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In 1987, 59.4 million tonnes of grains and oilseeds were produced in Canada. Of this total, 78.5 per cent was produced in Western Canada, 15.3 per cent in Ontario, four per cent in Quebec and 0.4 per cent in Atlantic Canada. Wheat was the largest crop, accounting for 44 per cent of total production (96.7 per cent of all wheat was grown in Western Canada, 2.4 per cent in Ontario, 0.7 per cent in Quebec and 0.2 per cent in Atlantic Canada). The second largest crop was barley, comprising 24 per cent of total production (distributed across Canada in a similar way to wheat). Corn, the third largest crop, comprising 11.8 per cent of the total, was grown primarily in Eastern Canada (20 per cent in Quebec, 78 per cent in Ontario and two per cent in Western Canada). Canola was the largest oilseed crop in Canada (6.5 per cent of grain and oilseeds production) and was grown primarily in Western Canada (99.2 per cent). Soybeans was the second largest oilseed crop (2.1 per cent of total production) and was grown only in Ontario (98.8 per cent) and Quebec (1.2 per cent). Other crops grown (accounting for 4.3 per cent of the total) were rye, mixed grains, flaxseed, mustardseed and sunflowerseed.

The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) is the sole marketing agency for wheat, oats and barley grown on the Prairies and destined for export or for human consumption within Canada. Board sales of these grains account for 88 per cent of the volume of sales of the principal grains in Western Canada. Open market sales of grains, which also include flaxseed, rye and canola, account for the remaining 12 per cent.

Feed grains for domestic consumption may either be delivered to the CWB or sold on the open market at the producer's option. Producers normally sell most feed wheat to the Board. Over the period 1980-81 to 1984-85, producers sold about 45 per cent of their feed oats and 16 per cent of their feed barley on the open market. About 40 per cent of barley production and lesser amounts of the other feed grains are exported.

Other grains and all oilseeds on the Prairies, most notably canola, are sold through the open market into the commercial handling system. About half of the canola crop is exported, mainly as seed, with the remainder processed and consumed domestically as oil and meal.

The Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board markets all Ontario wheat. Other grains in Ontario are handled by the private trade. In Quebec, wheat, corn and soybeans are marketed by the private trade. Wheat in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island is marketed by the Nova Scotia Winter Grains Marketing Board. Other grains produced in Atlantic Canada are marketed through the private trade.