



Foreign Agricultural Service

Global Market Analysis

International Production Assessment Division

Web: <https://ipad.fas.usda.gov>

September 18, 2024

Commodity Intelligence Report

CANADA: In-Season Ontario Crop Travel Summary

Analysts from USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) and FAS/Ottawa conducted crop assessment travel in southern Ontario during the second week of August 2024. The trip included visits with several farmers throughout the region, industry representatives from the AGRIS Co-Operative/Great Lakes Grain, and tours of the Greenfield Global Inc. ethanol plant in Chatham, Wallenstein Feed and Supply Ltd. in Wallenstein, and Richardson International's port office in Hamilton (Figure 1). Both farmers and Great Lakes Grain representatives who accompanied the FAS analysts on the tour, reported a positive outlook for marketing year MY 2024/25 field crops.

Southern Ontario grows about 63 percent of the total corn crop (Figure 2) and 55 percent of the total soybean crop (Figure 3) in Canada. During crop assessment travel, corn and soybeans were in mid-season with harvest to begin at the end of September and into October. Winter wheat (Figure 4) is also planted in rotation with corn and soybeans, however, most winter wheat fields that were observed had already been harvested (Figure 5). Fields of harvested winter wheat were identifiable from the stubble that remained. There has been an increase in field crop production moving north toward Owen Sound, Ontario over the past 10 to 15 years where pastureland is being converted to field crops.

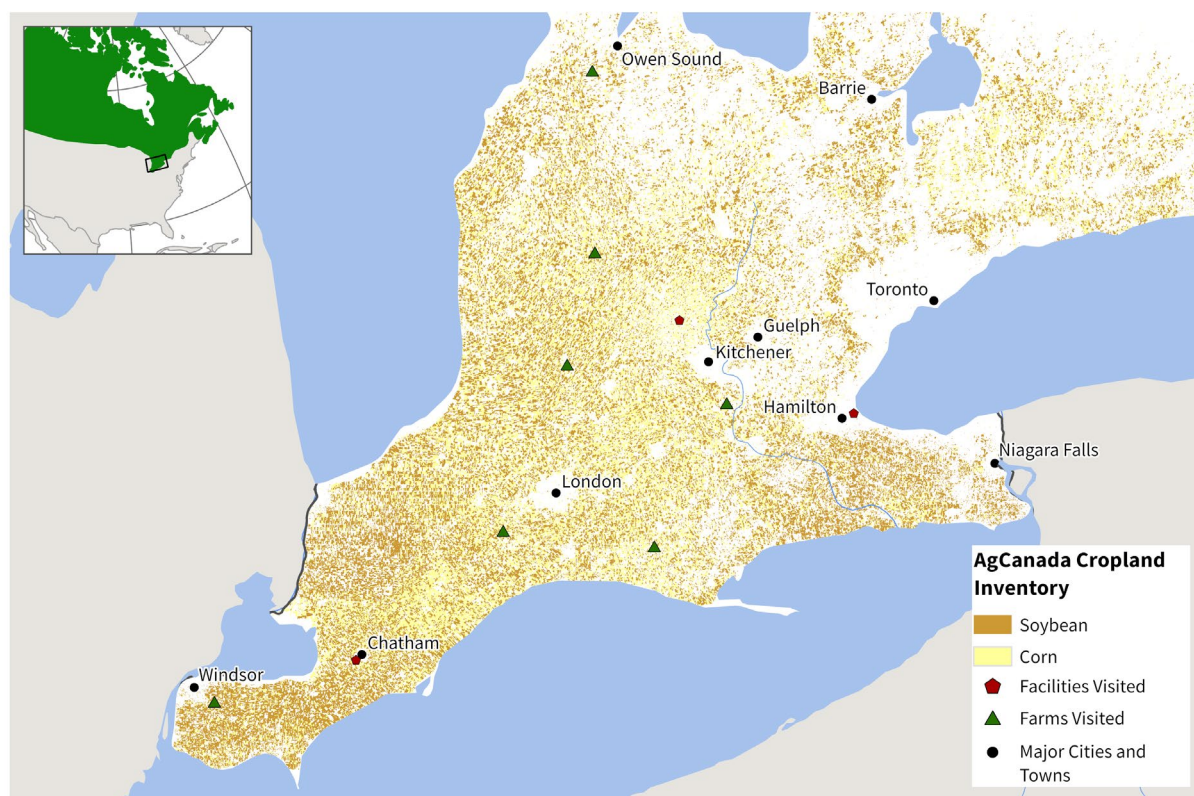
Crop conditions this season have been good to excellent in southern Ontario as most rainfed corn (Figure 6) and soybean (Figure 7) crops have benefited from regular rainfall throughout the growing season; rainfall has been primarily above normal levels (Figure 8).

Southern Ontario receives ample rainfall due to its proximity to the Great Lakes, so many farmers in the region have invested in subsurface drainage systems, referred to as tiling, which removes excess water from the root zone of the field and diverts that water to nearby ditches (Figure 9). Tiling fields will increase the yield from that field by nearly 20 percent on average, thus it is said that you pay for tiling with the installation expense, or you pay for not tiling the field in the form of lower-yielding crops. If there is too much moisture on the surface, the roots of the plant spread out rather than going deep in the soil to find moisture. Tiling drains the moisture, thus the plants roots go deeper in the soil to reach water and ultimately have access to additional nutrients in the soil. Tiling is seen as the single most cost-effective way to increase yields, and farmers and industry personnel interviewed suggested that at least 50 percent of fields in southern Ontario have been tiled.

Unlike western Canada, which relies primarily on rail transportation, Ontario utilizes trucking to move corn and soybeans from farms to various facilities, primarily regional ethanol plants, feed mills, and ports for export. Some corn is also sold directly to livestock farmers as feed. Trucking is most prevalent in the region because a substantial portion of the railway system in Ontario was decommissioned approximately 20 years ago, much of which is now used for recreational trails.

On-farm storage is abundant in the region, with some farms investing in dryers and grain elevators (Figure 10). This investment allows the farmers to store their harvested crop for up to a year. Much of the corn that is harvested holds moisture levels that exceed industry standards, requiring post-harvest drying. Vomitoxin is a common concern among corn and wheat producers in the area.

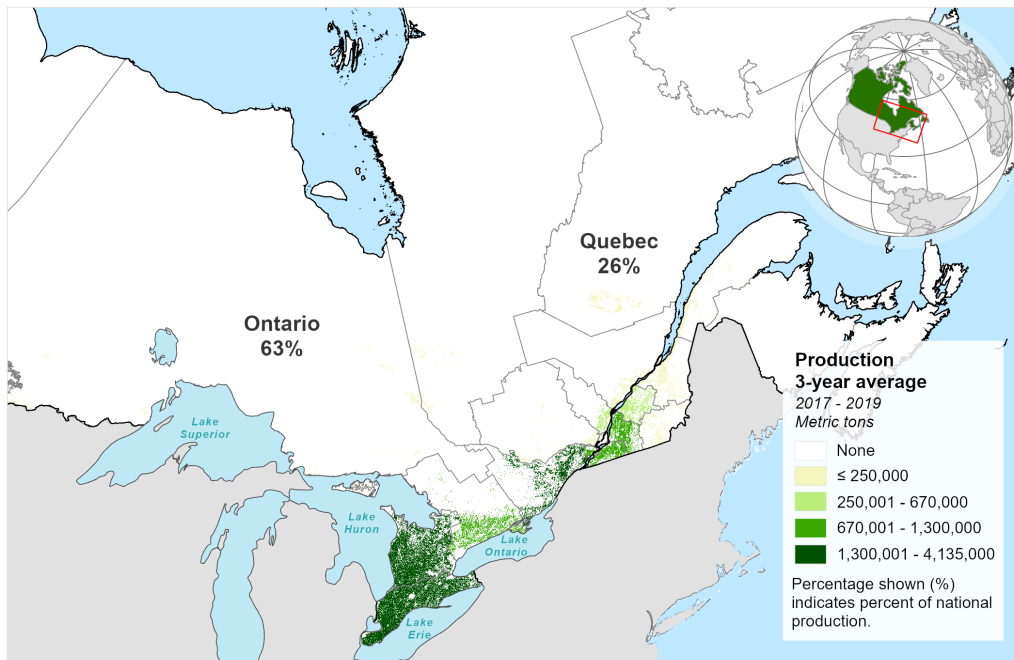
Ontario, Canada: Corn and Soybean Fields



Source: AgCanada 2023 Ontario LandCover Corn and Soy

Figure 1. Locations of farms and facilities visited on the crop assessment tour.

Canada: Corn

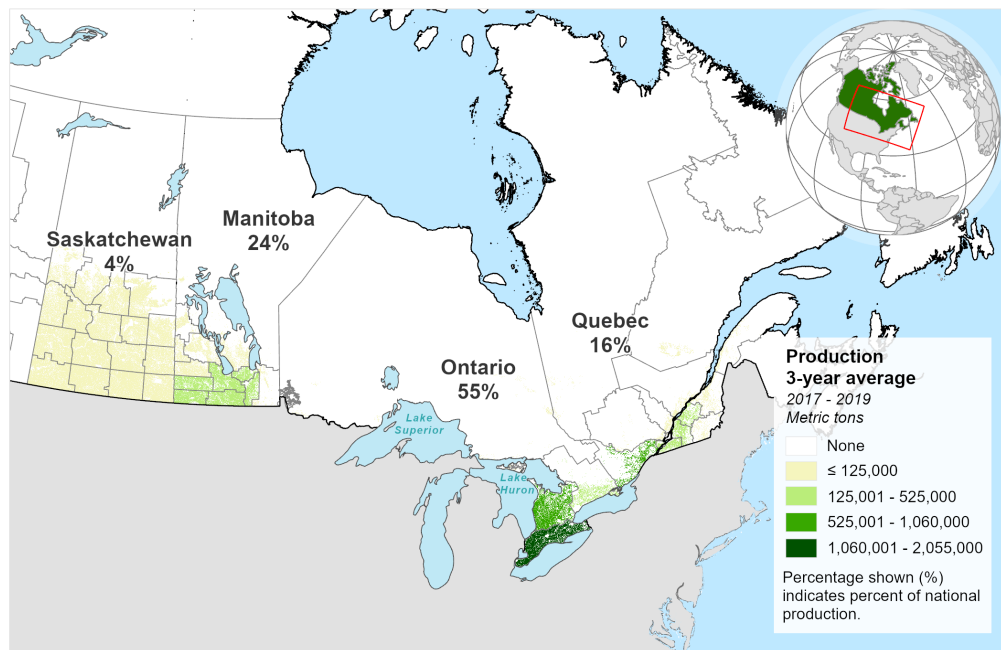


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Sources: Statistics Canada, Estimated production by Small Area Data Region (SADR); AgCanada Cropland Inventory 2018

Figure 2. Canada corn production map.

Canada: Soybean



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Sources: Statistics Canada, Estimated production by Small Area Data Region (SADR); AgCanada Cropland Inventory 2018

Figure 3. Canada soybean production map.

Canada: Winter Wheat Production

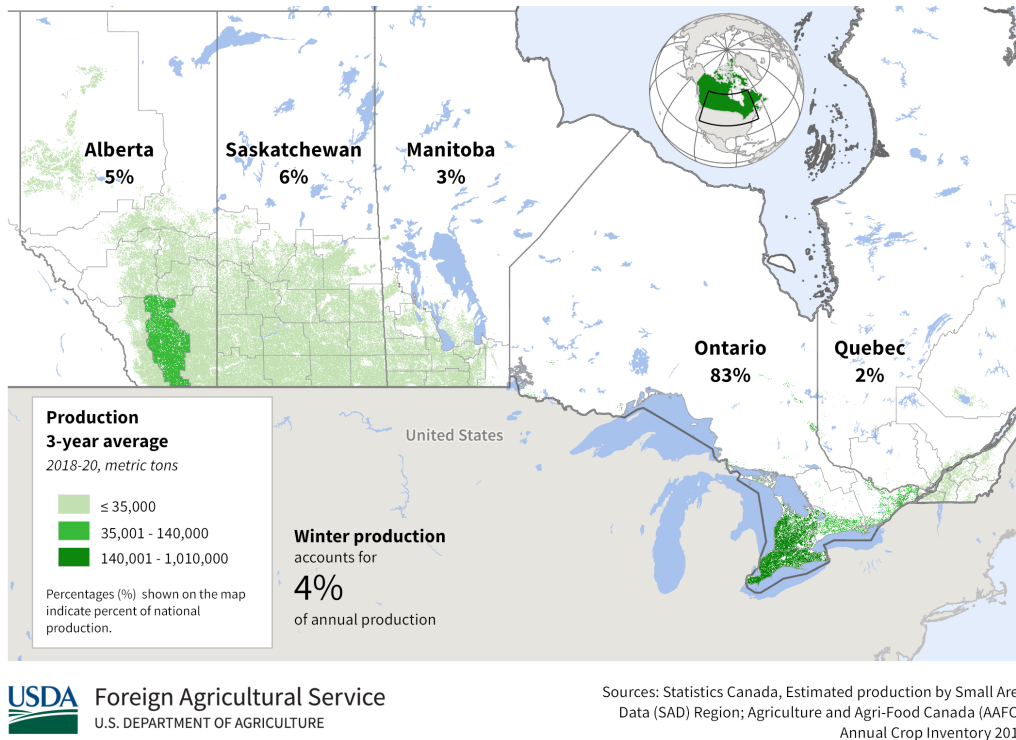


Figure 4. Canada winter wheat production map.

Canada Corn and Soybeans



Canada Winter Wheat



Figure 5. Crop calendar for the three main field crops grown in Ontario. Source: FAS.

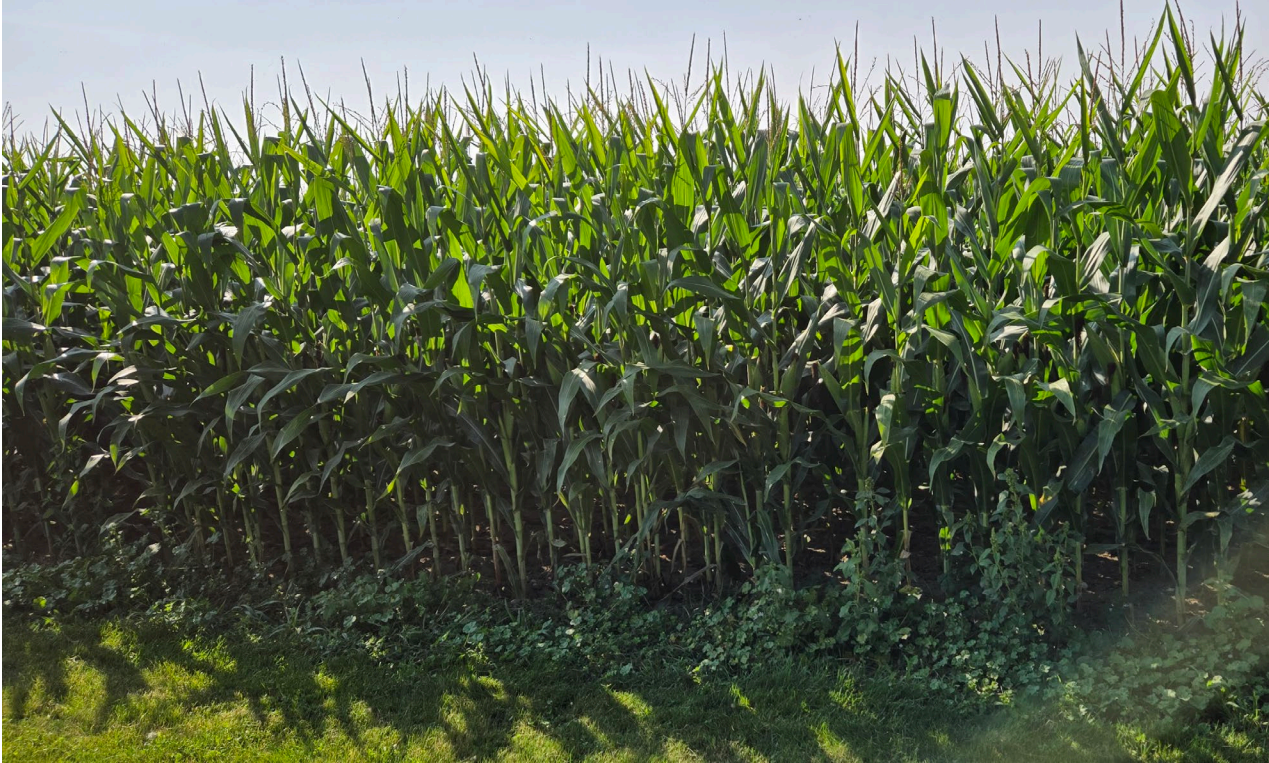


Figure 6. Corn growing in Gorrie, Ontario. Photo from FAS on August 14, 2024.



Figure 7. Soybeans growing in Mitchell, Ontario. Photo from FAS on August 13, 2024.

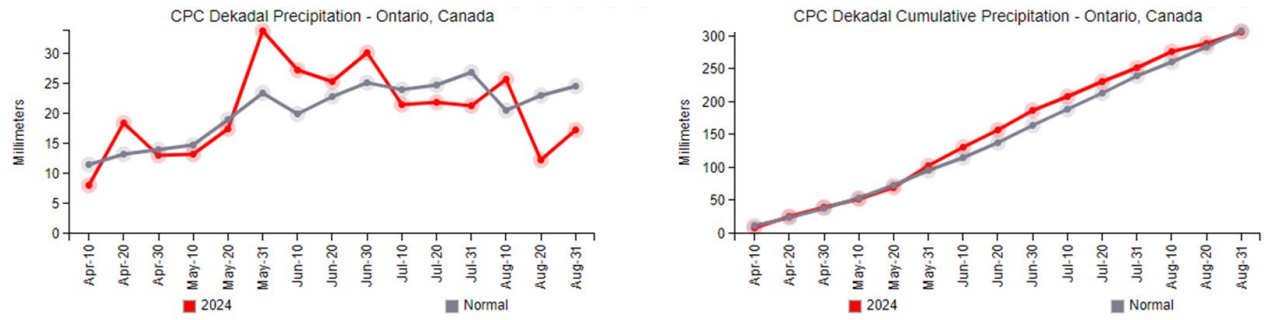


Figure 8. Ontario, Canada, actual 2024 vs normal and cumulative precipitation chart. Source: NOAA CPC.



Figure 9. Tiling being installed in a field near Mt. Brydges, Ontario. Photo from FAS on August 13, 2024.



Figure 10. Truck on weigh scale delivering corn to a local elevator in Gorrie, Ontario. Photo from FAS on August 14, 2024.

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Current World Agricultural Production Reports
<https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/world-agricultural-production>

Production, Supply and Distribution Database (PSD Online)
<https://apps.fas.usda.gov/psdonline/app/index.html#/app/home>

Global Agricultural Information Network (Agricultural Attaché Reports)
<https://www.fas.usda.gov/databases/global-agricultural-information-network-gain>

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<https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/>

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<https://geo.fas.usda.gov/GADAS/index.html>