



# THE CENSUS AND YOU

## WHAT IS THE CENSUS?

In Canada, a census is taken every five years. The Census of Population collects demographic, social and economic information from households. The Census of Agriculture collects information about every agricultural operation in Canada. Together, they paint a portrait of Canada's population and farming sector, providing high-quality information that helps Canadians make important decisions that affect their families, their communities and their businesses.

## WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT?

Census data are used by all levels of government, Indigenous communities and organizations, community and farm organizations, businesses, and many others to support decision-making. The information you provide ensures that the census accurately reflects Canada's changing society.

## WHO MUST COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE?

Participation in the 2026 Census of Population is mandatory for all residents. This includes Canadian citizens (by birth or naturalization), landed immigrants, refugee claimants (e.g., asylum seekers), Canadian Foreign Service officers, Canadian Armed Forces members stationed abroad, and persons who hold a work or study permit.

Any person responsible for operating a farm or an agricultural operation should complete a 2026 Census of Agriculture questionnaire. One questionnaire should be completed for every census farm.

## HOW IS THE CENSUS CONDUCTED?

Households in select northern and remote areas receive a census invitation letter in February 2026. All other households and agricultural operations receive their invitation letter in early May 2026. These letters provide information about the census, as well as instructions on how to complete the questionnaire.

Statistics Canada may follow up by phone or in person if a completed questionnaire is not received.

## IS MY INFORMATION KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Statistics Canada respects your privacy and places the highest priority on protecting it. All information collected by Statistics Canada is kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only, in accordance with the *Statistics Act*. For more information, please refer to [Statistics Canada's Trust Centre](#).