

NIAGARA AGRICULTURE PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a very important sector in Niagara both culturally and economically. Niagara has long been known as an agricultural powerhouse in Ontario, specifically for tender fruit and floriculture production. In recent years, the region continues to diversify and produce higher value agricultural outputs.

As of 2016, Niagara was home to 1,827 farms covering 218,251 acres of farmland. Although from 2011 to 2016 the number of farms and farmland area decreased, average farms in Niagara increased in size to produce higher value farm products while continuing to diversify and access new market opportunities. During this same time period, the average farm size in Niagara increased by 7.2% from 111 acres to 119 acres, while gross farm receipt value per acre increased by 17.9% from \$3,256 to \$3,850.

Niagara's agricultural sector also represents a major portion of the value of gross farm receipts in the Golden Horseshoe region of southern Ontario and is becoming increasingly more significant. In 2016, gross farm receipts in Niagara totaled \$838.1 million, which was a 15.5% increase over 2011. This represents 42.8% of the gross farm receipts in the Golden Horseshoe region.

Niagara farms are also investing more in farm capital, which includes land, buildings, animals, equipment, machinery and technology. In 2016, average farm capital was \$2,133,650, which was a 48.9% increase, or \$700,863 more than 2011.

Although the agricultural sector in Niagara is showing significant economic gains, there are some major challenges on the horizon. As of 2016, the average age of a farm operator in Niagara was 56 years and has been increasing consistently. This indicates that farm business succession is a major threat to the sustainability of the sector.

Below you will find key facts about the agricultural sector in Niagara.

NUMBER OF FARMS, RANKED BY TOTAL FARMS, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011	2016	Change	% Change
Niagara Region	2,014	1,827	-187	-9.3%
West Lincoln	444	391	-53	-11.9%
Lincoln	395	364	-31	-7.8%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	352	329	-23	-6.5%
Wainfleet	178	167	-11	-6.2%
Pelham	174	161	-13	-7.5%
St. Catharines	75	83	8	10.7%
Welland/Thorold	54	73	19	35.2%
Grimsby	105	72	-33	-31.4%
Fort Erie	77	68	-9	-11.7%
Port Colborne	72	61	-11	-15.3%
Niagara Falls	88	58	-30	-34.1%

- The total number of farms in Niagara decreased by 9.3% or 187 from 2,014 in 2011 to 1,827 in 2016.
- While West Lincoln, Grimsby and Lincoln had the greatest decrease in the number of farms, Niagara Falls and Grimsby decreased at the highest rate.
- Despite the decrease of total number of farms in Niagara overall, Welland/Thorold had an increase of 19 farms, and St. Catharines had an increase of 8 farms.

FARMLAND AREA (ACRES), RANKED BY AREA, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011	2016	Change	% Change
Niagara Region	222,911	218,251	-4,660	-2.1%
West Lincoln	76,781	66,588	-10,193	-13.3%
Wainfleet	34,635	39,211	4,576	13.2%
Lincoln	24,050	23,615	-435	-1.8%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	19,098	19,310	212	1.1%
Welland/Thorold	10,600	16,662	6,062	57.2%
Pelham	17,937	16,424	-1,513	-8.4%
Fort Erie	9,314	11,839	2,525	27.1%
Port Colborne	11,778	10,523	-1,255	-10.7%
Niagara Falls	9,608	5,322	-4,286	-44.6%
Grimsby	5,975	4,516	-1,459	-24.4%
St. Catharines	3,135	3,931	796	25.4%

- Total farmland area in Niagara has slightly decreased with the exceptions of Fort Erie, Wainfleet, Welland/Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and St. Catharines who saw increases in farmland area.
- Total farmland area in Niagara decreased by 2.1% or 4,660 acres from 222,911 acres in 2011 to 218,251 acres in 2016.
- Niagara Falls had the greatest decrease in farmland area by 44.6% or 4,286 acres. West Lincoln Port Colborne, and Pelham had significant decreases, and Lincoln also had a minor decrease in farmland area.
- Welland/Thorold had a substantial increase in farmland area by 57.2% or 6,062 acres. Fort Erie, St. Catharines, and Wainfleet also had increases, and Niagara-on-the-Lake had a minor increase in farmland area.

LAND OWNERSHIP, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011		2016	
	Percentage Leased, Rented or Crop Shared	% Owned	Percentage Leased, Rented or Crop Shared	% Owned
Niagara Region	37%	63%	39%	61%
Fort Erie	27%	73%	49%	51%
Port Colborne	43%	57%	38%	62%
Wainfleet	36%	64%	43%	57%
West Lincoln	41%	59%	36%	64%
Pelham	45%	55%	49%	51%
Welland/Thorold	59%	41%	59%	41%
Niagara Falls	45%	55%	38%	62%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	19%	81%	20%	80%
St. Catharines	7%	93%	3%	97%
Lincoln	32%	68%	34%	66%
Grimsby	24%	76%	17%	83%

- Most land in Niagara is owned by the farmer farming the land, however, farmland that is leased, rented or crop-shared has slightly increased.
- In 2016, 61% of farmland was owned, and 39% of farmland was leased, rented or crop-shared.
- From 2011 to 2016, farmland ownership had a minor decrease by 2%.
- In 2016, St. Catharines had a high level of farmland ownership at 97%. Grimsby and Niagara-on-the-Lake also had a high level of farmland ownership.
- Welland/Thorold had the lowest level of farmland ownership.

AVERAGE FARM SIZE (ACRES), RANKED BY SIZE, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011	2016	Change	% Change
Wainfleet	195	235	40	20.4%
Welland/Thorold	196	228	32	16.5%
Fort Erie	121	174	53	43.9%
Port Colborne	164	173	9	5.2%
West Lincoln	173	170	-3	-1.6%
Niagara Region	111	119	8	7.6%
Pelham	103	102	-1	-1.0%
Niagara Falls	109	92	-17	-15.8%
Lincoln	61	65	4	6.4%
Grimsby	57	63	6	10.0%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	54	59	5	8.7%
St. Catharines	42	47	5	12.8%

- As the number of farms in Niagara decreased the average size of farms increased by 8 acres from 111 acres in 2011 to 119 acres in 2016. This is a 7.6% increase in average size. In 2016, there were fewer farms, but the farms were larger in size.
- Fort Erie, Wainfleet and Welland/Thorold had substantial increases in average farm size while St. Catharines, Grimsby Niagara-on-the-Lake, Lincoln and Port Colborne had a moderate increase in average farm size.
- Niagara Falls had the greatest decrease in average farm size by 15.8% or 17 acres, and West Lincoln and Pelham had a minor decrease in average farm size.

NUMBER OF FARMS BY FARM TYPE, RANKED BY TOTAL FARMS, NIAGARA REGION, 2011 AND 2016

Farm Type	2011	2016	Change	% Change
Total number of farms	2,014	1,827	-187	-9.3%
Fruit and tree nut farming	637	547	-90	-14.1%
Oilseed and grain farming	316	326	10	3.2%
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production	283	254	-29	-10.2%
Other animal production	231	178	-53	-22.9%
Poultry and egg production	164	175	11	6.7%
Other crop farming (tobacco, hay, combination, maple)	159	142	-17	-10.7%
Cattle ranching and farming	104	91	-13	-12.5%
Vegetable and melon farming	64	73	9	14.1%
Sheep and goat farming	38	24	-14	-36.8%
Hog and pig farming	18	17	-1	-5.6%

- Niagara's agricultural base is diverse with a large number of farms across a variety of farm types.
- Fruit and tree nut farming; oilseed and grain farming; and, greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production are the top 3 farm types by number of farms.
- There is also a substantial number of animal, poultry and egg and other crop (tobacco, hay, combination and maple) farms.
- Vegetable and melon, sheep and goat, and hog and pig farm types have the lowest number of farms although the number is still substantial.

FARMLAND AREA (ACRES) BY LAND USE, RANKED BY AREA, NIAGARA REGION, 2011 AND 2016

Description	2011	2016	Change	% Change
Total farm area	222,911	218,251	-4660	-2.1%
Total area of hay and field crops	151,633	152,564	931	0.6%
Total area of fruits, berries and nuts (producing and non-producing)	25,903	24,892	-1,011	-3.9%
Area in Christmas trees, woodlands, and wetlands	16,340	15,253	-1,087	-6.7%
All other land	15,615	14,112	-1,503	-9.6%
Natural land for pasture	3,346	3,639	293	8.8%
Tame or seeded pasture	3,695	2,606	-1,089	-29.5%
Summerfallow land	1,834	1,134	-700	-38.2%
Total area of nursery products grown for sale	2,037	x	x	x
Total area of vegetables (excluding greenhouse vegetables)	1,617	x	x	x
Total area of sod under cultivation for sale	891	x	x	x

- From 2011 to 2016, total farmland area in Niagara decreased; however, total area of hay and field crops, and natural land for pasture increased.
- Total area of fruits, berries and nuts; area in Christmas trees, woodlands, and wetlands; and, tame of seeded pasture had decreases at similar levels, while all other land had the greatest level of decrease. Summerfallow land had the lowest level of decrease.

NUMBER OF FARMS, NIAGARA REGION AND GOLDEN HORSESHOE, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011	2016	% Change
Golden Horseshoe	6,090	5,531	-9.2%
Niagara Region	2,014	1,827	-9.3%

- The total number of farms is decreasing in Niagara and the Golden Horseshoe at a similar rate.
- From 2011 to 2016, both Niagara and the Golden Horseshoe experienced a decrease in the number of farms of 9.3% and 9.2% respectively.

FARMLAND AREA, NIAGARA REGION AND GOLDEN HORSESHOE, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	Acres			Average Size (Acres)			% of Golden Horseshoe	
	2011	2016	% Change	2011	2016	% Change	2011	2016
Golden Horseshoe	977,481	934,198	-4.4%	161	176	9.3%	100.0%	100.0%
Niagara Region	222,911	218,251	-2.1%	111	119	7.6%	22.8%	23.4%

- Farmland area is decreasing at a quicker rate within the Golden Horseshoe when compared to Niagara, but average size of farms is getting larger for both.
- From 2011 to 2016, both the Golden Horseshoe and Niagara had a decrease in farmland area, but the Golden Horseshoe rate more than doubled the decrease in Niagara.
- Niagara's share of farmland area within the Golden Horseshoe increased by 0.6% from 22.8% in 2011 to 23.4% in 2016.

GROSS FARM RECEIPTS, NIAGARA REGION AND GOLDEN HORSESHOE, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	GFR (\$)			Per Acre (\$)			% of Golden Horseshoe	
	2011	2016	% Change	2011	2016	% Change	2011	2016
Golden Horseshoe	1,716,206,729	1,959,172,301	14.2%	1,756	2,097	19.4%	100.0%	100.0%
Niagara Region	725,831,453	838,113,788	15.5%	3,256	3,840	17.9%	42.3%	42.8%

- The value of agricultural sales in both the Golden Horseshoe and Niagara has increased substantially
- Both the Golden Horseshoe and Niagara had substantial increases in the value of gross farm receipts.
- Niagara's share of Golden Horseshoe gross farm receipts also increased by 0.5%. Niagara's position within the Golden Horseshoe agricultural sector is becoming more prominent.

GROSS FARM RECEIPTS, RANKS BY VALUE, NIAGARA REGION GOLDEN HORSESHOE AND ONTARIO, 2006, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2006 (\$)	2011 (\$)	Change	% Change	2016 (\$)	Change	% Change
Ontario	10,342,031,229	11,890,835,395	1,548,804,166	15.00%	15,126,845,283	3,236,009,888	27.20%
Golden Horseshoe	1,573,787,767	1,716,206,729	142,418,962	9.00%	1,959,172,301	242,965,572	14.20%
Niagara Region	671,680,773	725,831,453	54,150,680	8.10%	838,113,788	112,282,335	15.50%
Durham Region	239,539,007	273,237,098	33,698,091	14.10%	321,749,341	48,512,243	17.80%
York Region	224,119,932	260,121,662	36,001,730	16.10%	301,462,398	41,340,736	15.90%
Halton Region	132,041,893	123,942,913	-8,098,980	-6.10%	143,802,693	19,859,780	16.00%
Hamilton	224,776,914	244,217,225	19,440,311	8.60%	259,909,162	15,691,937	6.40%
Peel Region	81,629,248	88,856,378	7,227,130	8.90%	94,134,919	5,278,541	5.90%

- From 2011 to 2016, the value of gross farm receipts in Ontario, the Golden Horseshoe, and Niagara increased. Peel and Hamilton had relatively moderate increases, while the others including Niagara, had substantial increases.
- From 2006 to 2011, Niagara had a \$54.15 million or 8.1% increase, and from 2011 to 2016 Niagara had a \$112.28 million or 15.5% increase, which indicates that the value of agricultural sales increased.

GROSS FARM RECEIPTS, RANKED BY VALUE, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011 (\$)	2016 (\$)	Change	% Change
Niagara Region	725,831,453	838,113,788	112,282,335	15.5%
Lincoln	190,859,305	253,834,638	62,975,333	33.0%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	157,280,430	169,108,335	11,827,905	7.5%
West Lincoln	140,871,566	144,214,198	3,342,632	2.4%
St. Catharines	82,427,329	77,573,999	-4,853,330	-5.9%
Wainfleet	42,985,613	52,075,542	9,089,929	21.1%
Pelham	44,517,010	48,145,486	3,628,476	8.2%
Grimsby	26,655,309	43,997,603	17,342,294	65.1%
Niagara Falls	13,390,575	17,534,647	4,144,072	30.9%
Welland/Thorold	9,778,601	14,430,294	4,651,693	47.6%
Port Colborne	10,069,240	9,250,537	-818,703	-8.1%
Fort Erie	6,996,475	7,948,509	952,034	13.6%

- From 2011 to 2016, the value of gross farm receipts in Niagara increased substantially by \$112.28 million.
- Lincoln contributed the majority of the increase by adding 56.1% or \$62.98 million to the Niagara total, while Grimsby, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Wainfleet were also major contributors.
- Port Colborne and St. Catharines were the only municipalities to see a decrease in the value of gross farm receipts.

GROSS FARM RECEIPTS PER ACRE, RANKED BY VALUE, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011 (\$)	2016 (\$)	Change (\$)	% Change
St. Catharines	26,293	19,734	-6,559	-24.9%
Lincoln	7,936	10,749	2,813	35.4%
Grimsby	4,461	9,743	5,282	118.4%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	8,235	8,758	523	6.3%
Niagara Region	3,256	3,840	584	17.9%
Niagara Falls	1,394	3,295	1,901	136.4%
Pelham	2,482	2,931	449	18.1%
West Lincoln	1,835	2,166	331	18.0%
Wainfleet	1,241	1,328	87	7.0%
Port Colborne	855	879	24	2.8%
Welland/Thorold	923	866	-57	-6.2%
Fort Erie	751	671	-80	-10.6%

- From 2011 to 2016, the value of gross farm receipts per acre in Niagara increased by 17.9% or \$584 per acre. This indicates that farmland is producing greater value per acre.
- Grimsby had the highest increase in gross farm receipt value per acre of \$5,282, but Niagara Falls had the highest growth rate of 136.4%.
- Lincoln, Pelham, and West Lincoln had moderate increases in gross farm receipts per acre, and Wainfleet, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Port Colborne had minimal increases. Welland/Thorold, Fort Erie and St. Catharines showed decreases in gross farm receipts per acre.

TYPE OF FARM, RANKED BY GROSS FARM RECEIPT, NIAGARA REGION, 2011 AND 2016

Farm Type	2011 (\$)	2016 (\$)	Change	% Change
All farms	725,831,453	838,113,788	112,282,335	15.5%
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production	338,430,597	411,275,935	72,845,338	21.5%
Poultry and egg production	150,209,715	154,447,372	4,237,657	2.8%
Fruit and tree nut farming	132,458,802	139,975,834	7,517,032	5.7%
Oilseed and grain farming	53,128,979	57,039,970	3,910,991	7.4%
Hog and pig farming	6,795,738	29,606,505	22,810,767	335.7%
Dairy cattle and milk production	17,176,952	19,601,848	2,424,896	14.1%
Other animal production	15,700,892	10,834,585	-4,866,307	-31.0%
Other crop farming	4,475,443	8,978,124	4,502,681	100.6%
Vegetable and melon farming	5,162,702	3,092,587	-2,070,115	-40.1%
Beef cattle ranching and farming, and feedlots	1,690,156	2,161,101	470,945	27.9%
Sheep and goat farming	601,477	1,099,927	498,450	82.9%

- From 2011 to 2016, Niagara saw an increase in the value of gross farm receipts across most farm types, other than other animal production, and vegetable and melon farming.
- Hog and pig farming had exponential growth of 335.7% or \$22.81 million, and other crop farming had increases of 100.6% or \$4.5 million.
- Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production saw the greatest increase in real value by \$72.85 million to a total of \$411.28 million, which is 49% of the value of all agricultural gross farm receipts for Niagara.
- Poultry and egg production, and fruit and tree nut farming were second and third in terms of value of gross farm receipts at \$154.45 million and \$139.98 million, respectively.

FARM OPERATING COSTS PER ACRE, RANKS BY VALUE, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011 (\$)	2016 (\$)	Change (\$)	% Change
St. Catharines	23,808	16,971	-6,837	-28.7%
Lincoln	7,365	9,598	2,233	30.3%
Grimsby	4,044	8,441	4,397	108.7%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	7,108	7,163	55	0.8%
Niagara Region	2,856	3,238	382	13.4%
Niagara Falls	1,188	2,848	1,660	139.8%
Pelham	2,210	2,417	207	9.4%
West Lincoln	1,511	1,701	190	12.6%
Wainfleet	1,035	1,083	48	4.7%
Port Colborne	718	770	52	7.2%
Welland/Thorold	677	697	20	3.0%
Fort Erie	682	554	-128	-18.7%

- Farm operating costs per acre vary widely across Niagara and the local municipalities. St. Catharines, Lincoln, Grimsby, and Niagara-on-the-Lake had much higher operating costs per acre than Niagara Falls, Pelham, West Lincoln, Wainfleet, Port Colborne, Welland/Thorold, and Fort Erie. This is due to the difference among farm types and farmland area.
- From 2011 to 2016, St. Catharines had a significant decrease of 28.7% or \$6,837 in farm operating cost per acre and Fort Erie had a decrease of 18.7% or \$128.
- During this same time frame, Grimsby had a substantial increase of 108.7% or \$4,397 per acre, Lincoln had a substantial increase of 30.3% or \$2,233 per acre, Niagara Falls had a substantial increase of \$1,660 per acre. Pelham, West Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Port Colborne, Wainfleet, and Welland/Thorold had minor increases.

OPERATING COST PER FARM, RANKED BY VALUE, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2016

Geography	2011 (\$)	2016 (\$)	Change (\$)	% Change
St. Catharines	995,191	803,754	-191,437	-19.2%
Lincoln	448,456	622,676	174,220	38.8%
Grimsby	230,124	529,421	299,297	130.1%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	385,644	420,394	34,750	9.0%
Niagara Region	316,083	386,793	70,710	22.4%
West Lincoln	261,321	289,689	28,368	10.9%
Niagara Falls	129,667	261,362	131,695	101.6%
Wainfleet	201,386	254,353	52,967	26.3%
Pelham	227,817	246,583	18,766	8.2%
Welland/Thorold	132,932	159,083	26,151	19.7%
Port Colborne	117,388	132,785	15,397	13.1%
Fort Erie	82,437	96,486	14,049	17.0%

- Given the diversity of agriculture across the Region, operating costs by farm also vary greatly among Niagara's local municipalities.
- St. Catharines was the only municipality to have a decrease in operating cost per farm. The increase was 19.2% or \$191,437 per farm.
- Grimsby had a significant increase of 130.1% or \$299,297 per farm, and Niagara Falls also had a significant increase of 101.6% or \$131,695 per farm.
- Lincoln had a moderate increase of 38.8% or \$174,220 per farm. Wainfleet, Welland/Thorold, Fort Erie, Port Colborne, West Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Pelham had minor increases.

TOTAL FARM GROSS FARM RECEIPTS, EXPENSES, NET REVENUES, AND RATIO OF EXPENSES AND REVENUES, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011

Geography	2011			
	Receipts (\$)	Expenses (\$)	Net Revenue (\$)	Ratio Expenses/Revenues
Niagara Region	725,831,453	636,591,140	89,240,313	0.88
Fort Erie	6,996,475	6,347,637	648,838	0.91
Port Colborne	10,069,240	8,451,901	1,617,339	0.84
Wainfleet	42,985,613	35,846,753	7,138,860	0.83
West Lincoln	140,871,566	116,026,590	24,844,976	0.82
Pelham	44,517,010	39,640,101	4,876,909	0.89
Welland/Thorold	9,778,601	7,178,311	2,600,290	0.73
Niagara Falls	13,390,575	11,410,713	1,979,862	0.85
Niagara-on-the-Lake	157,280,430	135,746,687	21,533,743	0.86
St. Catharines	82,427,329	74,639,332	7,787,997	0.91
Lincoln	190,859,305	177,140,043	13,719,262	0.93
Grimsby	26,655,309	24,163,072	2,492,237	0.91

- In 2011, farms in Niagara had total expenses of \$636,591,140 while net revenue was \$89,240,313. The ratio of expenses to revenues was 0.88, which was similar among the local municipalities in Niagara other than Welland/Thorold at 0.73.

TOTAL GROSS FARM RECEIPTS, EXPENSES, NET REVENUES AND RATIO OF EXPENSES AND REVENUES, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2016

	2016			
Geography	Receipts (\$)	Expenses (\$)	Net Revenues (\$)	Ratio Expenses/ Revenues
Niagara Region	838,113,788	706,671,692	131,442,096	0.84
Fort Erie	7,948,509	6,561,042	1,387,467	0.83
Port Colborne	9,250,537	8,099,890	1,150,647	0.88
Wainfleet	52,075,542	42,476,918	9,598,624	0.82
West Lincoln	144,214,198	113,268,360	30,945,838	0.79
Pelham	48,145,486	39,699,874	8,445,612	0.82
Welland/Thorold	14,430,294	11,613,024	2,817,270	0.8
Niagara Falls	17,534,647	15,158,980	2,375,667	0.86
Niagara-on-the-Lake	169,108,335	138,309,787	30,798,548	0.82
St. Catharines	77,573,999	66,711,547	10,862,452	0.86
Lincoln	253,834,638	226,653,970	27,180,668	0.89
Grimsby	43,997,603	38,118,300	5,879,303	0.87

- From 2011 to 2016, gross farm receipts increased at a higher rate than expenses resulting in a 47.3% or \$42.2 million in net revenue across all farms.
- In Niagara, the increase in net revenue resulted in a decrease in the ratio of expenses to revenues decreasing to 0.84.
- In 2016, the ratio of expenses to revenues changed slightly in each local municipality. Welland/Thorold, Port Colborne, and Niagara Falls had slight increases, while Wainfleet, West Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Lincoln, Grimsby, St. Catharines, Pelham, and Fort Erie had decreases.

AVERAGE FARM CAPITAL, RANKED BY VALUE, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2011	2016	Change	% Change
Niagara-on-the-Lake	1,768,351	2,576,249	807,898	45.7%
Wainfleet	1,431,319	2,504,184	1,072,865	75.0%
Lincoln	1,543,258	2,422,954	879,696	57.0%
Niagara Region	1,432,787	2,133,650	700,863	48.9%
Pelham	1,324,747	1,943,877	619,130	46.7%
Niagara Falls	1,450,228	1,941,094	490,866	33.8%
West Lincoln	1,235,854	1,913,744	677,890	54.9%
St. Catharines	1,683,324	1,854,043	170,719	10.1%
Welland/Thorold	1,463,200	1,831,232	368,032	25.2%
Grimsby	1,508,852	1,547,898	39,046	2.6%
Port Colborne	972,666	1,415,231	442,565	45.5%
Fort Erie	756,396	1,342,253	585,857	77.5%

- In 2016, average farm capital including land, buildings, animals, equipment, machinery, and technology was \$2.13 million. This was an increase of 45.7% or \$807,898 over 2011, indicating that farms in Niagara invested heavily from 2011 to 2016.
- Fort Erie, Wainfleet, Lincoln, West Lincoln had increases over 50% on average farm capital, while Pelham, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Port Colborne, Niagara Falls, Welland/Thorold, and Grimsby had increases less than 50%.

AVERAGE AGE OF FARM OPERATORS, RANKED BY AGE, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	2006	2011	2016
Niagara Falls	55.2	59.1	60.2
Port Colborne	53.9	55.8	58.5
Welland/Thorold	54.4	55.5	57.3
Fort Erie	53.5	58.1	57.2
Niagara-on-the-Lake	54.1	55.7	57
Lincoln	53.3	55.5	56.9
St. Catharines	55.5	54.5	56.8
Grimsby	53.5	54.9	56.1
Niagara Region	53.1	55.2	56
Pelham	54.1	56.3	55.6
West Lincoln	51.5	53.9	54
Wainfleet	49.7	52.4	53.4

- In Niagara, the average age of farm operators continues to increase.
- In 2016, the average age of a farm operator in Niagara was 56 years, a 0.8 year increase over 2011 and a 2.9 year increase over 2006.

AGE AND GENDER CHARACTERISTICS OF FARM OPERATORS, NIAGARA REGION AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES, 2011 AND 2016

Geography	All		Male		Female		Under 35		35 to 54		55+	
	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016
Niagara Region	2,980	2,615	2,085	1,820	900	795	160	175	1,345	995	1,474	1,445
Fort Erie	100	90	65	65	40	25	5	5	30	30	60	55
Port Colborne	105	85	70	55	35	35	10	5	40	30	60	55
Wainfleet	265	250	190	170	80	80	15	25	160	115	100	115
West Lincoln	670	560	455	390	210	165	40	55	310	225	320	275
Pelham	265	240	180	160	90	80	15	15	115	100	135	125
Welland/Thorold	85	100	55	80	25	25	5	5	40	40	35	55
Niagara Falls	120	85	90	50	35	30	5	0	45	30	70	55
Niagara-on-the-Lake	525	450	365	325	155	130	20	30	225	140	280	280
St. Catharines	110	115	85	85	25	30	10	5	55	40	50	65
Lincoln	580	530	410	365	165	160	25	25	265	195	285	310
Grimsby	165	110	110	75	45	35	15	5	60	50	85	55

- In 2016, there were 2,615 farm operators in Niagara, which was a 365 decrease in the number of operators since 2011.
- From 2011 to 2016, the number of male farm operators decreased more than the number of female farm operators. The number of male farms operators decreased by 12.7% or 265 people, while female farm operators decreased by 11.7% or 105 people.
- There was a slight increase in the number of farm operations across the region under the age of 35.

Sources

Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture, 2011 and 2016 including CANSIM tables 004-0201, 004-0204, 004-0005, 004-0200, 004-0202, 004-0233, 004-0235, 004-0234, 004-0239, 004-0238, as well as special data tabulations provided by Statistics Canada.

Glossary of Terms

GROSS FARM RECEIPTS: Gross farm receipt refers to the gross farm receipts of the agricultural operation in the year prior to Census or the last complete accounting (fiscal) year. This includes receipts from all agricultural and forest products sold, program payments and custom work receipts. It does not include sales forestry products (firewood, pulpwood, logs, fence posts, pilings, etc.), of capital items (quota, land, machinery, etc.), or receipts from the sale of any goods purchased only for retail sales. It is gross receipts before deducting expenses.

GOLDEN HORSESHOE: In the context of this study, Golden Horseshoe refers the geographical area consisting of the municipalities of Niagara Region, City of Hamilton, Halton Region, Peel Region, Durham Region, and York Region.

OPERATING COST PER FARM: Estimates of farm operating costs represent business costs incurred by farm operators for goods and services used in the production of agricultural commodities. All expense information is on a calendar-year basis. If direct rebates are paid to farmers to reduce the cost of particular inputs, then the net expense estimates are used in the preparation of net income, although both gross and net expenses may be displayed. As the objective is to produce provincial estimates of net income, within-province flows from one farm to another are excluded from the estimates.

FARM OPERATOR: Those persons responsible for the management decisions in operating an agricultural operation. They can be owners, tenants or hired managers of the agricultural operation, including those responsible for management decisions pertinent to particular aspects of the farm such as planting, harvesting, raising animals, marketing and sales, and making capital purchases and other financial decisions. Not included are accountants, lawyers, veterinarians, crop advisors, herbicide consultants, and other service providers who make recommendations affecting the agricultural operation but are not ultimately responsible for management decisions.