

## 2016 Farm Direct Industry Census Highlights

**A**s reported in the December issue of *Field Notes*, the 2016 Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture introduced a question about farms selling food directly to consumers.

There are 2,062 farms (five per cent of all farms) in Alberta that offer direct food sales. Of those, approximately 96 per cent sell unprocessed food products (fruits, vegetables, meat cuts, poultry, eggs, maple syrup, honey, etc.), and about 10 per cent sell value-added products (jellies, sausages, wine, cheese, etc.).

Direct Marketing Farms in Alberta		
Type of farm	Number of farms	Profitability ratio*
All farms	2,062	0.81
Beef cattle ranching and farming	543	0.85
Animal combination farming	236	0.80
Hay farming	167	0.99
Apiculture	162	0.74
Other grain farming	140	0.79
Other vegetable (except potato) and melon farming	84	0.72
All other misc. crop farming	78	0.77
Other misc. animal production	58	0.85
Chicken egg production	53	0.90
Oilseed (except soybean) farming	39	0.80
Nursery and tree production	30	0.87
Other food crops grown under cover	22	0.85
Floriculture production	22	0.62
Other	428	--

\*operating expenses to gross farm receipts ratio

Most farms (85 per cent) sell their products at a farm gate, stand, kiosk or U-pick operation, while about 20 per cent sell at farmers' markets and six per cent through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).

Alberta's direct marketing farms are scattered throughout the province, with the majority located in Census Division 11 which includes Edmonton, and Census Division 6 which includes Calgary.

All farms reported direct marketing yielded higher than average profitability compared to farms that did not sell directly to consumers. The profitability ratios of some direct marketing farms were further improved if they sold value-added products through farmers' markets or CSAs.

Farms using direct marketing also showed a higher average of gross farm receipts to farm area at \$442 per acre, compared to farms that did not sell directly to consumers with \$349 per acre.

Direct marketing farms also revealed a higher percentage of female operators (38 per cent) than other farms (31 per cent). Additionally, more women operate direct market

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Alberta (2016 Census of Agriculture) <sup>1</sup>	No. of farms
Farms selling direct to consumer	2062
Farms selling unprocessed agricultural products	1986
Farms selling value-added products	197
Farms using farm gate sales, stands, kiosks, U-pick	1761
Farms using farmers' markets	425
Farms using Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)	119
Farms using other methods	94

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farms in Alberta than the national average (36 per cent).

The data also revealed that young operators (under 35) are more involved in direct market farming in Alberta —

nine per cent compared to eight per cent province-wide in all agriculture operations.

However, farms selling organic products through direct marketing in Alberta is lower than the national

average, at only 15 per cent compared to 32.6 per cent nationwide.

Of the 2,062 direct market farms, 35 per cent were new entrants (not reporting in the 2011 Census), with beef cattle farms representing the highest proportion, followed by apiculture and animal combination farming.

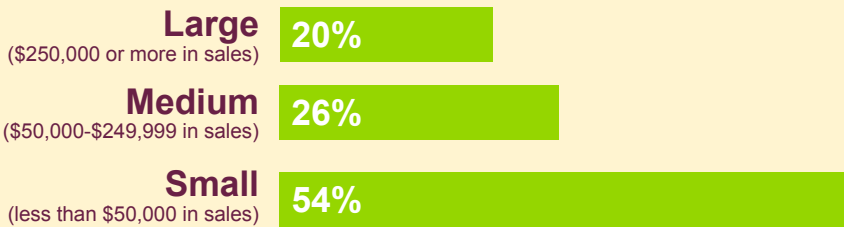
One in five direct marketing farms in Alberta is a large farm with sales of \$250,000 for more. Among the new entrants, more than two-thirds were small farms with sales less than \$50,000, 18 per cent were medium-sized and 10 per cent were large, with sales of \$250,000 or more.

For a more detailed synopsis of the Alberta information, contact Mimi Lee: [mimi.lee@gov.ab.ca](mailto:mimi.lee@gov.ab.ca), 780-968-3552, or visit [Explore Local](#). ●

<sup>1</sup>All data courtesy Statistics Canada 2016 Census of Agriculture.

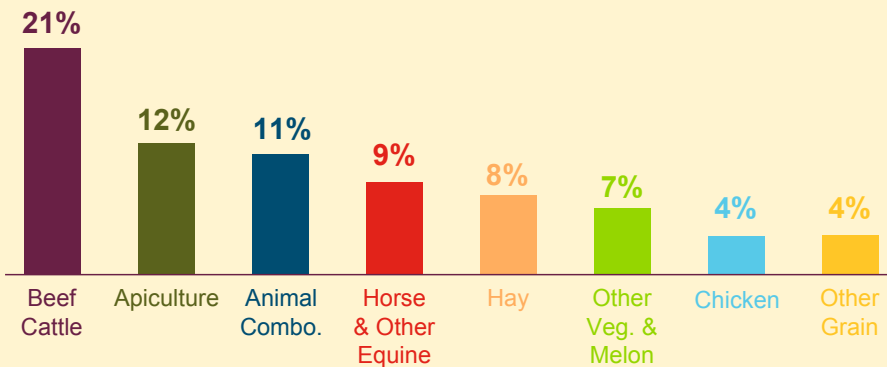
## Farm Size

One in five direct marketing farms in Alberta is a large farm with sales of \$250,000 or more

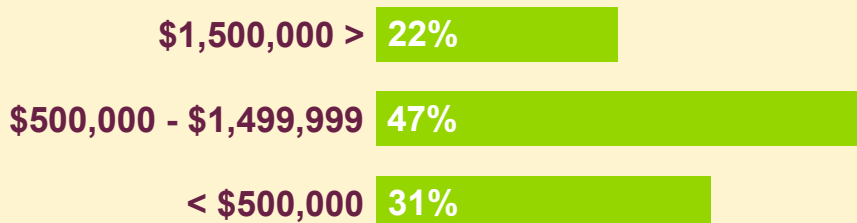


## New Entrants

From a total of 2,062 direct marketing farms, 35% identified as new entrants



## Farm Capital of New Entrants



## Top Three Trends at Grocery Innovations Canada 2017

By Sue Mah, MHS, RD, PHEC and Lucia Weiler, BSc, RD, PHEC

Grocery Innovations Canada (GIC) is an annual event for professionals in the grocery and specialty food business. This year's conference and trade show offered tips for growth, innovation, and best ways to connect with consumers.

Here are three top trends we recognized in some of the award-winning products.

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## Pack it with protein

Food makers are adding and highlighting protein in just about every category. It's true that consumers are looking for protein but many people are confused about how much they need and where are the best sources of this important nutrient. Canadian nutrition recommendations encourage people to include plant based proteins and balance their protein intakes throughout the day, especially at breakfast.

## Make it Fresh

Demand for fresh food is on the rise (Euromonitor). We saw many packages inviting us to eat with our eyes first, using windows to let fresh food peek through and beautiful fresh food images on the packaging. Adding a story about where the food was grown and who cared for it makes packaged fresh food a consumer attraction.

## Keep it Simple

The food label that is. Consumers are looking for a clean label which may be interpreted as a combination of 'free from' features as well as an ingredient list that is easy to read, understand and not too long. ●

*Excerpted with permission from Nutrition for NON-Nutritionists™, a leading organization providing nutrition training, interactive workshops, team-building sessions, educational webinars and nutrition communications / strategy consulting. Co-Founders and Registered Dietitians Sue Mah and Lucia Weiler are nutrition experts, trailblazers and advocates for healthy eating. Register for their 11th annual course Wed April 18th at [www.n4nn.ca](http://www.n4nn.ca).*

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE TIP FOR FARMERS

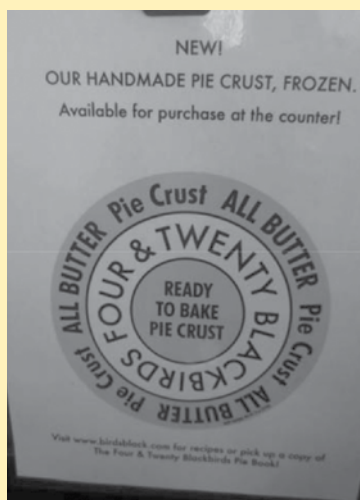
You should leave your farm once a day, your village once a week, your county once a month and your province at least once a year.

# Noticed in the Big Apple

During a recent tour of New York City, attending members of the Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association (OFFMA) spotted these eye-popping items.

*Excerpted with permission from the OFFMA Fresh Facts Newsletter, issue #325, December 2017. Our thanks to the editors for sharing*

## Not-so-humble pie!



New York City will always be remembered as the home of the \$42 pie.

No that is not a typo. Four and Twenty Blackbirds has been in business for seven years. Sisters, Emily and Melissa were committed to using the best ingredients they could find for their pies and in order to be sustainable the price was \$35.

Expenses have gone up and so has the cost of their pies.

The sisters have a market for these pies as they sold 5,000 during the 2016

Thanksgiving holiday. Just recently they started selling their frozen pie crusts for home bakers to try their hand at making their own pies.

## Creative bench design



*This cool bench was spotted outside of a bakery in NYC. Whoever created it made sure to include a tray for your coffee cup. Easily moveable as well.*

# Upcoming Events

## WEBINAR SERIES

### CREATING TOP NOTCH JOB DESCRIPTIONS

January 31, 2018

Join HR industry expert Denise Burrell of The Performance Group as she shares insights and techniques for creating top notch job descriptions that deliver results. Denise will explore practical tools and techniques using simple templates to achieve the perfect combination of technical and performance factors for your business. Apply these techniques to build job descriptions that will attract new recruits to your business. To register, [click here](#).

### ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES FOOD REGULATION FOR FARMERS' MARKETS

February 7, 2018

Learn the ins and outs of the Food Regulation as it applies to food sold at Alberta approved farmers' markets. A public health inspector with Alberta Health Services will share the requirements you need to meet in order to sell your food products through this important sales venue. To register, [click here](#).

### EMPOWERED EMPLOYEES: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL ONBOARDING

February 14, 2018

Please join us as HR industry expert Denise Burrell explores approaches addressing key challenges on-boarding new employees. Denise will provide insight on how good orientation practices can play a critical role in

employee effectiveness and retention. Learn strategies to maximize your most important resource, your people. To register, [click here](#).

### IMAGE-DRIVEN MARKETING

March 7, 2018

Photographer and communications professional Bri Vos will demonstrate how to create and use images to draw customers in and strengthen your online marketing. Bri will touch on composition and characteristics of a strong photo, online resolution requirements, Facebook and Instagram analytics tools, online marketing strategies and much more. To register, [click here](#).

### NO FEAR FARM FINANCE

March 28, 2018

What money do you have to invest in your local food business? What type of financing fits your business? How much credit should you carry? Join Ron Lyons as he demystifies the finance puzzle that many small agri-food producers, processors and local food entrepreneurs face as they grow their businesses. To register, [click here](#).

## WORKSHOP SERIES

### GETTING INTO FARMERS' MARKETS

February 15, 2018, 8:30am-4pm

4910 - 52 St., Camrose

\$25 incl. GST, lunch & snacks

A one-day workshop looking at selling food at Alberta approved farmers' markets. [Click here](#) to register by February 8, 2018.

### PRICING PRINCIPLES WHEN MOVING TO RETAIL

January 30, 2018. 9am-3:30pm

Provincial Building, Grande Prairie

\$25 incl. GST, lunch & snacks

Planning on selling to retail? Expand your understanding of the costs related to setting a profitable price. Attend this workshop if you are looking to:

- Price your products for profit
- Understand the components of pricing for the retail market
- Understand retail buyers needs

To register, call [1-800-387-6030](tel:1-800-387-6030).

### FRUIT & VEGETABLE CONVENTION

February 21-22, 2018

Online registration for Canada's premier horticultural event is now open! Offering 2-day, single day, trade show only and student packages, OFVC 2018 is the place to be for anyone connected to horticulture. LEARN from 120+ sessions, BROWSE the sold out trade show, ENJOY the Farmer and Friends reception and most importantly, SAVE by pre-registering. Visit [www.ofvc.ca](http://www.ofvc.ca) for complete information.

### TOUR TO IRELAND

April 16-20, 2018

Registration forms will be available early January. Contact the [Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association](#) for complete details.

## EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE, OR FUTURE WEBINARS AND EVENTS [CLICK HERE](#) OR CALL [1-800-387-6030](tel:1-800-387-6030).

**Field Notes** is published up to four times per year and is available online at [explorelocal.ca](http://explorelocal.ca). For further information about anything you've read here, or to be included on our email list, please contact Donna Skoworodko at [donna.skoworodko@gov.ab.ca](mailto:donna.skoworodko@gov.ab.ca).