

# 10th year anniversary marks more than 3,100 participants

HEATHER GALE

CanadaGAP is a food safety program for companies that produce, pack, repack, store, wholesale and broker fruits and vegetables. 2018 marks the 10-year anniversary of CanadaGAP certification becoming available. The program officially launched in September 2008 with the enrolment of 500 potato growers, and has grown to more than 3,100 participating companies today from across the Canadian and U.S. fresh produce industry.

The program enjoys strong support from Canada’s retail, processing and food service sectors, as well as international recognition across the range of export markets in the U.S., Latin America, Europe and Asia. Working together, a dedicated team of staff members, board of directors, stakeholders and program participants contribute to strengthening food safety implementation across the horticultural sector.

### Key Achievements for 2018

• Alignment with new Safe Food for Canadians Regulations: CanadaGAP achieved full Government Recognition in March 2017 under the Canadian Government Food Safety

Recognition Program.

This stamp of approval by federal and provincial governments positions the program favourably in the context of the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations that will come into force on January 15, 2019. CanadaGAP is recognized as a “model system” for food safety preventive controls that fresh produce operations will need to have in place under the new regulations.

In addition, CanadaGAP participated in a pilot project with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to ensure that program requirements are aligned with the new federal regulations. Some welcome changes to the legislation were introduced in response to technical comments submitted by CanadaGAP. The positive results of the comparison, as well as further details about how CanadaGAP fits with regulatory initiatives, are published at [www.canadagap.ca/publications](http://www.canadagap.ca/publications).

• Highest Average Audit Score: 2018 saw the average audit score peak at 94.34%. CanadaGAP- certified companies have set record-high scores in the tenth anniversary year of the program! Congratulations to program participants for showing great commitment to continuously improving their audit results.

• GFSI Recognition: Re-benchmarking of the CanadaGAP program to GFSI (Global Food Safety Initiative) requirements Version 7.1 was successfully completed in 2018. CanadaGAP has been GFSI-recognized since 2010. Re-benchmarking occurs each time GFSI updates its requirements. Significant effort and resources are devoted to securing and maintaining GFSI recognition, which enables program users to access markets both within and outside Canada.

• Growth in Option D: Since receiving GFSI recognition for Option D in 2016, interest in CanadaGAP certification for repacking, wholesaling and brokerage operations has grown steadily. Customer demands for supply chain certification continue to drive uptake of Option D, leading to a 13 per cent growth rate over the last year. With 90 participating companies, we are close to reaching the target of 100 clients that was set when the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) Repacking and Wholesaling standard was integrated into the CanadaGAP program four years ago.

• Unannounced Audits: Program participants and certification bodies undertook the first full year of implementation of the Unannounced Audit programme over the course of the past season. Five percent of CanadaGAP-certified companies are selected each year by their certification body to undergo an audit “unannounced” – i.e., with only 2 to 5 business days’ notice. This initiative aligns CanadaGAP with GFSI requirements and contributes to improving the integrity and credibility of certification.

• FSMA Resources: CanadaGAP has maintained and updated a series of resources first published in 2017 on the CanadaGAP website. The purpose of these materials is to help CanadaGAP-certified companies understand the impact of the U.S. Food Safety Modernization Act on their export or U.S.-based business. The following resources can be

found at [www.canadagap.ca](http://www.canadagap.ca) under “Food Safety Links”:  
o Information for Canadian exporters to the United States about the Foreign Supplier Verification Program (FSVP)

### Report from the Board

CanAgPlus, the not-for-profit corporation that owns and operates the CanadaGAP program, holds its Annual General Meeting (AGM) for members each December. At the 2017 AGM, one resolution related to Unannounced Audits was debated. The 2018 AGM will take place in Ottawa on December 6, 2018.

The Board of Directors is comprised of eight volunteer directors. In keeping with the by-laws developed by the corporation’s founding organizations, four directors are approved by the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) and two by CPMA, with another two directors at-large. Directors serve two-year rotating terms, with four directors elected annually. Four positions are available to aspiring candidates at the 2018 AGM.

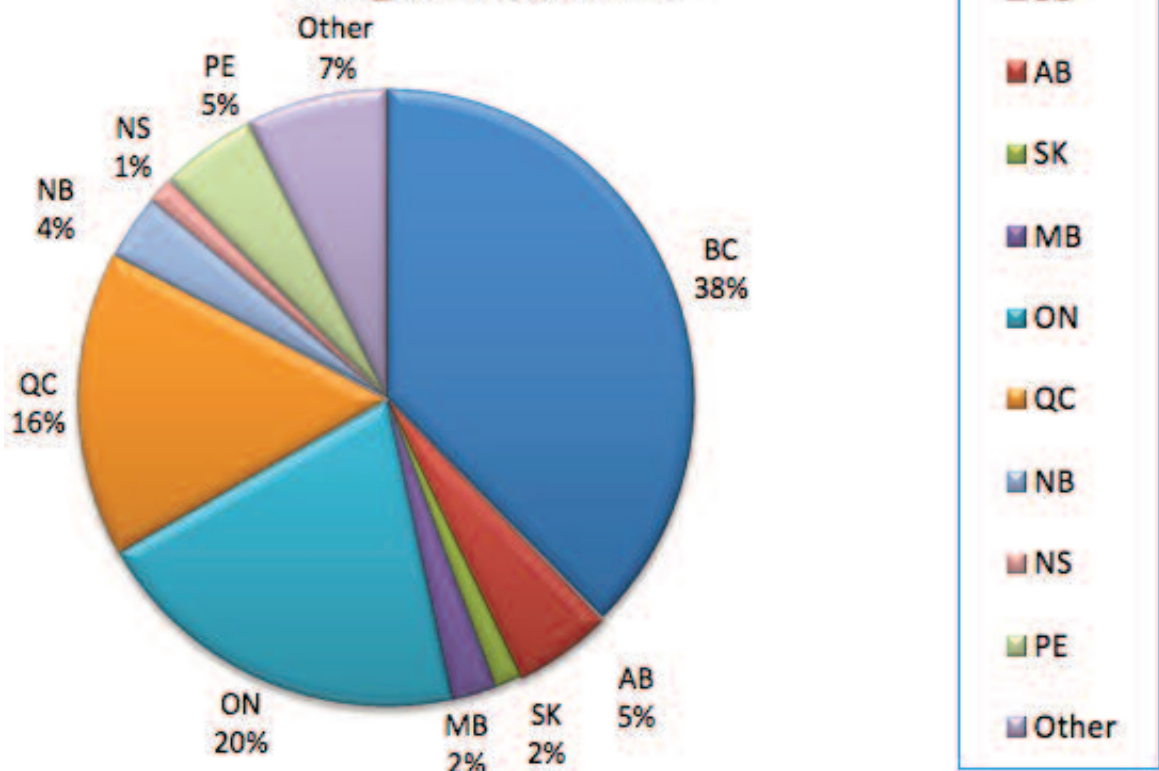
The Board meets face-to-face twice annually and holds regular conference calls. The full list of directors and their biographies are posted at: [www.canadagap.ca/about-us/governance/](http://www.canadagap.ca/about-us/governance/)

The Board will elect a new chair and vice-chair following the 2018 AGM.

### Thank you

Thanks to retiring chair Jack Bates and departing vice-chair Hugh Bowman.

## Operations Enrolled by Province August 31, 2018



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## Participation Trends

The following participation trends are significant for 2018:

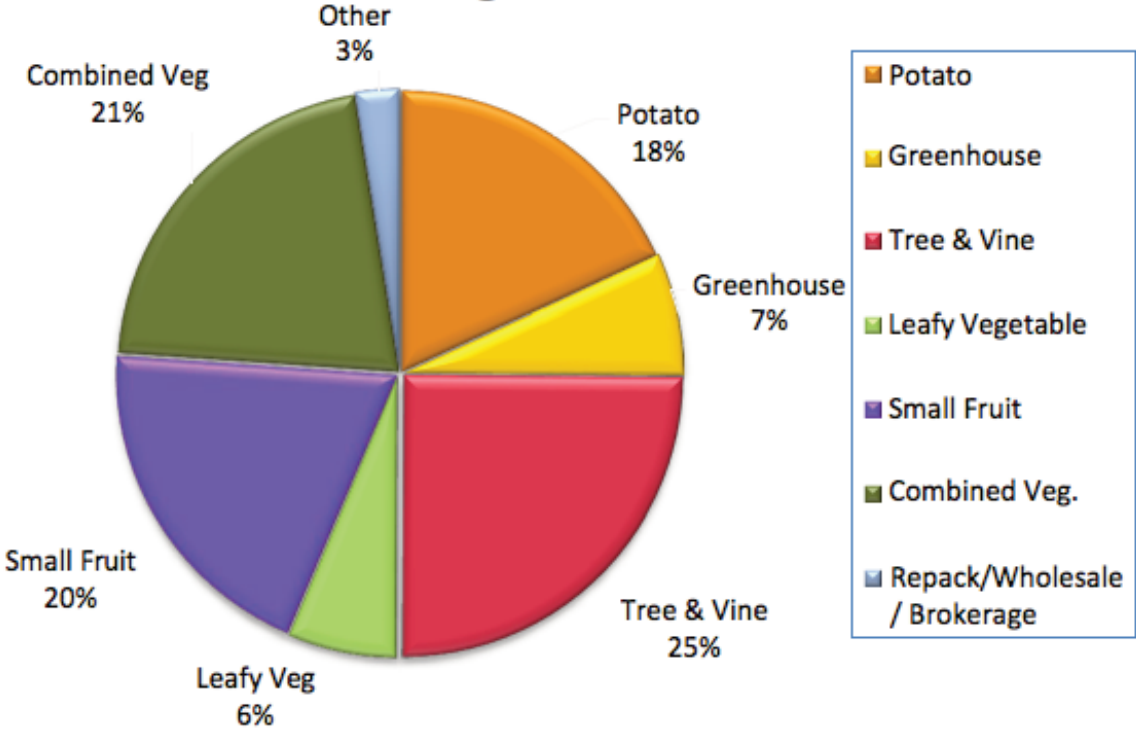
- Participation rates have been stable since 2016. While new participants continue to enrol in the program, a significant number of retirements and farm sales have also occurred, offsetting significant growth in enrolment figures.
- Participation rose slightly among producers in British Columbia and Saskatchewan, and declined marginally in Manitoba. Among commodity groupings, moderate increases were seen in the Combined Vegetable sector.
- BC maintains the highest enrolment levels overall, representing 38% of all CanadaGAP-certified companies.
- Growth in Option D enrolments for repacking, wholesaling, and brokerage operations continues to increase, up 13%

over last year.

- CanadaGAP continues to attract U.S. growers, many of whom are organized into groups to pursue food safety certification.
- Group certifications comprise 21% of all enrolments, while 25% of certified companies are enrolled in the four-year audit cycle.
- More than half (52%) of program participants are enrolled in Option C and undergo an annual audit.
- For the purposes of analyzing participation trends, enrolment figures are broken down by five crop groupings:
  - o Tree and Vine Fruit
  - o Field Vegetables
  - o Potatoes
  - o Small Fruit
  - o Greenhouse

Heather Gale is executive director CanadaGAP Program, CanAg Plus.

Proportion of CanadaGAP participants represented by crop grouping August 31, 2018



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