

## FOCUS: FOOD SAFETY

## CanadaGap enrolment increases significantly in Ontario

HEATHER GALE

CanadaGAP is a food safety program for companies that produce, pack, repack, store and wholesale fruits and vegetables. It is designed to help implement effective food safety procedures within fresh produce operations. Audit and certification services for the program are delivered by third party, accredited Certification Bodies. The program has been benchmarked and officially recognized by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) for certification options B and C.

Two manuals, one specific to greenhouses, the second for other fruit and vegetable operations, have been developed by the horticultural industry and reviewed for technical soundness by Canadian government officials. The manuals are designed for companies implementing Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), and maintaining an effective food safety program. The manuals are based on a rigorous hazard analysis applying the seven principles of the internationally-recognized HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) approach.

Integration of repacking and wholesale food safety requirements

A major milestone was realized in 2014 with the unveiling of the fully integrated program on April 1st. CanadaGAP certification became available to repacking and wholesaling operations under the new Option D. This achievement was the culmination of discussions that began in 2009 between the Canadian Horticultural Council and the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) to consolidate CanadaGAP with the former CPMA Repacking and Wholesale Food Safety Program. The new certification option has seen a steady pace of enrolment since its launch. CanadaGAP extends congratulations to the first companies who were certified under Option D:

- BC Hot House Foods
- Western Harvest
- Manley Sales
- Chenail Import-Export
- Les Aliments Aquafuchsia Foods Inc.

A number of other companies have enrolled and are preparing for upcoming audits. Once ten accredited certificates have been issued, CanadaGAP will begin the process to benchmark Option D to the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) requirements.

Directory of CanadaGAP-certified companies

Over the past year CanadaGAP has worked to streamline internal processes to enable the compilation of a list of certified companies. The new list, which will be published starting January 2015 on the CanadaGAP website, consolidates the details based on information provided by the certification bodies. The list will be a searchable PDF and draws on details of certificates issued, suspended or withdrawn. This list is designed to help users find CanadaGAP-certified companies; however, it is important to note that the certification bodies remain the definitive source to confirm a supplier's certification status. More information can be found at [www.canadagap.ca](http://www.canadagap.ca) under "Certified Companies."

Participation trends

More than 2,500 producers are now enrolled in CanadaGAP, representing an increase of 3.5 per cent since 2013. The following participation trends are noteworthy for 2014:

- The fastest-growing area of participation continues to be at the farm level, as certified packinghouses request food safety compliance from growers in response to new requirements from retail/food service.
- Continued trending towards increased enrolment among Ontario and U.S. producers. 2014 saw a 100 per cent increase in Ontario greenhouse enrolments and 25 per cent growth for Ontario apple and combined vegetable producers.
- High proportion of enrolments continue to occur among

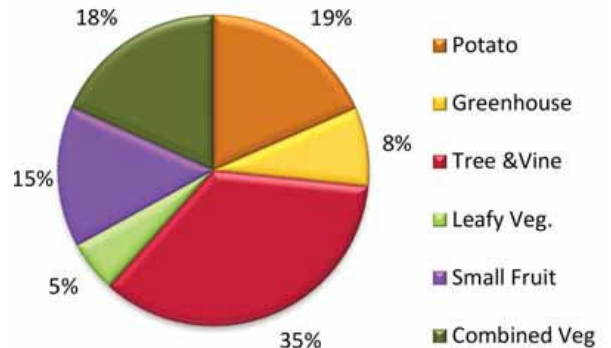
individuals choosing Option C (annual audit), comprising 40 per cent of all certified companies.

The trend continues away from the four-year audit cycle options (A1 and A2), which now stand at 30 per cent of all CanadaGAP enrolments. (Was 50 per cent in 2011)

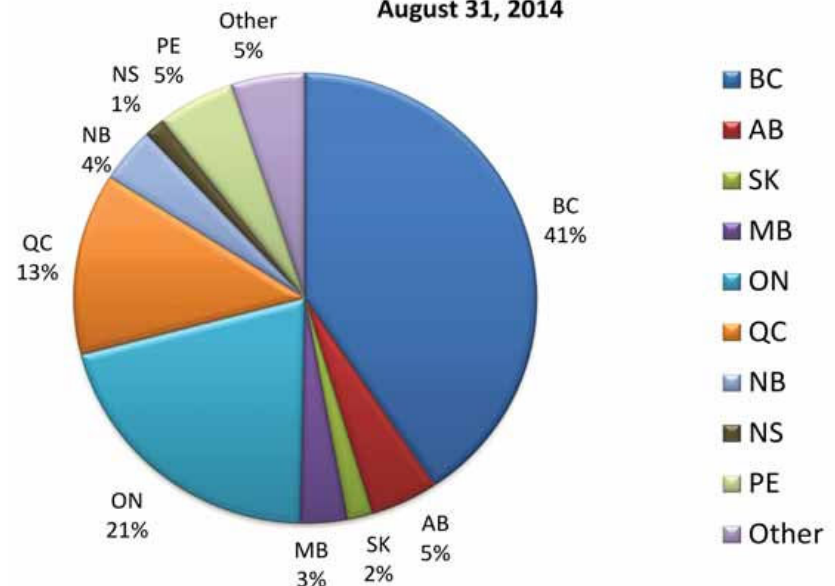
The proportion of producers achieving certification in a group option continues to be stable at approximately 30 per cent of enrolments.

This year saw higher than normal retirements as the established farming population ages. Processing potato producers are withdrawing from CanadaGAP due to reduced number of processing contracts. Manitoba started with 80 and is now down to 68, New Brunswick was 96

Proportion of CanadaGAP Participants represented by crop grouping August 31, 2014



Operations Enrolled by Province August 31, 2014



and is now 88. The totals for potato enrolments are stable because tablestock producers in other provinces have joined. For the purposes of analyzing participation trends, enrolment figures are broken down by five crop groupings: Tree and Vine Fruit, Field Vegetables, Potatoes, Small Fruit, and Greenhouse. Total participation in CanadaGAP is 100 per cent. The proportion of that total occupied by each crop grouping is presented on the next page.



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FOCUS: FOOD SAFETY

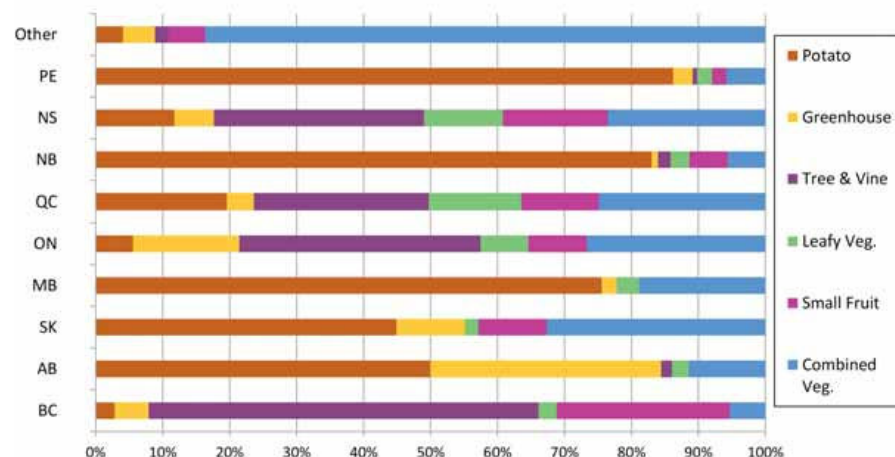
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Proportion of CanadaGAP Participants represented by crop grouping:

Based on # of producers	Tree and Vine Fruit	Field Vegetables	Potatoes	Small Fruit	Greenhouse Total	CanadaGAP Participation
Percentage of CanadaGAP participants	35%	24%	18%	15%	8%	100%

Data current as at August 31, 2014

## Commodity by Province - August 31, 2014



### What Else is Ahead in 2015?

- GFSI Benchmarking of Option D and Annual Assessment. We hope to submit our request for GFSI recognition of CanadaGAP Option D by the end of 2014.
- Completion of the Canadian Government Recognition Program: CanadaGAP has completed government technical reviews of its manuals and generic HACCP models. We're now undertaking recognition of the program management and delivery system. Management System Technical Review by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency was initiated September 2014. CanadaGAP hopes to complete Implementation Assessment and achieve full Government Recognition in 2015.
- Compile survey results from program participant survey on Auditor Competence: A survey developed by GFSI is currently being completed voluntarily by program participants. Results will be compiled and aggregated with other scheme owner results to inform GFSI on the status of program auditors.
- Changes to 2015 Manuals – some of the key revisions to come into effect April 1, 2015 include:
  - o The addition of brokers to the program scope
  - o The addition of mushrooms to the wholesaling scope
  - o New requirement in Section 19.1 relative to sourcing product.

Heather Gale is executive director, CanadaGAP Program, CanAgPlus

### Audit Trends

• Number of CanadaGAP Audits

	2014	2013	2012	2011
No. of audits reported	1037	1031	771	557

Reporting period from September 1 to August 31, 2014

• Average Audit Score by Crop Grouping

Crop Grouping	2014	2013	2012	2011
Potato	94.19	92.54	93.19	92.88
Greenhouse	92.40	94.80	95.16	95.07
Tree & Vine Fruit	89.19	92.71	88.99	89.77
Leafy Vegetable & Cruciferae	91.76	92.43	90.35	89.42
Small Fruit	90.91	92.71	91.11	90.91
Combined Vegetable	92.85	93.40	91.52	90.96
Overall Average	91.88	92.81	91.65	91.83

Reporting period from September 1 to August 31, 2014

• Trends: Audit scores remain consistently high. This has been a steady trend over the years, across provinces and commodities. This trend shows a general consistency in audit results and in the implementation and interpretation of requirements.

### CanadaGAP Auditors

• The auditor pool consists of 40 active and qualified CanadaGAP auditors (currently working for a Certification Body). This represents 23 per cent of those who have taken the CanadaGAP auditor training course and 24 per cent of those who passed the exam.

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