

Asparagus production in Canada

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About the Canadian asparagus sector

- 2066 ha harvested on a total of 2411 ha planted in 2021.
 - 1689 ha in Ontario
 - 434 ha in Quebec
- Total production in 2021: 8940 mt.
- Average yield of 4.3 mt/ha.
- Approx 140 asparagus growers in Canada for an average of 17.5 ha per grower.
- 99.9% green asparagus
- Consumption: 0.8 kg/year/person (fresh), 0.03 kg/year/person (processed)

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0365-01 Area, production and farm gate value of marketed vegetables



Production processes

TIMING

- From the first week of May to the first days of July.
- The peak of the harvest is during the first 3 weeks of May

TECHNOLOGIES

- Use of foils or forcing tunnels are sporadic.
- Harvesting machines are used by most of the farms.
- Irrigation can be done by drip or sprinklers.

Main challenges and particularities

Pest

- Rust and Stemphylium
- Fusarium
- Asparagus beetles
- Aphids, tarnished plant bugs and miners in augmentation.

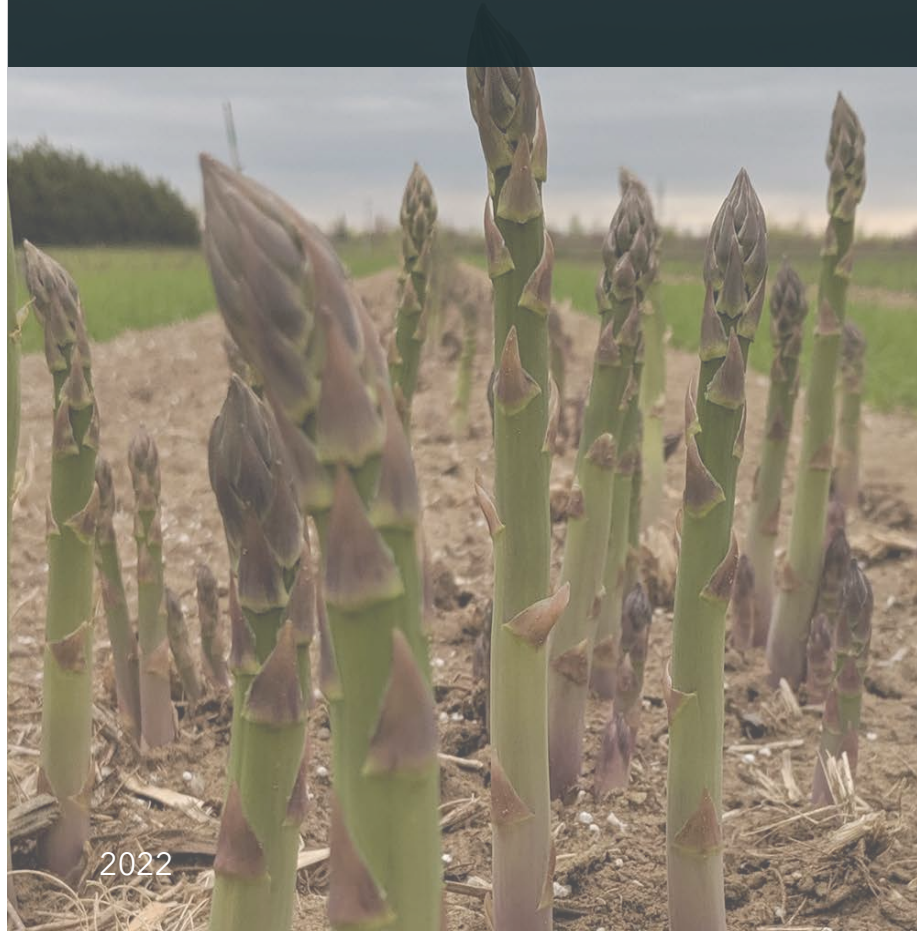
Other

- Late frosts.
- Short growing season (April-October).
- We rely mainly on Guelph Millennium, Eclipse and Equinox varieties.
- Plantations have a life span of over 20 years.



Workforce

- We are depending heavily on temporary foreign workers mainly from Mexico and Guatemala, but also from Honduras and Jamaica.
- Main issue is the administrative burden both on the Canadian side and the country of origin, causing delay problems and lack of staff especially since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Minimum wage: 14.25\$/hour (Quebec), 15.50\$/hour (Ontario).
 - With the social security obligation (+lodging, plane tickets, recruiting fees, etc): 18-22\$/hre or 13.30-16.26€/hre (Quebec), 19-23\$/hre 14-17€/hre (Ontario)
- Performance wages are not forbidden in Canada as long as the minimum hourly wage is reached, but seldom used.





Market

Most of the volume is directed to a few packers and then sold through wholesalers for distribution to retailers.

Most farms have small roadside markets during the harvest period.

We exported in 2021 for 10 215 364\$ / 1898 mt to United States.

Importations in 2021 were at a value of 111 172 493\$ / 27 496 mt mainly from Mexico, Peru and United States.



Thank you

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