

Trends: Organic

All figures listed, unless otherwise noted, represent Canadian 2006 retail data, from the May 2007 report *Retail Sales of Certified Organic Food Products in Canada, in 2006*, commissioned and published by the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada in May 2007. Funding partners for this report were the governments of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

A - Sales through Canadian Retail Supermarkets

While the total Canadian organic food industry does not represent a large part of total Canadian farm production, organic food sales at supermarkets continue to grow and were 28% higher in 2006 than in 2005, through all market channels. 2006 sales of total retail sales of certified organic product were conservatively estimated to have surpassed \$1 billion, accounting for 0.9% of retail food sales in Canada.²

Canadian fresh organic vegetables accounted for 25% (\$102 million) of total retail organic food sales through all market channels, with fresh organic fruit accounting for 13% (\$52 million). Bagged salads and bagged broad-leaved vegetables grew 78% and 79% respectively in 2006 over 2005. Lettuce was up 41%.⁴

Fresh Organic Fruit and Vegetables: Share by Category or Commodity⁴

Vegetable	100%	Fruit	100%
Bagged salad	27.9	Bananas	25.4
Carrots	22.4	Apples	23.0
Broad Leaf Vegetables	19.7	Grapes	8.2
Lettuce	5.3	Oranges	4.5
Tomatoes	4.2	All other	38.8
Onions	3.4		
Potatoes	2.6		
Other	14.5		

B - Regional Fruit Sales through Conventional Market Channels

Percentage share of total Certified Organic fruit purchased in each region⁴

Bananas account for 25.4% (\$13.1M) of total retail organic food sales through all market channels, followed by apples at 23% and oranges at 4.5%. Fruit preferences differ from region to region, as exemplified by the following chart showing organic apple and banana sales percentages in each region.

FRUIT	NATIONAL	MARITIMES	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	MAN/SASK	ALBERTA	BC
Bananas	25.4	33.3	39.9	23.4	8.4	12.7	29.3
Apples	23	26.4	22.3	23.8	16.6	18.2	25.1

C - Sales through Alternative Market Channels

Natural Food Stores

These markets estimated total organic fresh fruit and vegetable sales of \$75M.

Box Delivery/Community Shared Agriculture (CSA)

Out of \$20M in total organic food sales through box delivery or CSAs, approx \$17M represents produce.

Farmer's Markets

Though a difficult sector to monitor, direct sales of organic fruit and vegetables were believed to be \$65M in 2006.

Co-Ops and buying clubs

Coops and buying clubs accounted for another \$5M of organic fresh fruit and vegetable sales.

D - Food Service Sales

Food service, which obtains organic produce through wholesale channels, as well as directly from individual producers, is estimated at \$10M.

Organic Facts and Figures

Production

Five percent of Canadian producers reporting to the 2005 Statistics Canada survey considered themselves to be organic producers. Organic farms considered themselves to account for 1.8% of the total commercial fruit area under cultivation and about 1.5% of the commercial vegetable area under cultivation.¹

Organic Pricing

Organic products typically cost 10 to 40% more than similar conventionally produced products.⁴

Organic Regulations for Agricultural Products

Regulations regarding [Organic Regulations for Agricultural Products](#) came into effect on June 30, 2009.⁵

Only certified organic multi-ingredient products, the contents of which are at least 95% organic products, and certified organic products other than multi-ingredient products, may bear the agricultural product legend (Canadian Organic Logo) or the designations "Organic" and "Biologique", or other similar terms.

The purpose of the regulations is to establish a system by which the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, as competent authority, may regulate the use of the "Organic" agricultural product legend.

The provinces of Quebec and British Columbia are currently the only provinces that have provincial organic certification systems.

Sources:

¹ VISTA, *on the Agri-Food Industry and the Farm Community*, cat. 21-004-X1E April 2005

² Wikipedia.org, *Organic Food*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organic_food

³ Canada Agricultural Products Act, Organic Products Regulations, P.C. 2006-1535 December 14, 2006

⁴ Organic Agricultural Centre of Canada, *Retail sales of certified organic food products in Canada, in 2006*. May 2007

⁵ Canada Agricultural Products Act, Regulations Amending the Organic Products Regulations, P.C. 2008-1670 September 5, 2008