Catalogue no. 22-002-X

Field Crop Reporting Series

March 31st Intentions, 2008

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Statistics Canada
Agriculture Division

Field Crop Reporting Series

March 31st Intentions, 2008

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

April 2008

Catalogue no. 22-002-X, vol. 87, no. 2

ISSN 1488-9900

Frequency: Irregular

Ottawa

La version française de cette publication est disponible sur demande (nº 22-002-X au catalogue).

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User information

Symbols

The following standard symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

.	not available for any reference period
..	not available for a specific reference period
...	not applicable
0	true zero or a value rounded to zero
0s	value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
p	preliminary
r	revised
x	suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
E	use with caution
F	too unreliable to be published

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Highlights

March intentions of principal field crops areas, Canada, 2008

- Prairie farmers anticipate a record area of canola and field peas, along with gains in spring wheat and durum.In the East, Quebec growers may see a record area of soybeans, while farmers in Ontario and Quebec expect to seed less corn for grain.

Analysis

March intentions of principal field crops areas, Canada, 2008

Prairie farmers anticipate a record area of canola and field peas, along with gains in spring wheat and durum, according to the 2008 March seeding intentions survey.

In the East, Quebec growers may see a record area of soybeans, while farmers in Ontario and Quebec expect to seed less corn for grain.

The survey, which covered 16,000 Canadian farmers, indicated potential increases in the area for canola, field peas, spring wheat and durum, but fewer acres of oats and barley on the Prairies.

It is too early to assess planting conditions for this spring. However, on the Prairies, concerns have already been raised due to persistently dry conditions in southern Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Survey data reveal only intentions. Economic and environmental conditions are always subject to change, requiring farmers to modify their plans prior to planting time. Some farmers indicated that they were still undecided about their final strategies for 2008.

Canola acreage may hit a record

Early indications are that Prairie farmers may seed a record 14.7 million acres of canola, up 0.4% or 50,000 acres from the record set in 2007. The five-year average is 13.0 million acres.

Farmers in Alberta reported that they may plant a record 5.1 million acres, an increase of 13.3% or 600,000 acres. That would break the previous record of 5.0 million acres set in 1994.

Spring wheat and durum wheat areas could jump

Prairie farmers anticipated a 9.4%, or 1.4 million acre increase in intended spring wheat plantings to a potential 16.3 million acres. This would be slightly below the five-year average of 17.0 million acres.

Spring wheat acreage should increase in all three Prairie provinces, but still remain less than the five-year average in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Prairie durum area could rise by 22.5%, or 1.1 million acres, in 2008. In Saskatchewan, where the majority of Canadian durum is grown, the area should rise 28.4%, while in Alberta, the planted area could fall 8.5% to 700,000 acres.

Barley and oat areas tumble

The total area seeded to barley on the Prairies is expected to tumble by 15.4%, or 1.6 million acres, to an estimated 8.7 million acres. This would be well below the five-year average of 10.0 million acres.

Farmers in all three Prairie provinces reported possible decreases, with levels below the five-year average in each province.

Prairie farmers reported that they expected to plant 4.1 million acres of oats, a decline of 16.8% or 825,000 acres from the area planted in 2007. The five-year average is 4.4 million acres. Possible declines are expected in each Prairie province.

Field pea area could rise to record territory

Field pea acreage could rise again in 2008 by 4.3% to 3.8 million acres. This would be an increase of 155,000 acres from the record of 3.6 million acres set in 2007.

The main contributing factor could be expectations for a record planted area in Alberta. Farmers there reported an increase of 14.8% to 700,000 acres, which could easily break the record of 660,000 acres set in 2000.

Eastern farmers set to plant more soybeans and less grain corn

Quebec farmers said they may plant a record 593,100 acres to soybeans this year, up 36.4% from 2007. The previous record was 494,200 acres set in 2004.

On the other hand, Ontario farmers intend to plant 6.2% fewer acres in soybeans, taking acreage to 2.1 million acres, the smallest level since 2003.

Growers in Ontario and Quebec reported that they intend to plant less acreage in corn for grain in 2008.

Quebec farmers reported a potential drop of 11.1% to 998,400 acres; those in Ontario saw a potential decline of 13.1% to 1.8 million acres.

Related products

Selected publications from Statistics Canada

21-206-X	Statistics on Income of Farm Operators
21-207-X	Statistics on Income of Farm Families
21-208-X	Statistics on Revenues and Expenses of Farms
22-003-X	Fruit and Vegetable Production
22-008-U	Canadian Potato Production - Updates
22-008-X	Canadian Potato Production
22F0005X	Crops Small Area Current Data
23-221-X	Production and Value of Honey and Maple Products
23-501-X	Livestock Feed Requirements Study
23-502-X	Alternative Livestock on Canadian Farms
96-325-X	Canadian Agriculture at a Glance
96-328-M	Canadian Agriculture at a Glance - Teacher's Kit

Selected CANSIM tables from Statistics Canada

001-0004	Estimated summerfallow areas, annual
001-0010	Estimated areas, yield, production and average farm price of principal field crops, in metric units, annual
001-0014	Area, production and farm value of potatoes, annual
001-0017	Estimated areas, yield, production, average farm price and total farm value of principal field crops, in imperial units, annual
001-0018	Estimated areas, yield, production, average farm price and total farm value of selected principal field crops: sugar beets, tame hay and fodder corn, in imperial units, annual
001-0019	Estimated area, yield, production, average farm price and total farm value of selected major speciality field crops, in imperial units, annual
001-0020	Estimated area, yield, production, average farm price and total farm value of selected principal field crops: dry beans (white and coloured), in imperial units, annual

001-0040	Stocks of grain and oilseeds at March 31, July 31 and December 31, 3 times per year
001-0041	Supply and disposition of grains in Canada as of March 31, July 31, August 31 (soybeans only) and December 31, 3 times per year
001-0042	Supply and disposition of corn in Canada and selected provinces as of March 31, August 31 and December 31, 3 times per year
001-0043	Farm supply and disposition of grains as of March 31, July 31, August 31 (soybeans only) and December 31, 3 times per year

Selected surveys from Statistics Canada

3401	Field Crop Reporting Series

Selected summary tables from Statistics Canada

- *Field and specialty crops*

Statistical tables

Table 1

March 31, 2008 intended areas of principal field crops and summerfallow, compared with 2007 seeded areas

	Seeded area 2007	Intended area 2008	Area of 2007	Seeded area 2007	Intended area 2008
	thousands of hectares		percent	thousands of acres	
Canada					
Winter wheat [1]	642.1	1,062.2	165.4	1,586.7	2,624.9
Spring wheat	6,157.2	6,711.3	109.0	15,214.9	16,584.1
Durum wheat	1,948.6	2,387.7	122.5	4,815.0	5,900.0
All wheat [2]	**8,747.9**	**10,161.2**	**116.2**	**21,616.6**	**25,109.0**
Oats	2,188.4	1,815.0	82.9	5,407.7	4,485.1
Barley	4,396.8	3,776.5	85.9	10,864.8	9,332.1
Fall rye [1]	123.4	135.5	109.8	305.0	335.0
Flaxseed [3]	528.0	594.9	112.6	1,305.0	1,470.0
Canola	5,959.5	5,991.2	100.5	14,726.0	14,804.6
Corn for grain	1,391.5	1,216.3	87.4	3,439.0	3,005.4
Soybeans	1,180.1	1,208.0	102.4	2,915.9	2,985.1
Dry peas	1,469.0	1,531.7	104.3	3,630.0	3,785.0
Summerfallow	3,120.0	2,772.0	88.8	7,710.0	6,850.0
Maritimes					
Winter wheat [1]	4.0	6.0	150.0	10.0	15.0
Spring wheat	10.1	13.3	132.0	25.0	33.0
All wheat [2]	**14.1**	**19.3**	**137.1**	**35.0**	**48.0**
Oats	15.6	15.3	98.7	38.5	38.0
Barley	50.6	54.6	108.0	125.0	135.0
Mixed grains	4.0	4.0	100.0	10.0	10.0
Corn for grain	6.8	8.9	129.4	17.0	22.0
Soybeans	4.5	4.9	109.1	11.0	12.0
Fodder corn	9.2	10.0	108.7	23.0	25.0
Quebec					
Winter wheat [1]	2.7	4.0	147.8	6.7	9.9
Spring wheat	53.8	49.0	91.1	132.9	121.1
All wheat [2]	**56.5**	**53.0**	**93.8**	**139.6**	**131.0**
Oats	115.0	100.0	86.9	284.2	247.1
Barley	95.0	100.0	105.2	234.8	247.1
Mixed grains	25.0	22.0	88.0	61.8	54.4
Canola	8.5	14.0	164.8	21.0	34.6
Corn for grain	450.0	400.0	88.9	1,112.0	988.4
Soybeans	176.0	240.0	136.4	434.9	593.1
Total beans	6.5	5.0	77.0	16.1	12.4
Fodder corn	47.0	41.0	87.3	116.1	101.3
Ontario					
Winter wheat [1]	240.8	479.6	199.2	595.0	1,185.0
Spring wheat	72.8	60.7	83.3	180.0	150.0
All wheat [2]	**313.6**	**540.3**	**172.3**	**775.0**	**1,335.0**
Oats	40.5	26.3	65.0	100.0	65.0
Barley	68.8	76.9	111.8	170.0	190.0
Fall rye [1]	20.2	16.2	80.0	50.0	40.0
Mixed grains	56.7	54.6	96.4	140.0	135.0
Canola	14.2	20.2	142.9	35.0	50.0
Corn for grain	849.8	738.6	86.9	2,100.0	1,825.0
Soybeans	906.5	849.8	93.8	2,240.0	2,100.0
Dry white beans	34.4	30.4	88.2	85.0	75.0
Dry coloured beans	30.3	16.2	53.3	75.0	40.0
Fodder corn	121.4	107.2	88.3	300.0	265.0
Manitoba					
Winter wheat [1]	178.1	242.8	136.4	440.0	600.0
Spring wheat	1,005.6	1,046.1	104.0	2,485.0	2,585.0
All wheat [2]	**1,183.7**	**1,288.9**	**108.9**	**2,925.0**	**3,185.0**
Oats	424.9	354.1	83.3	1,050.0	875.0
Barley	412.8	356.1	86.3	1,020.0	880.0
Fall rye [1]	22.3	26.3	118.2	55.0	65.0
Flaxseed [3]	80.9	125.5	155.0	200.0	310.0
Canola	1,153.4	1,153.4	100.0	2,850.0	2,850.0
Corn for grain	80.9	68.8	85.0	200.0	170.0
Soybeans	93.1	113.3	121.7	230.0	280.0
Dry white beans	26.3	24.3	92.3	65.0	60.0
Dry coloured beans	34.3	30.2	88.2	85.0	75.0
Dry peas	38.5	54.6	142.1	95.0	135.0
Sunflower seeds	76.9	60.7	78.9	190.0	150.0

See footnotes at the end of the table.

Table 1 – continued

March 31, 2008 intended areas of principal field crops and summerfallow, compared with 2007 seeded areas

	Seeded area 2007	Intended area 2008	Area of 2007	Seeded area 2007	Intended area 2008
	thousands of hectares		percent	thousands of acres	
Fodder corn	30.4	22.3	73.3	75.0	55.0
Summerfallow	107.0	121.0	113.2	265.0	300.0
Saskatchewan					
Winter wheat [1]	151.8	228.6	150.7	375.0	565.0
Spring wheat	3,029.1	3,156.7	104.2	7,485.0	7,800.0
Durum wheat	1,639.0	2,104.4	128.4	4,050.0	5,200.0
All wheat [2]	**4,819.9**	**5,489.7**	**113.9**	**11,910.0**	**13,565.0**
Oats	1,133.1	930.8	82.1	2,800.0	2,300.0
Barley	1,780.6	1,497.3	84.1	4,400.0	3,700.0
Fall rye [1]	52.6	64.7	123.1	130.0	160.0
Flaxseed [3]	435.0	453.2	104.2	1,075.0	1,120.0
Canola	2,934.0	2,711.4	92.4	7,250.0	6,700.0
Dry peas	1,183.7	1,193.8	100.9	2,925.0	2,950.0
Lentils	540.2	538.2	99.6	1,335.0	1,330.0
Mustard seed	141.6	161.9	114.3	350.0	400.0
Canary seed	172.0	165.9	96.5	425.0	410.0
Chick peas	153.8	62.7	40.8	380.0	155.0
Summerfallow	2,145.0	1,862.0	86.8	5,300.0	4,600.0
Alberta					
Winter wheat [1]	64.7	101.2	156.3	160.0	250.0
Spring wheat	1,969.6	2,367.3	120.2	4,867.0	5,850.0
Durum wheat	309.6	283.3	91.5	765.0	700.0
All wheat [2]	**2,343.9**	**2,751.8**	**117.4**	**5,792.0**	**6,800.0**
Oats	424.9	364.2	85.7	1,050.0	900.0
Barley	1,962.7	1,659.2	84.5	4,850.0	4,100.0
Fall rye [1]	28.3	28.3	100.0	70.0	70.0
Flaxseed [3]	12.1	16.2	133.3	30.0	40.0
Canola	1,821.1	2,063.9	113.3	4,500.0	5,100.0
Mixed grains	56.7	40.5	71.4	140.0	100.0
Dry coloured beans	21.4	10.1	47.2	53.0	25.0
Dry peas	246.8	283.3	114.8	610.0	700.0
Mustard seed	34.4	40.5	117.6	85.0	100.0
Summerfallow	850.0	769.0	90.5	2,100.0	1,900.0
British Columbia					
Spring wheat	16.2	18.2	112.5	40.0	45.0
Oats	34.4	24.3	70.6	85.0	60.0
Barley	26.3	32.4	123.1	65.0	80.0
Canola	28.3	28.3	100.0	70.0	70.0
Summerfallow	18.0	20.0	111.1	45.0	50.0
Western Canada					
Winter wheat [1]	394.6	572.6	145.1	975.0	1,415.0
Spring wheat	6,020.5	6,588.3	109.4	14,877.0	16,280.0
Durum wheat	1,948.6	2,387.7	122.5	4,815.0	5,900.0
All wheat [2]	**8,363.7**	**9,548.6**	**114.2**	**20,667.0**	**23,595.0**
Oats	2,017.3	1,673.4	82.9	4,985.0	4,135.0
Barley	4,182.4	3,545.0	84.8	10,335.0	8,760.0
Fall rye [1]	103.2	119.3	115.7	255.0	295.0
Flaxseed [3]	528.0	594.9	112.6	1,305.0	1,470.0
Canola	5,936.8	5,957.0	100.3	14,670.0	14,720.0
Dry peas	1,469.0	1,531.7	104.3	3,630.0	3,785.0
Summerfallow	3,120.0	2,772.0	88.8	7,710.0	6,850.0

1. The area remaining after winterkill.
2. The all wheat total is the sum of winter wheat after winterkill, plus spring wheat and durum wheat.
3. Excludes solin.

Concepts and definitions

Definitions of the crop categories referenced in various Crop Reporting Series publications are listed below.

Major grains: wheat, oats, barley, rye, flaxseed, canola, corn for grain and soybeans.

Coarse grains: oats, barley, rye, corn for grain and mixed grains.

Oilseeds: canola, flaxseed and soybeans.

Major special crops: lentils, dry field peas, mustard seed, canary seed and sunflower.

Methodology and data quality

Survey frame and sample selection

Every five years, the Census of Agriculture collects information on agricultural operations across Canada, including institutional farms, community pastures, Indian reserves, etc. The Census of Agriculture provides a list of farms and their crop areas from which probability samples are selected. The data collected from one of these samples form the basis of the seeding intentions estimates.

The survey frame represents all agricultural operations enumerated in the Census of Agriculture with the exception of institutional farms, farms on Indian reserves and farms from the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Atlantic region.

Probability surveys can use two types of sampling frames, list and area. In the seeding intentions survey, only the list frame is used in sample selection. This list frame is stratified into homogenous groups on the basis of Census characteristics (such as farm size and crop area) and sub-provincial geographic boundaries. A sample of approximately 16,000 farms is drawn from the list frame for the Seeding Intentions Survey.

Data collection

Data collection for the March Seeding Intentions Survey was carried out from March 20 to March 31, 2008.

Data collection for field crop surveys is undertaken using the “Computer assisted telephone interview” (CATI) system.

Edit and imputation

With the introduction of the CATI system, it is now possible to implement edit procedures at the time of the interview. Computer programmed edit checks in the CATI system inform interviewers during the interview of possible data errors, which can then be corrected immediately by the interviewer and respondent. CATI significantly reduces the need for subsequent telephone follow-up, thereby reducing respondent burden and survey processing time.

Response rate

By the end of the collection period, 80% of the questionnaires were fully completed. The refusal rate to the survey was approximately 6 to 8%. The remainder of the sample unaccounted for, can be explained by non-contact and non-response. Initial sample weights are adjusted (a process called raising factor adjustment) in cases of total and partial non-response; no imputation is performed for missing values.

Sampling and non-sampling errors

The statistics contained in this publication are based on a random sample of agricultural operations and, as such, are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. The overall quality of the estimates depends on the combined effect of these two types of errors.

Sampling errors arise because estimates are derived from sample data and not the entire population. These errors depend on factors such as sample size, sampling design and the method of estimation. An important feature of probability sampling is that sampling errors can be measured from the sample itself.

Non-sampling errors are errors which are not related to sampling and may occur throughout the survey operation for many reasons. For example, non-response is an important source of non-sampling error. Coverage, differences in

the interpretation of questions, incorrect information from respondents, mistakes in recording, coding and processing of data are other examples of non-sampling errors.

Estimation

The survey data collected are weighted in order to produce unbiased level indicators which are representative of the population. These level indicators then undergo a validation process, based on subject matter analysis and consultation with provincial statisticians, before a final estimate is published.

Revisions

The seeding intentions estimates contained in this publication are not revised, since seeding intentions represent plans, not actual occurrences.

Data quality

The seeding intentions estimates in this publication are based on level indicators obtained from a probability survey of farming operations. The potential error introduced by sampling can be estimated from the sample itself by using a statistical measure called the coefficient of variation (c.v.). Over repeated surveys, 95 times out of 100, the relative difference between a sample estimate and what should have been obtained from an enumeration of all farming operations would be less than twice the coefficient of variation. This range of values is referred to as the confidence interval. While published estimates may not exactly equal the level indicators (due to the validation and consultation process), these estimates do remain within the confidence interval of the survey level indicators.

For the Seeding Intentions Survey, c.v.'s range from 5% to 10% for the major crops. C.v.'s for specialty crops and small areas of major crops are usually within 10% to 25%.

Data confidentiality

Data confidentiality is ensured under the *Statistics Act*, which prohibits the divulging of individual or aggregated data where individuals or businesses might be identified.