



# WORLD PROCESSING TOMATO COUNCIL

## Tomato processing in Canada

An average of 462 000 metric tonnes of tomatoes for processing were grown in Canada over the last three years, which represents about 1.1 % of WPTC volume.



Virtually all of the tomatoes grown in Canada for processing are produced in Ontario. The main growing area in South western Ontario is located in the Kent and Essex Counties, where a unique combination of climate and soils has created an area suitable to the production of processing tomatoes.

In 1988, there were 31,490 acres of tomatoes in production. Tomato acreage has steadily declined due to dramatic improvements in yield performance, and only 13 166 acres were planted in 2011: the yields rose from 18.1 tons per acre (40.7 tonnes per hectare) in 1988, to 40.4 tons (90.5 tonnes per hectare) in 1998 and 39.6 tons per acre (88.7 tonnes per hectare) in 2010. The average price paid for fresh tomatoes in 2011 was 102.8 Canadian Dollars (about 102 US \$) per ton ex field.

	2009	2010	2011
Volume processed (metric tonnes)	495	466	426
Pourcentage of world production	1,2%	1,2%	1,1%
Surface (hectares)	5300	5000	5184
Average yield (t/ha)	93,5	93,2	83,5
Average price of tomatoes for paste	125,4 CAD	102 CAD	102,8 CAD

All tomato acreage in Ontario is measured by an independent third party, which also provides independent third party grading to the industry each year .Ontario's greenhouses supply all the required seedlings for processing tomato growers. The

Ontario industry utilizes 100% transplants for planting. There are close to 40 acres of greenhouses used for transplants producing approximately 200 million tomato seedlings for Ontario and U.S. growers.

The seedlings are normally transplanted in early May, as soon as the risk of night frost has disappeared. About 90/95 days are needed between transplanting and harvest for early varieties and 110/125 days for late varieties. Approximately 50% of the surface is irrigated. Generally spring and summer rains are sufficient to cover water needs, however, drought conditions in some years has resulted in a strong focus on drip irrigation with significant grower investment being made over. Harvest takes place between early August and mid-October, and is fully mechanized.

There are 8 tomato processing facilities in the province, the largest three H.J. Heinz Company of Canada Ltd., CanGro Foods Inc. (formerly Kraft Canada Inc.) and Sun-Brite Canning Ltd. process approximately 85 % of the total volume. The distribution of the tomato production is usually as follows:

- 70% of tomatoes are made into tomato paste, manufactured during harvest season and reprocessed internally to manufacture ketchup, soups and sauces.
- 20% made into whole peeled tomatoes.
- 10% made into juice from fresh tomatoes.

## **OPVG & OF&VPA**

Within the WPTC, Canada is represented by both the Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers (OPVG) and the Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Processors Association (OF&VPA).

The Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers is a producer organization established in 1944 to bargain collectively for prices and terms and conditions of sale with Ontario processors for 12 processing crops, of which tomatoes are the largest. Each producer contracts directly with his own processor for quantities required, varieties to be grown and planting schedules to be utilised. The board funds and co-ordinates research relating to processing vegetable production. In 1998 the Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers and the Ontario Food Processors Association joined together to form the Ontario Tomato Research Institute which funds research relating to all aspects of processing tomatoes. They also jointly organise the Ontario Processing Vegetable Industry Conference each January.