

THE LAND

Canada is the second largest country in the world, stretching 6 440 km (4 000 miles) from east to west and 4 830 km (3 000 miles) from north to south. Of the total land area of 9 312 703 km² (3 581 809 square miles), 702 000 km² (270 000 square miles) are classed as farmland, concentrated mainly in a narrow band along the southern border.

Canada has a major resource base in the form of about 20 235 000 hectares (50 million acres) of rangeland in the west and 2 023 500 hectares (about five million acres) in the east. In addition to the rangelands, an estimated 2 428 200 hectares (six million acres) of hay, grass and corn silage and 1 618 800 hectares (four million acres) of cereal are used for beef production.

Although beef cattle are raised in most areas of the country, the largest concentrations of purebred stock are in the western provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, and in the Great Lakes peninsula of southern Ontario. Western herds are subject to greater climatic extremes and required to graze over wider and rougher terrains. The Ontario herds are usually found on more highly developed pastures. In the westernmost province of British Columbia, large herds thrive on the Interior Plateau and in forested areas. In the Maritime Provinces on the east coast, herds are under more intensive care in a mixed farming economy. The diverse systems of beef production in Canada have produced a type of beef animal that adapts well to widely varied environmental conditions.

