



# FINDING farms

Agriculture is important to both urban and rural communities across Canada. Agricultural activities can be found across many of Canada's diverse landscapes and regions.

The natural resources found in Canada's regions influence ways of life and activities of the people who live in Canada's communities. Agriculture is one of those activities.

**Natural resources** include the land, air, soil and water. They also include wildlife, plants and minerals. Farmers use, depend on and protect these natural resources.

Farming can be thought of as both a natural resource and a human activity. **Human activities** are all the actions that people take to live, work and play. Farming is a human activity that produces food and other products that are essential for all people.

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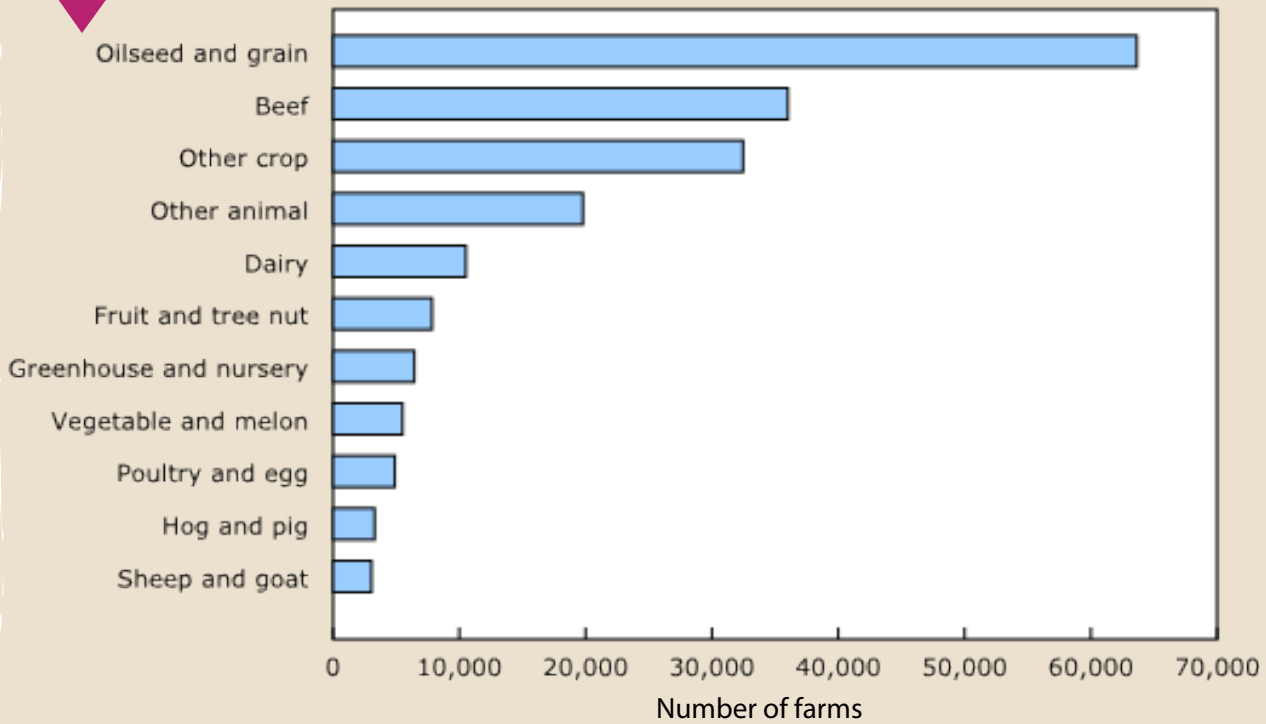
Rank the top three natural resources that you think are most important to dairy farmers.



Explain why you ranked them in this way.



## Types of Agriculture in Canada



Human activities in communities that are found across Canada's different regions can vary greatly. Most human activities are found in more than one region. For example, animal and crop farming is found in a number of different places across Canada. People grow and raise animals and plants for food on different types of land and in different climates.

**Agricultural commodities**, shown in this graph, come from natural resources that are used to make food products. What can you find out about each of the commodities in this graph? For example, did you know that **oilseeds** refer to crops like canola, soybean and sunflowers? Or that **horticulture** involves growing and caring for plants like vegetables, fruits and flowers? Did you know that **forage** means crops, like hay and grass, that are grown to provide food for cattle and horses?

Graph from Statistics Canada: Number of agricultural operations by operation type, Canada, 2016. Online. [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/170510/cg-a003-png-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/170510/cg-a003-png-eng.htm)

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Identify four different food products you like to eat. On what types of farms would these food products come from? Use the graph to help you identify the types of farms.

In the past, most farms were located close to centres of population. A **centre of population** refers to areas in which many people live close together. There are three types of population centres, according to Statistics Canada. Small population centres have a population between 1 000 and 29 999. Medium population centres have a population between 30 000 and 99 999. Large urban population centres have a population of 100 000 or more.

Today, farms are located wherever the land and available resources are suitable for farming. For example, many dairy farms are located on flat ground because of the farming practices used by dairy farmers. If dairy farmers grow crops for feed, then flat ground is important.



### Dairy Farms Across Canada



Dairy farms are found in every province of Canada. Quebec has the most dairy farms of any province. Newfoundland has the fewest.

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Why do you think there are no dairy farms in Yukon, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories? What are the natural regions in these territories?

In Alberta, the soil types best suited for crop production are located on the prairies. In southern Alberta where the terrain is the flattest, farmers can also use irrigation to bring water to their crops. Irrigation is best suited to a flat terrain. The rougher terrains are better suited for beef cows that graze all the time. Dairy cows are usually housed in barns. Barns help the cows stay cool in the summer and warm in the winter.



### Dairy Farm Totals in Areas of Alberta

	Number of Dairy Farms	Size of Area in Square KM	Number of Dairy Farms Per 100 Square KM
North	143	12 689	1.13
Central	196	10 449	1.88
South	162	15 140	1.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>12 759</b>	<b>1.36</b>

This chart compares the number of dairy farms to the total size of each area of Alberta. For example, there are 143 dairy farms found in an area that is 12 689 square kilometres. If you divide 143 by 1268, you find the **average** number of dairy farms per 100 square km. This average number is similar to the idea of population density. Can you identify the area of Alberta that has the highest density of dairy farms?

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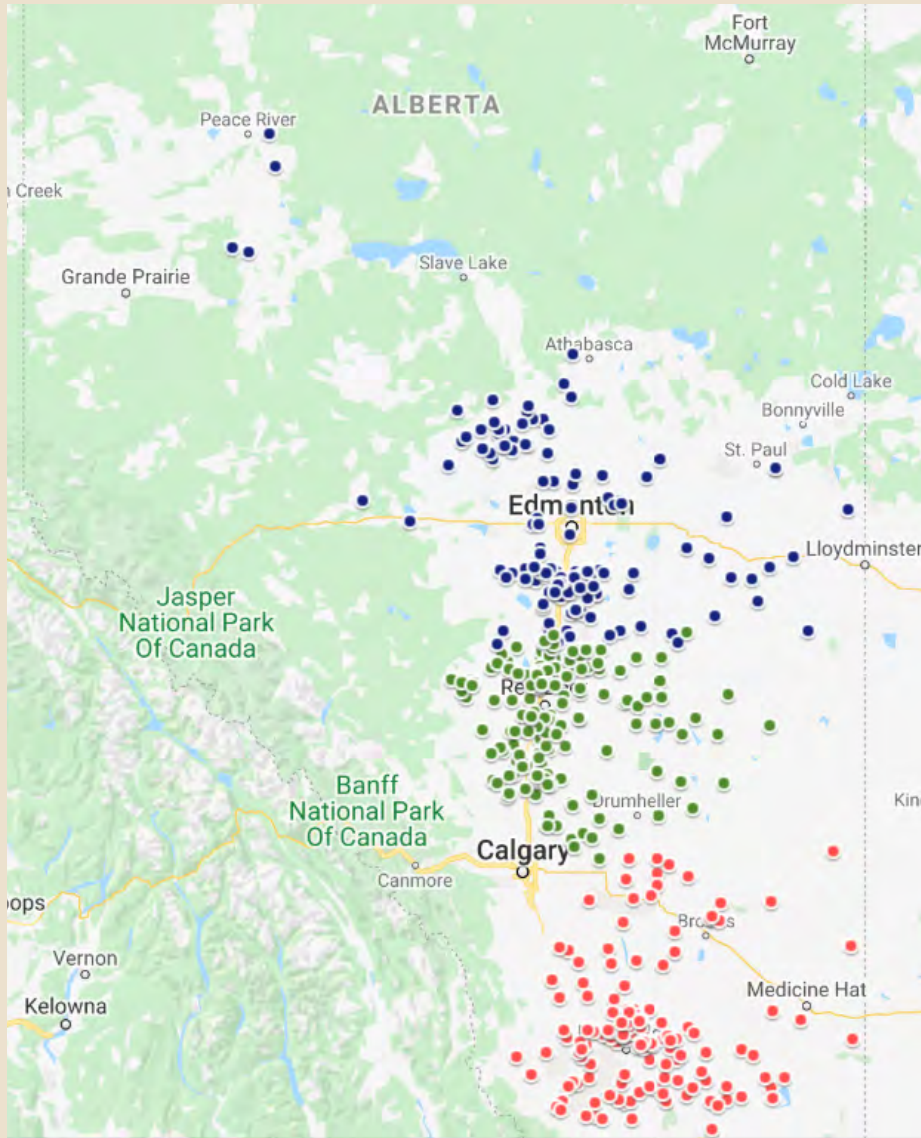
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Which natural geographic regions would you find in the north, central and south areas of Alberta? What types of land and resources would you expect to find?



## The Location of Dairy Farms in Alberta



This map shows dairy farms in Alberta. Blue dots show dairy farms in the northern area. Green dots show dairy farms in the central area and red dots in the southern areas of Alberta.

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What additional information does this map give you about the number and location of dairy farms in each area of Alberta?