



## Agriculture, Seafood and Food Processing

Fertile ground for opportunity



**British Columbia,** *Naturally.*

[BritishColumbia.ca](http://BritishColumbia.ca)

# British Columbia is **Serving-Up World Class Agriculture and Agri-Food Products** to the Global Marketplace.

Located on Canada's West Coast, British Columbia (B.C.) lies at the commercial crossroads of the Asia-Pacific region and North America. British Columbia's varied terrain, long coastline and temperate climate produces high-quality agriculture, seafood, beverage and food processing products that are in demand globally. Industry leaders leverage B.C.'s natural advantages with its focus on sustainability, safety, quality and innovation. Additionally, Canada's numerous international trade agreements provide preferential market access, making it easier and more efficient for B.C.-based businesses to do business abroad. With its business-friendly environment and abundant trade opportunities, B.C. attracts investment from all over the world.

## Diversity of Products

Thanks to its temperate climate and varied terrain, B.C. produces a diversity of products from land and sea. B.C.'s farms and food processors supply everything from fruit, vegetables and herbal preparations to top-grade meats and beverages. The province is also home to a globally recognized wine industry.

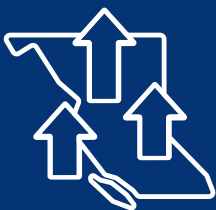
## Quality and Food Safety

British Columbia's reputation for producing high-quality, great-tasting foods is supported by internationally renowned food traceability, safety and sustainability standards.

## Sustainable Practices

Sustainability principles guide food production in British Columbia. The province is a leader in agri-tech innovation and regenerative farming practices that can increase the productivity, profitability and sustainability of B.C.'s food system.

A co-operative approach between industry and government has put the B.C. seafood industry at the forefront of new conservation initiatives, helping to ensure a sustainable industry for the future. Commercial fishers and seafood processors work together to supply both domestic and international markets with a vast array of safe and high-quality seafood products.



## British Columbia Agriculture, Seafood and Food Processing Sector by the Numbers

- British Columbia exported agriculture, seafood, beverage and food processing products to **189 international markets** in 2023.
- In 2023, B.C. had more than **3,500** food and beverage manufacturing operations.



# Industry Profile

British Columbia has thousands of agriculture, seafood and food companies, including primary growers and producers on land and sea, food and beverage processors and manufacturers of specialty items such as nutraceuticals, floral products, pet foods and more.

In 2023, British Columbia exported \$5.7 billion of agrifood products to markets around the world. Ninety-one percent of the export value was generated by the top five markets: the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong. In 2023, B.C. also exported \$1.2 billion in edible fruit and vegetable products (including prepared and preserved products), the province's second largest agriculture and food export product, after fish and seafood.

## Livestock and Poultry Products

British Columbia's farms and ranches produce beef, dairy, chicken, turkey, eggs, pork, mutton, lamb and other animals and animal products.

## Fruits and Nuts

As Canada's third largest fruit-producing province, B.C.'s diverse climate enables the production of a wide variety of berries, grapes and tree fruits on approximately 26,378 hectares of farmland. Ninety-five percent of all Canadian cherries are proudly grown in British Columbia. Similarly, British Columbia is the largest producer of highbush blueberries in Canada, with 90 percent of production concentrated in the province. B.C.'s tree fruits include apples, cherries, peaches, pears, plums, prunes, nectarines, apricots and hazelnuts.

### Farm Gate Value of Fruit in 2023

Fresh blueberries	\$150,601,000
Fresh sweet cherries	\$93,675,000
Fresh grapes	\$64,742,000
Fresh cranberries	\$43,851,000

## Grains and Oilseeds

British Columbia farmers produced approximately 1.3 million metric tonnes of grains and oilseeds and other field crops in 2023, including wheat, canola, oats and barley. There are approximately 1,000 B.C. grain and oilseed producers and 380,000 acres of land in annual field crop production.

## Vegetables

Thanks to a moderate climate, fertile soil and access to good water, B.C. fields and farms can grow many different types of vegetables, from asparagus to zucchini. In 2023, the top five vegetable exports were mushrooms, peppers, tomatoes, potatoes and cucumbers. B.C.'s greenhouse vegetable sector, which accounted for 43 percent of its total vegetable export value in 2020, supplies fresh vegetables for 10-months out of the year.

## Floriculture, Sod and Nursery Products

British Columbia produces many ornamental flowers and shrubs. The total value of B.C.'s floriculture in 2023 was over \$771 million, with a production of over 280 million floriculture including bedding plants, cut flowers, cuttings and potted plants. British Columbia's nursery industry produces different species of perennials, vines, ground covers, shrubs and trees either grown in the field or in containers.



## Seafood

British Columbia's prime fishing grounds, world-famous salmon-rearing rivers and pristine ocean produce a rich and varied harvest of finfish, groundfish and shellfish. Among the key fish species are salmon, halibut, rockfish, hake, sablefish, herring and tuna. Shellfish include clams, oysters, crab, prawns, geoduck, sea urchins and sea cucumber. B.C. also produces a variety of marine plants.

On the water, conservation initiatives lead the way, with fishers and processors working together to protect marine ecosystems while delivering safe, high-quality seafood to markets around the globe. In fact, British Columbia has three species (halibut, albacore tuna and hake) certified under Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), which is the international leader in sustainable fisheries certification. There are several B.C. seafood companies that are MSC Chain of Custody certified. B.C.'s diverse seafood industry has responsible management practices that protect the environment and maintain healthy fish stocks.

British Columbia's top five markets for seafood are: the United States, China, Japan, Hong Kong and Lithuania. British Columbia's top seafood exports include Atlantic salmon, wild salmon, halibut, chinook salmon, sea fish, tuna, oysters, crabs, and shrimps and prawns.

## Beverage Processing

Over 100 different grape varieties are produced in B.C., with the top 10 being Merlot, Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc and Gamay Noir. B.C. also produces premade cocktails, celebrated craft-brewed ciders, beers and spirits, including whiskey, gin and vodka. B.C. is known as a top-quality producer of fresh glacial spring water, kombucha and a variety of fruit and vegetable juices.

## Food Processing

British Columbia's diverse agricultural production supports a varied food processing industry. In fact, food processing is the second largest of British Columbia's manufacturing industries, generating more than \$13.2 billion in sales in 2023 and employing over 39,000 people. More than 3,000 small and medium-sized establishments produce and sell products from agriculture and seafood sources.

B.C. food processors supply high-quality products, including all kinds of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, bread and baked goods, cereal and grains, confectionary products, dairy products, eggs and alternatives, fish and seafood, meat, poultry, and plant-based proteins, nuts and seeds, prepared foods, sauces, dressings and seasonings, and fruits and vegetables.

### Top 5 B.C. Agriculture, Seafood and Food Processing Export Markets

2022 by Market

United States	\$4.8B
China	\$400M
Japan	\$246M
South Korea	\$139M
Hong Kong	\$63M



British Columbia's diverse and high-quality products are shipped to markets around the world through an extensive and efficient network of ship, air, rail and road connections.

# British Columbia's Agriculture, Seafood and Food Processing Associations, Collaboratives and Research Centres

Industry-led associations work with the government to encourage investment, promote collaboration and grow the agriculture and agrifood economy.

## Associations and collaboratives representing the sector include:

<b>BC Agriculture Council</b>	Advocates for key sector-wide priorities in British Columbia. Helps build industry consensus and advancing public policy by delivering a unified voice for the sector to government through their member farm associations.
<b>BC Food &amp; Beverage</b>	Helps shape, support and grow thousands of food and beverage businesses from start-up to multi-national companies.
<b>BC Fruit Growers</b>	Promotes awareness of the tree fruit sector, representing growers' interests to government, coordinating industry initiatives, and providing services and products to growers.
<b>BC Seafood Alliance</b>	Provides small and medium-sized businesses in B.C. with effective leadership, advocacy and communication in pursuit of a profitable and sustainable seafood industry.
<b>Wines Growers of British Columbia</b>	Represents the interests of British Columbia wineries through marketing, communication and advocacy.
<b>BC Craft Brewers Guild</b>	Represents the interests of British Columbia Craft Breweries through marketing, communication and advocacy.
<b>Investment Agriculture Foundation</b>	Delivers programs and services to support a thriving agriculture and agri-food sector in B.C.
<b>Provincial Agricultural Land Commission</b>	Preserves agricultural land for the future and acts as the administrative tribunal that adjudicates applications in the ALR while prioritizing and protecting the ALR land base and its use for agriculture.
<b>Small Scale Food Processor Association</b>	Serves as a national trade association of processors, growers and suppliers of food and agricultural products; helping members grow their businesses and expand local economies.





### Research and education centres representing the sector include:

<b>BC Agricultural Climate Action Research Network</b>	Fosters collaboration among researchers, government and producers to catalyze effective, research-backed climate solutions for B.C. food producers.
<b>BC Farmers Institute</b>	Provides locally relevant information, workshops and agricultural education events.
<b>Faculty of Land and Food Systems (UBC)</b>	Explores ways to build resilient food systems, further sustainable agriculture, improve food security, promote healthier communities and ensure the health and welfare of animals.
<b>Food and Beverage Innovation Centre (UBC)</b>	Helps food and beverage businesses grow, innovate and become export oriented.
<b>Food and Agriculture Institute (UFV)</b>	Functions as an interdisciplinary research centre that focuses on issues, challenges and sustainability solutions related to food and farm systems.
<b>Seafood Business Accelerator (SBA)</b>	Supports innovation, profitability and sustainability for small scale seafood entrepreneurs. The SBA provides food industry training, coaching, business advice and one-on-one support from food industry experts to help participants focus on a specific project and start working on it.
<b>Young Agrarians (YA)</b>	Serves as a community driven educational resource network for new and young ecological, organic and regenerative farmers in Canada. Provides courses, seminars, workshops and counselling about agriculture, farming, food processing, entrepreneurship, community economic development and environmental sustainability.



## Supportive Government

British Columbia's agriculture, seafood and food and beverage processing sectors are flexible and resilient with the help of industry-led associations and government support including tax incentives and grants. These supports enhance the sector's sustainability and productivity through marketing, research, innovation and technology.

- **B.C. Agri-Business Planning Program** provides funding support for primary agricultural producers and agriculture, food and beverage processors to support informed decision making and ensure business development.
- **B.C. Agriculture and Food Export Program** provides cost-shared funding to undertake market development activities outside of B.C., enabling sector businesses and associations to maintain, expand and/or diversify export markets.
- **B.C. Land Matching Program** provides land matching and business support services to new farmers looking for land to farm as well as landowners interested in finding someone to farm their land.
- **The Buy BC Partnership Program** and brand helps British Columbians choose foods and beverage products made in B.C. The program provides up to \$2 million in cost shared funding to help B.C. farmers and food processors promote their products and support food security in British Columbia.
- **Traceability Adoption Program** seeks to increase the implementation of traceability systems in production and processing to enable the B.C. agrifood and seafood sector to meet new and existing regulatory requirements for the traceability of food, animals, and seafood products.

## British Columbia's Competitive Advantages



- **A leader in sustainable development**
- **Prime location**
- **Supportive federal and provincial programs**
- **Diverse geography and climate**
- **A world-renowned wine industry**
- **High-quality and diverse agrifood products**
- **First-class fishing grounds**



## Join B.C.'s world-class agriculture, seafood and food processing companies, including:

- Dairyland
- Daiya Foods
- Fanny Bay Oysters
- Innofoods
- Jealous Fruits
- Mark Anthony Group
- Nature's Path Foods
- Purdy's Chocolates
- SunRype
- Windset Farms



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## Trade and Invest British Columbia

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