Agrifood Export Performance

This publication assesses Manitoba’s agrifood export performance on a quarterly basis and highlights key trends. With a significantly higher export performance in the first quarter of 2020, compared to the same quarter in 2019, Manitoba’s agrifood exports have shown resilience to the COVID-19 pandemic. Manitoba’s ability to keep exporting through a pandemic such as COVID-19 provides assurance to its key trade partners and maintains Manitoba’s reputation as a dependable supplier of safe, quality agrifood products.

Top Ten Agrifood Export Commodities and Products

Manitoba’s first quarter agrifood export growth significantly outperformed the agrifood export growth at the national level. In the first quarter of 2020, Manitoba exported $1.7 billion worth of agricultural commodities and processed products, an increase of 16 per cent compared to the same quarter in 2019. During the same period, Manitoba’s total export increased by 13.5 per cent, from $3.8 billion in 2019 to $4.3 billion in 2020. Canada’s agrifood exports in the first quarter of 2020 was $16.3 billion, an increase of 8.5 per cent, compared to the $15 billion export value in the first quarter of 2019.

Meat and meat products accounted for 23 per cent of total agrifood export values in the first quarter of 2020, followed by oilseeds (20 per cent), grains (18 per cent), animal and vegetable fats and oils (12 per cent), and preparation of vegetables, mainly frozen potatoes (seven per cent). These five commodities and products constitute 80.2 per cent of Manitoba’s total agrifood exports in the first quarter of 2020. The chart below indicates the top ten agrifood export commodities and products in the first quarter of 2020.
First Quarter Export Performance (2020 versus 2019)

In the first quarter of 2020, meat and meat products have shown the largest percentage increase, as compared to the same quarter in 2019. While meat export values increased by 42.6 per cent, from $268.7 million in the first quarter of 2019 to $383.1 million in the same period in 2020, meat export volume increased by 19.8 per cent, from 81.7 thousand tonnes to 97.8 thousand tonnes. Oilseed exports showed the second-largest percentage increase in the first quarter of 2020. The value of oilseed exports increased by 42.5 per cent, from $232.6 million to $331.3 million. The volume of oilseed exports also increased by 61.1 per cent, from 333.3 thousand tonnes to 536.9 thousand tonnes. Animal and vegetable fats and oils – mainly canola oil – showed the third largest percentage increase, where the export value increased by 32.5 per cent, from $146.1 million in the first quarter of 2019, to $193.7 million in the same period in 2020. The export volume of animal and vegetable fats and oils increased by 37.1 per cent, from 114.4 thousand tonnes to 156.9 thousand tonnes.

On the other hand, grains and live animals exports were down by 14.3 per cent and 20 per cent in the first quarter of 2020, as compared to the same period in 2019, respectively. The value grain export decreased from $345.3 million to $269.0 million. Wheat exports value, which accounted for 84.8 per cent of the total grains export value during this export period, decreased by 16.2 per cent, from $292 million to $245 million. Wheat export volume decreased by 12.4 per cent, from 887.7 thousand tonnes to 777.5 thousand tonnes. Similarly, barley export value and volume decreased by 37.3 per cent and 27 per cent, respectively. The two grains that showed an increase in export values were oats and buckwheat, where the export values increased by 16.2 and 43.8 per cent, respectively. The graph below presents the percentage changes in export values between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, and between February and March of 2020.

In March 2020, exports of edible vegetables, root and tubers, and pulses increased by 78.6 per cent, compared to the previous month, where exports of dried beans, frozen potatoes and dried peas increased by 317.4 per cent, 64.2 per cent, and 33.1 per cent, respectively. Compared to February 2020, oilseeds export also increased by 55.1 per cent in March 2020, where soybean export increased by 467.2 per cent, canola by 70 per cent, and mustard seed 39.8 per cent. Grains exports showed the third largest percentage increase in March 2020, compared to the previous month. Barley export increased by 94.1 per cent in March 2020, compared to February 2020. This was followed by oats (53.3 per cent) and wheat (42.9 per cent). The large increase in pulse and grain exports in March is mainly related to the panic-buying of dried foods and other essential products in many parts of the world. Increased demand from China boosted oilseeds export.

Top Five Export Destinations

In the first quarter of 2020, the top five export destinations for Manitoba’s agrifood products were the United States, Japan, China, Mexico and Indonesia. This ranking remains unchanged, compared to the same period in 2019. There was also little change in the share of the top five export destinations. The top five countries accounted for 81.2 per cent of Manitoba’s total
agrifood exports in the first quarter of 2020. The United States accounted for 45.7 per cent of Manitoba’s total agrifood exports, 1.7 per cent less than the export share in the same quarter in 2019. Japan and China accounted for 15.6 per cent and 13 per cent of Manitoba’s total agrifood export share, respectively. Compared to the first quarter in 2019, China’s export share increased by 17.1 per cent in the first quarter of 2020, from 11.1 per cent to 13 per cent. The graph below presents the share of the top five export destinations for Manitoba’s agrifood exports in the first quarters of 2019 and 2020.

Main Commodities and Products Exported to the Top Five Export Destinations
In the first quarter of 2020, the top five export commodities and products exported to the United States are canola oil (22.9 per cent), prepared potatoes and other preserved vegetables (15.1 per cent), live animals (11.7 per cent), oilseeds – mainly canola (11.2 per cent), and oil-cake and other animal feed (9.5 per cent). These five commodities and products constitute 70.4 per cent of the total agrifood exports to the United States. The top five agrifood exports to Japan are meat and meat products – mainly pork and pork products (63.6 per cent), oilseeds – mainly canola (17.7 per cent), grains (17 per cent), animal and vegetable oils (one per cent), and dairy (0.4 per cent). These five commodities and products accounted for 99.7 per cent of the agrifood exports to Japan. Meat and meat products – mainly pork (61.6 per cent), oilseeds – mainly canola (24.7 per cent), grains (11.4 per cent), products of animal origin (1.6 per cent), and prepared vegetables – mainly dried peas (0.5 per cent) constituted 99.8 per cent of the total export value to China. The top five commodities and products exported to Mexico are oilseeds (26.6 per cent), animal/vegetable oils (20.9 per cent), meat and meat products (20.2 per cent), grains (20.1 per cent), and prepared vegetable – mainly frozen potatoes (5.9 per cent). Wheat constituted 98.3 per cent of the export values to Indonesia. While exports to the United States and Mexico are relatively diverse, exports to Japan and China are highly concentrated on meat (pork and pork products) and canola.