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BUILDING CANADA'S FOOD AND AGRICULTURE BRAND IN THE WORLD

Canada's agriculture and food industry feeds the world safe, healthy food that is well-respected by international trading partners. Canada is the world's fourth-largest exporter in the agriculture and seafood trade, and is internationally recognized for high quality products.

The Contribution by Canada's Three Northern Territories

From the 60th parallel to the North Pole, Canada's Yukon, Northwest Territories (N.W.T.) and Nunavut cover 2.5-million square kilometres. The long hours of summer daylight and suitable soils seemed well indicated for agriculture. Small-scale agriculture was encouraged during the Yukon Gold Rush and the development of Hudson Bay Company posts and church missions. But these efforts dwindled over time.

The N.W.T. and Yukon now produce small, but exportable amounts of dairy products, eggs and honey. Of the territories, Nunavut achieved close to \$1.2-million in agri-food, fish and seafood exports in 2008, more than twice the combined exports of Yukon (\$277,158) and the N.W.T. (\$195,708).

Agri-Food

Having about 160 farms, Yukon is more agriculturally diverse than its territorial cousins. There are single-product and mixed farms, organic and traditional producers growing hardy, short-season crops and raising robust livestock.

Agriculture-based industry in the N.W.T. is challenged by the territories' small, widespread markets. However, in some communities there are market gardens producing lettuce, potatoes, carrots, radishes, corn, and strawberries.

Oilseeds for sowing and fodder were the leading agri-food exports for Yukon earning \$118,098 in 2008, and similarly for the N.W.T., they earned just more than \$17,000.

Nunavut earned about \$48,000 by exporting products of animal origin such as wild game meat.

Fishery

For each of the territories, fish and crustaceans are the leading food and agriculture exports. In 2008, Nunavut alone exported more than \$1-million, while the N.W.T.'s exports surpassed \$154,000 and Yukon's exports cleared \$118,000.

Northern Shrimp and Greenland Turbot are Nunavut's leading fisheries. The N.W.T. has a commercial, freshwater fishery based on Whitefish harvested from Great Slave Lake. Pickerel, or Walleye, are harvested on a smaller scale. Arctic Grayling and Chinook Salmon are the fish most common in Yukon waterways.

Did you know?

Community-scale vegetable gardens, even dairy and beef productions, were once a feature of Hudson Bay Company posts and church missions in the N.W.T. Inspired by this nearly forgotten tradition and knowledge base, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the N.W.T. Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment initiated a program to develop small, community-based food production. In 2008, 18 isolated communities grew inexpensive, storable root crops.

