



North America: Potato production, 2007

country	area harvested (hectares)	quantity (tonnes)	yield (tonnes/ha)
Bermuda	45	1 100	24.4
Canada	158 927	4 970 938	31.3
United States of America	456 906	20 373 267	44.6
North America	615 878	25 345 305	41.2

Source: FAOSTAT

Top producers, 2007

1 United States of America **2** Canada

North America

North American potato production is concentrated in two countries – the United States of America and Canada, which rank 4th and 13th, respectively, in the potato producing world (their closest regional rival, Bermuda, produced 1 100 tonnes in 2007). Since 1990, both countries have achieved notable increases in yields, which now average around 44 tonnes in the United States. Both are also major exporters of frozen potato products.

1. United States of America



Although the potato was grown in South America for millennia, the first potato patch in North America was only planted in 1719, in New Hampshire (the first French fries

were served at the White House during the Presidency of Thomas Jefferson some 80 years later).

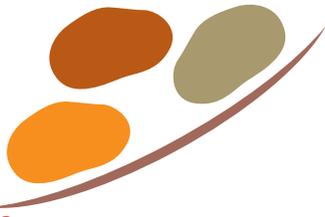
In 2007, the United States harvested 20.3 million tonnes of potatoes, enough to make it the world's fourth biggest producer. Potatoes in the United States are grown in nearly every state, although about half of the crop comes from Idaho, Washington, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Colorado, Oregon, Maine, Minnesota, California and Michigan. Most potatoes are harvested in September and October.

Only about one third of the potatoes grown in the United States is consumed fresh. Around 60 percent of annual output is processed into frozen products (such as frozen fries and wedges), crisps, dehydrated potato and starch, while 6 percent is re-used as seed



Potato harvester in Anza, California

SKYE COMPTON



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of the Potato 2008
*New light on a hidden
treasure*

potato. Americans eat more than 54 kg of potatoes per capita every year. However, fresh potato consumption has declined from more than 22 kg per person in 1993 to just 16 kg in 2006.

2. Canada

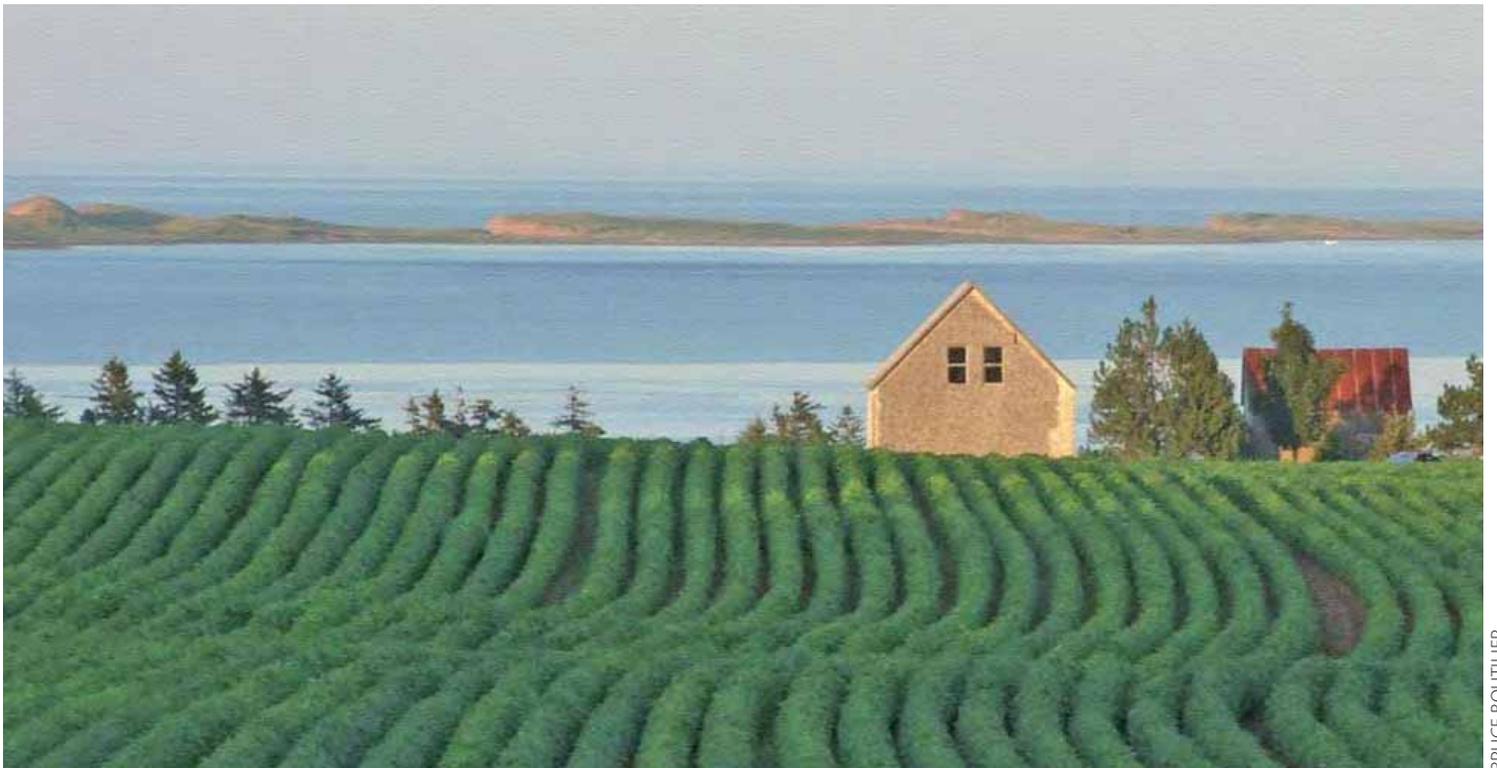


Potatoes were first grown by settlers in New Brunswick, on Canada's Atlantic coast, as early as the mid-1600s. Today, Canada ranks as the world's 13th largest potato grower, with 2007 output of almost five million tonnes. The potato accounts for one third of all vegetable farm cash receipts, or \$846 million in 2007, making it Canada's most important horticultural crop.

*Potato fields
on Prince Edward Island,
Canada*

Since the early 1990s, Canadian potato production has expanded to meet international demand for frozen potato products. In 2006-07, Canada shipped 970 000 tonnes of frozen French fries to foreign markets, making it the second largest French fry exporter after the Netherlands. In the same period, it exported 120 000 tonnes of seed potatoes valued at \$38 million and 470 000 tonnes of table potatoes worth \$140 million.

Potatoes account for about 36 percent of all fresh and processed vegetables consumed in Canada. Despite the potato's popularity, however, total consumption has declined from 76 kg per person in 1994 to 65 kg in 2007.



BRUCE BOUTILIER