



GROW **organic**

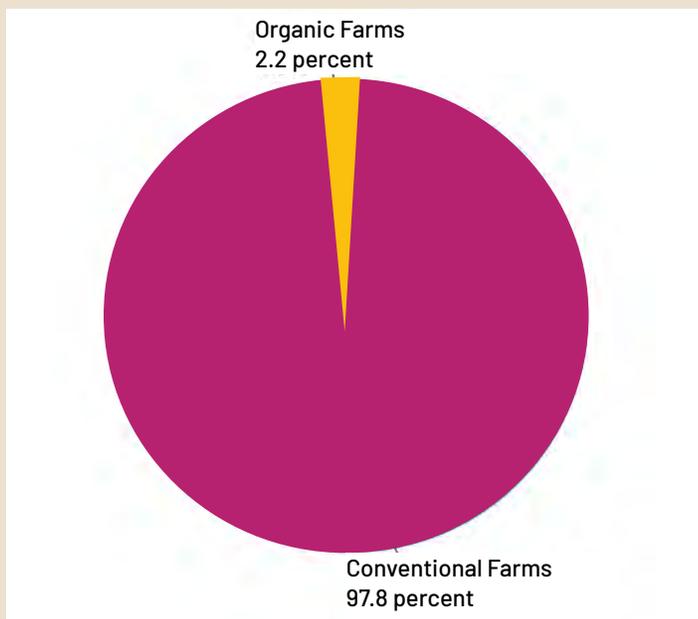
Farmers make choices about how they will produce the food they are growing. Canadians' increasing interest in organic farming practices has resulted in a higher demand for organic foods.

Organic food production is based on farming practices that do not use any synthetic chemicals and apply strategies like **crop rotation** – which involves growing different types of crops in the same area across different growing seasons. Conventional farming practices also use crop rotation, and farmers make decisions about using both natural and synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.

The number of certified organic farms in Canada has increased from 3914 in 2009 to 5791 in 2018. Most of these farms are located in Quebec, Saskatchewan and Ontario.



Organic Farming



This circle graph compares the number of organic farms to farms that use conventional farming methods. It shows that just over 2 out of every 100 farms in Canada uses organic farming methods.

Why do you think organic farms only represent 2 out of every 10 farms in Canada? Do you think the number of organic farms will increase or decrease in the future? Why do you think this?



Are there organic dairies?

There were seven certified organic dairy producers in Alberta in 2016. A producer is **certified** when he or she meets requirements, which are sets of rules. When a product is **certified organic**, it means that it has been grown or made according to strict rules.

It takes three years of testing land and soil to be certified as organic. Cows are fed with organic food for at least one year before they can be certified organic. There is no difference in the nutrient value of organic and regular milk. The difference occurs in the ways that cows are raised and managed on the farm and the feed that they eat.

In Canada, the number of farms that produce organic milk increased from 65 in 2001 to 247 in 2019. The most popular organic dairy products remain yogurt, ice cream and cheese.

Do you think the trend toward using more technology helps organic farmers and food producers? Why do you think this?





ASSESS **organic** CHOICES



Think About

Do you and your family use local or organic foods? How can you find out? What are some examples of the foods you eat?

Three horizontal dashed lines for writing answers.

How can food trends affect food choices? Go to www.projectagriculture.ca/elementary to find the carousel slide with this guiding question in the **trending** NOW topic. Use the information in the carousel slide and the **Grow Organic Learning Source** to help you complete these learning tasks.



Search and Investigate

Start with the **Ask a Dairy Farmer** feature on the **Alberta Milk** website at <https://albertamilk.com/ask-dairy-farmer/>. Explore the questions or use the search feature to find questions related to the words “organic” and “local.”

Find out more about different types of organic agriculture practices on the **Organic Alberta** website at <http://organicalberta.org/eat-organics/>. Search for organic food sources at <http://map.organicalberta.org/>.

♦ How would you define organic farming in your own words?

Four horizontal dashed lines for writing answers.

What is one organic agricultural practice that is different than a practice used on a conventional farm?

Four horizontal dashed lines for writing.



Investigate

What values are reflected in organic agricultural practices?

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How are animals, like dairy cows, cared for on both organic and conventional farms? Visit **Animal Care is Our Business** at <https://dairyfarmersofcanada.ca/en/who-we-are/our-commitments/animal-care> if you need to find out more.

Four horizontal dashed lines for writing.

What values do you or your family apply to your food choices?

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Values are ideas and principles that you believe to be most important in life.