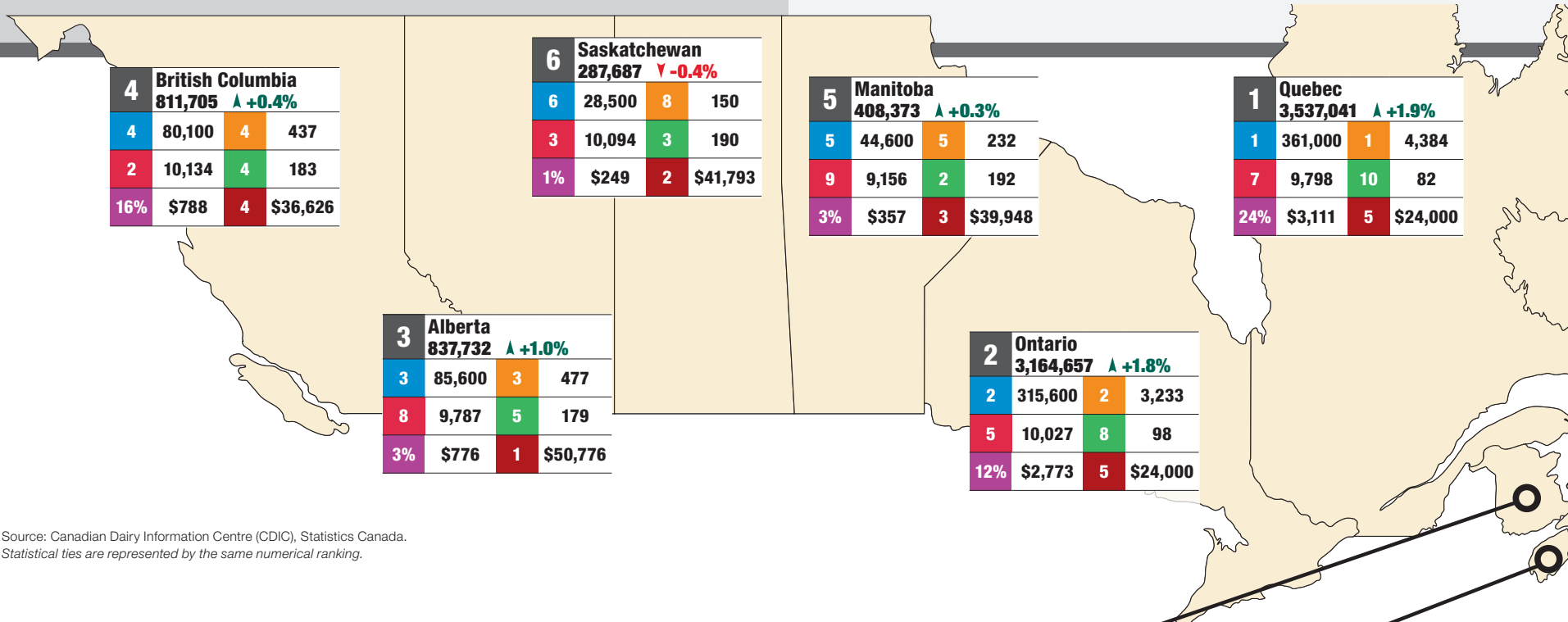
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# 2023 Canada dairy statistics



Source: Canadian Dairy Information Centre (CDIC), Statistics Canada. Statistical ties are represented by the same numerical ranking.

## Legend

Province	Ranking	Total Milk Production (kL)	% Change	Farms with Shipments	Farms with Milk Shipments	Average Herd Size	Value of Quota (\$M)	Quota Value* (\$/kg)
New Brunswick	8	162,992	+1.8%	16,200	7	164	\$147	\$24,000

Province ranking – total milk production  
 Total milk production in calendar year (in kilolitres)  
 Province ranking – number of cows  
 Number of cows  
 Province ranking – milk litres per cow  
 Milk per cow (in litres)  
 Dairy receipts as a percentage of province's total farm receipts  
 Dairy receipts annual total (in millions of dollars)

Percentage increase/decrease in total milk from 2022  
 Province ranking-number of farms with milk shipments  
 Number of farms with milk shipments  
 Province ranking-average herd size  
 Average herd size  
 Province ranking value of quota  
 Quota value\* (in \$ per kg of butterfat per day)

All information is from 2023, unless otherwise noted.  
 \*Weighted average using total production quota

## Canada

Ranking	Total Milk Production (kL)	% Change	Farms with Shipments	Farms with Milk Shipments	Average Herd Size	Value of Quota (\$M)	Quota Value* (\$/kg)
1	9,589,291	+1.5%	969,500	9,443	103	\$8,551	\$28,315*

\*Weighted average using total production quota

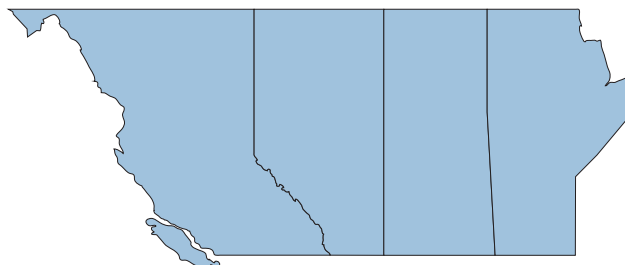
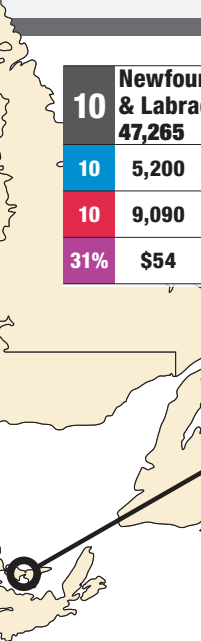


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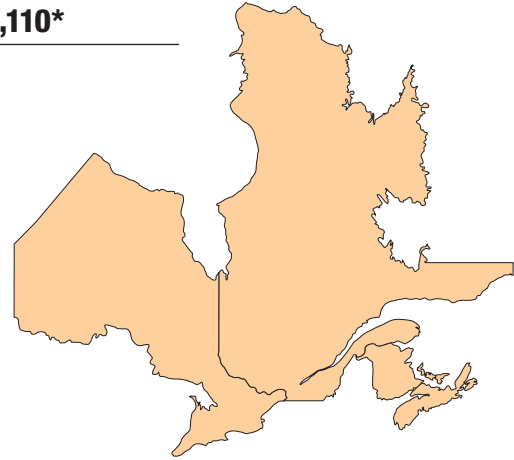


**WMP** (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)  
**2,345,496** ▲ +0.5%

238,800 ▲ +2.2%	1,296 ▼ -49
9,822 ▼ -1.7%	184 ▲ +11
\$2,170 4.0%	\$41,110*

**10 Newfoundland & Labrador**  
**47,265** ▲ +0.4%

10	5,200	10	23
10	9,090	1	226
31%	\$54	-	-



**P5** (Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island)  
**7,196,530** ▲ +1.8%

725,500 ▼ -0.7%	8,124 ▼ -245
9,919 ▲ +2.6%	89 ▲ +2
\$6,327 17%	\$24,000*

**9 Prince Edward Island**  
**121,711** ▲ +0.8%

9	12,200	9	145
6	9,976	9	84
13%	\$110	5	\$24,000

\*Weighted average using total production quota

Province total production rank	Province	Total milk production (in kilolitres) 2023	Percentage increase/decrease in total milk from 2022	Number of cows 2023	Percentage increase/decrease in number of cows from 2022	Milk per cow (in litres) 2023	Percentage increase/decrease in milk per cow from 2022	Number of farms with milk shipments 2023	Change in number of farms with milk shipments from 2022	Average herd size 2023	Change in avg herd size from 2022
1	Quebec	3,537,041	1.9	361,000	2.0	9,798	-0.1	4,384	-164	82	5
2	Ontario	3,164,657	1.8	315,600	-3.0	10,027	5.0	3,233	-65	98	-1
3	Alberta	837,732	1.0	85,600	8.4	9,787	-6.8	477	-11	179	18
4	British Columbia	811,705	0.4	80,100	-2.3	10,134	2.8	437	-24	183	5
5	Manitoba	408,373	0.3	44,600	3.2	9,156	-2.8	232	-7	192	11
6	Saskatchewan	287,687	-0.4	28,500	-3.1	10,094	2.7	150	-7	190	3
7	Nova Scotia	210,129	1.5	20,500	-6.0	10,250	7.9	198	-4	104	-4
8	New Brunswick	162,992	1.8	16,200	0.0	10,061	1.8	164	-3	99	2
9	Prince Edward Island	121,711	0.8	12,200	-8.3	9,976	9.9	145	-9	84	-2
10	Newfoundland and Labrador	47,265	0.4	5,200	4.0	9,090	-3.5	23	-2	226	26
	CANADA TOTAL	9,589,291	1.5	969,500	0.0	9,891	1.5	9,443	-296	103	3

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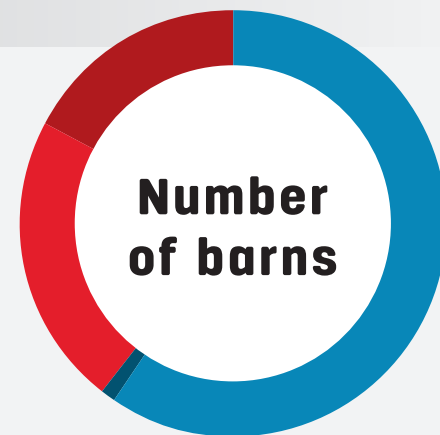
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# 2023 Dairy barns by type

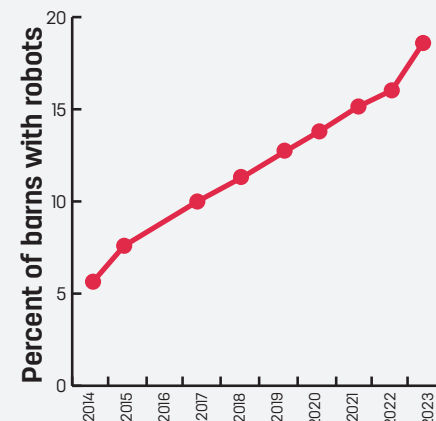
Province	Tiestall			Freestall		
	Number	Herd size	Percentage of tiestall barns with robots	Number of barns	Herd size	Percentage of freestall barns with robots
British Columbia	6	31		169	198	32%
Alberta	7	97		277	170	30%
Saskatchewan	6	114		68	208	32%
Manitoba	29	85	3%	96	236	58%
Ontario	1,106	62	0.3%	915	128	40%
Quebec	2,434	71	2%	725	131	59%
New Brunswick	41	66		69	140	45%
Nova Scotia	42	66		66	139	32%
Prince Edward Island	34	71	3%	46	113	24%
Newfoundland and Labrador				9	180	33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,705</b>		<b>2%</b>	<b>2,440</b>		<b>44%</b>

Based on herds enrolled in milk recording program

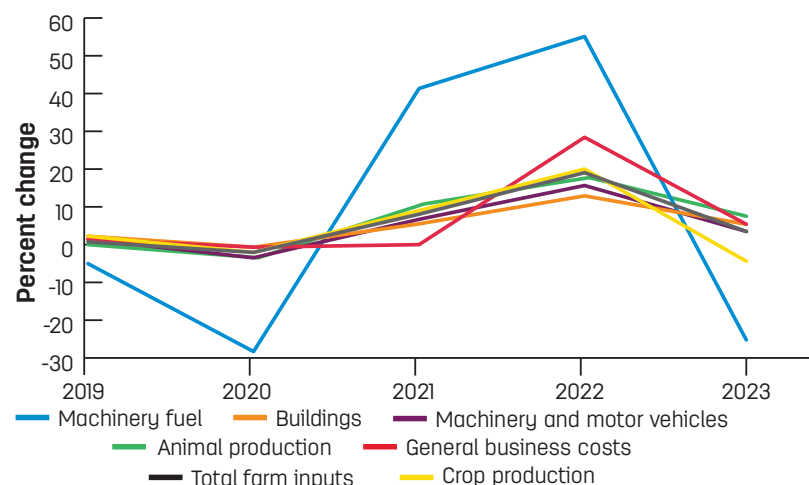
Source: Lactanet



● Tiestall (3,640) 59%
 ● Freestall (1,372) 22%
 ● Tiestall with robots (65) 1%
 ● Freestall with robots (1,068) 17%

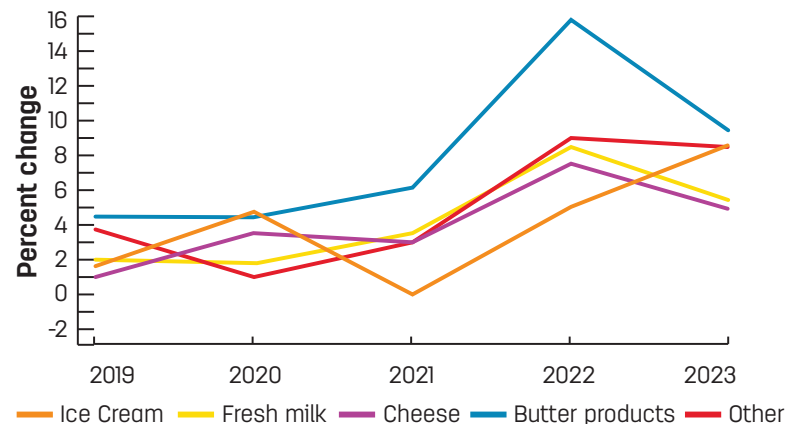


## Percent change in Canadian dairy farm input prices



Source: Statistics Canada

## Percent change in Canadian consumer prices



Source: Statistics Canada



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