

Facts & Figures About Canadian

Greenhouse Vegetables

In General:

- There are 220 growers in Ontario.
- 2,547 acres of greenhouses growing tomatoes, cucumbers, and bell peppers span across Ontario.
- Ontario's vegetable greenhouses are located throughout the province from Windsor to Niagara and across to Ottawa.
- Our farmers are less than one day's drive from the majority of markets they serve in Canada and the U.S.
- Average greenhouse size: 10.14 acres
 - Largest greenhouse: 125.70 acres
 - Smallest greenhouse 0.09 acres
- Tomatoes represent 36.7% of all production.
- Peppers represent 35% of all production.
- Cucumbers represent 38.3% of all production.
- More than 70% of Ontario greenhouse produce is exported to the U.S.
- The Ontario greenhouse sector accounts for over 13,000 employees.
- The farm gate value of the greenhouse vegetable industry is \$840 million.



Facts courtesy of the Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers

You were asking about...Greenhouse Vegetables

Basics

Greenhouses in Canada provide vegetable growers with a longer growing season (in many cases year round), and give Canadians the chance to buy domestic produce for a greater portion of the year. The industry is growing, and greenhouse farms come in all sizes. The vegetables grown are both sold domestically and exported.

Greenhouse Vegetables – the product

The main greenhouse vegetables grown in Canada are tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers. Greenhouses allow the growers to produce for a greater portion of the year, although the growers may still need to stop producing for the coldest months of the year due to heating costs. Greenhouse vegetables can be found at grocery stores and sometimes at on farm stores or farmers' markets.



GREENHOUSE VEGETABLES TRIVIA

- Although the Spanish brought tomatoes to Europe from South America, they used them as decoration, fearing they were poisonous. It wasn't until the 16th century before tomatoes were eaten in Europe and it was the Florentines in Italy who led the way.
- Did you know that the tomato is actually a fruit? Botanically, tomatoes are a fruit, because a fruit is defined as the edible part of the plant that contains seeds, while a vegetable is the edible stems, leaves and roots of the plant.
- Did you know that tomatoes come in a variety of colours such as red, orange, yellow, pink, white and even red and yellow striped?
- Thomas Jefferson was one of the first Americans to grow tomatoes, which were called "love apples" at the time. Even in the U.S. the tomato has been eaten for only 150 years. It began with a courageous demonstration by Colonel Robert G. Johnson on the courthouse steps in Salem, New Jersey at noon on September 26, 1820 when he ate an entire basketful of tomatoes. He not only survived, but wasn't ill following his heroic demonstration.
- The cucumber is of the same family as pumpkins, zucchini and other squash.
- In the United States in the 1930s, a "cucumber" was slang for a dollar.
- Greenhouse cucumbers are the same species as the field or pickling cucumber, but are the aristocrats of the family - the skin is totally edible with no tough seeds to be removed. Since the skin is edible, you do not waste any of the cucumber!
- Greenhouse cucumbers are not pollinated, so the fruit is seedless! This is especially helpful for preventing gas caused from eating cucumber seeds.
- The skin of a cucumber is rich in fibre and contains many nutrients. It is completely edible, so be sure not to peel them!
- Peppers originated in Central & South America.
- Christopher Columbus is supposed to have taken the first peppers to Europe.
- All bell peppers start off green, and then change colour based on the variety.
- Red, yellow and orange bell peppers contain three to four times more Vitamin C than an orange!
- Tomatoes are an excellent source of Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Folacin, Thiamine, Magnesium and Potassium.
- Cucumbers are an excellent source of Vitamin C and Folacin.
- Sweet Peppers are an excellent source of Vitamin B6, Vitamin C and Folacin.

Trivia courtesy of Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers

About Greenhouse Vegetables Additional Website Links

BC Greenhouse Growers' Association
www.bcgreenhouse.ca

Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association
www.agga.ca

Saskatchewan Greenhouse Growers
www.saskgreenhouses.com

Ontario Greenhouse Marketers Association
www.ontariogma.com

Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers
www.ogvg.com

Syndicat des producteurs en serre du Québec

www.spsq.info

Greenhouse Nova Scotia

www.greenhousenovascotia.com

Greenhouse Vegetable Dictionary

- **Acre:** A unit of area used to describe the size of fields and land areas in farming. One acre is approximately 43,560 square feet – or about the size of two and a half ice hockey rinks. One hectare (another unit of area also used in farming) is approximately 2.47 acres.
- **Crop protection:** Products used by farmers to protect plants against insects, weeds, and fungi (plant diseases) that can attack and destroy a crop.
- **Environmental Farm Plan:** Program that allows farmers to assess environmental risks on-farm and help identify and fund ways to fix them.
- **Fertilizer:** Any natural or synthetic material given to plants to supply them with the nutrients they need to grow.
- **Greenhouse:** A building covered in glass, plastic or fibreglass where most growing conditions can be controlled by the grower, often with the help of computers, such as temperature, ventilation, humidity, light, water and carbon dioxide.
- **Hydroponic:** A production method where plants are grown using water and nutrients instead of soil.
- **Integrated pest management (IPM):** Is a sustainable approach to managing and reducing pest-related damage to crops that uses cultural, physical, biological and chemical methods. In greenhouses, this means bringing insects that are found throughout nature inside to keep the bad pests out and the good ones in.
- **Irrigation:** Watering crops so that they'll grow.
- **Nutrient:** Any chemical element or compound essential to the growth and development of an organism.
- **Yield:** Describes how much of a specific crop can be harvested from a certain land area.

 Greenhouse
Vegetables
FACT SHEET