

1.5.1 What is on the Canadian table?

The Canada Food Guide recommends the number of food servings Canadians should eat each day depending on age and sex.⁷² For example, women aged 19 to 50 should have 7 to 8 servings of vegetables and fruit, 6 to 7 servings of grain products, 2 servings of milk and alternatives, and 2 servings of meat and alternatives on a daily basis.

Since 1976, the average number of calories available per person from Canada's food supply has increased 9% from 3,118 kcal to 3,384 kcal (Chart 1.13).⁸

Not all this food is eaten—wastage occurs from spoilage and other losses in stores, in restaurants and in the home. In 2007, loss of solid food was estimated at over 6.0 million tonnes between retail level and the plate—the equivalent of 183 kg per person.^{7,9} Another 2.8 billion litres of liquids including milk and milk products, coffee, tea, pop and juices were also wasted. These losses do not include losses at the production level or during food processing.

Waste food can be composted, but often ends up as landfill or down the drain. Food waste also represents a waste of other resources, as considerable water,

energy, and greenhouse gas emissions are involved in producing, transporting, and preparing food.

Over 70% of the food Canadians buy is produced domestically, including 80% of meat and dairy products and 76% of breads and cereals. Imports account for 40% of all fish and fruit and vegetables.⁵

In 2007, about \$24 billion worth of food was imported into Canada from 198 different countries.⁶ The top ten countries provided 80% of the value of food imports: countries outside of North America provided 40% (Table 1.12).

Table 1.12

Imports of food into Canada by country, 2007

	Imports	Total food imports	
	millions of dollars	percent	rank
World	23,729.0	100.0	
United States	13,542.5	57.1	1
Mexico	906.6	3.8	2
China	799.0	3.4	3
Italy	691.6	2.9	4
France	686.0	2.9	5
Brazil	665.1	2.8	6
Chile	523.1	2.2	7
Thailand	483.1	2.0	8
Australia	441.8	1.9	9
United Kingdom	393.6	1.7	10

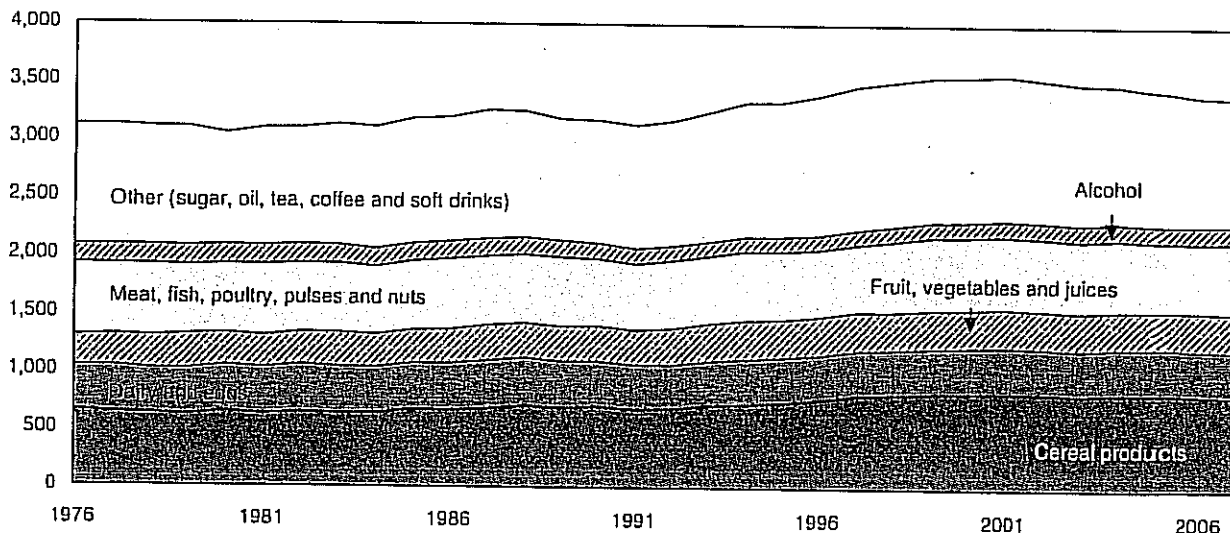
Source(s): Statistics Canada, 2008, International Trade Division, special tabulation.

See note(s) at the end of the section.

Chart 1.13

Energy available from the Canadian food supply, per person, per day, 1976 to 2007

kilocalories



Source(s): Statistics Canada, 2008, Canada Food Stats Database, Catalogue no. 23F0001X, version 1.12 June 2008.