

A Time Line of Agricultural and Settlement Events

This list of over 90 different agricultural and settlement ‘events’, with an intended Canadian bias, illustrates relationships between agriculture and settlement. The ‘years ago’ column dates from the year 2000.

Event	Years Ago
1. Human existence begins-homo habilis	1,900,000
2. Appearance of homo erectus	1,600,000
3. Acheulean tool “industry” begins in Africa-hand axes, knives and other tools	1,500,000
4. Fire	500,000
5. Archaic Homo sapiens	250,000
6. Tool making (Neanderthals)	100,000
7. Homo sapiens (Neanderthals) in Europe	80,000
8. Modern Homo sapiens (more sophisticated tools)	40,000
9. Modern homo sapiens reach Australia	40,000
10. First spread of human beings around the world	30,000
11. People of southeast Asia began populating islands in Pacific Ocean	30,000
12. People learn to hunt together	24,000
13. Early humans begin to fish for food	22,000
14. Ice Age Glaciers begin to melt/climate begins to warm	15,000
15. Flint-edged wooden sickles are used to gather wild grains	13,000
16. Jericho, the oldest known city is built in the Middle East	12,000
17. Human occupation of North Yukon/western United States (some sources-13000 years ago)	12,000
18. Migration of people to South America	11,000
19. The dog is the first wild animal domesticated	11,000
20. Plant cultivation begins in the Fertile Crescent region of the Middle East	11,000
21. Human beings had colonized or at least set foot on most of the world’s great land masses	10,000
22. Paleindians occupied southern half of Canada’s provinces (except NFLD)	10,000
23. Mesoamerican peoples begin domesticating plants	9,000
24. Sheep domesticated in Near East	9,000
25. Large settlements in Indus Valley based on domestication of plants, animals & irrigated agr	9,000
26. Natural “plant husbandry” begins (gathering & broadcasting seeds and waiting to harvest)	8,300
27. Human Skeleton found in Kamloops area (earliest dated Canadian skeleton)	8,250
28. Egyptians begin irrigation of crops	7,000
29. Swine (pigs) become domesticated	7,000

30. Continental glacier in North America disappears	7,000
31. Cultivation of plants in Near East and Europe begins	6,500
32. Egypt, western end of Fertile Crescent, is oldest urban & literate societies	6,000
33. Domestication of corn	5,700
34. Domestication of cattle begins	5,500
35. Domestication of horses by central Asian nomads	5,000
36. Settled societies developed on a major scale	5,000
37. First use of surveying in Egypt to divide land into plots for purposes of taxation	3,400
38. The Vikings explore the coast of North America	3,000
39. Chickens are domesticated	3,000
40. Mechanized farming using simple tools with goat, horse & ox replacing human muscular power	3,000
41. Holstein cows are on the scene	2,000
42. Madagascar populated by human beings	1,500
43. First crop in Canada-Maize in southern Ontario resulting in relatively permanent villages	1,500
44. Rabbit, last farm animal to be domesticated	1,500
45. Beans and squash added to local diet of Iroquoian peoples of SW Ont. & St. Lawrence Valley	1,350
46. New Zealand populated by human beings	1,100
47. Iroquoians in St. Lawrence R. Valley and S. Ontario received agriculture	1,000
48. English land owners begin enclosing their fields with hedges (1485)	515
49. John Cabot lands off the coast of North America (1497)	503
50. Horses introduced on the North American mainland by Spanish (1519)	481
51. Corn imported from West Indies to Spain (1520)	480
52. Jacques Cartier's first of three voyages of discovery (of Canada) (1534)	466
53. Jacques Cartier winters in Quebec & visits Hochelaga (Montreal) (1535)	465
54. Potatoes brought back from America's and cultivated in Spain (1573)	427
55. Maritime agriculture dates from the establishment of Port Royal by French (1605)	395
56. Champlain establishes the town of Quebec (1608)	392
57. First European agriculture in Quebec- Louis Hebert cleared land and raised cattle (1617)	383
58. Trois-Rivieres established (1638)	362
59. Quebec agriculture achieves self-sufficiency (1640)	360
60. Montreal established (1642)	358
61. First horses in Eastern Canada brought from France (1665)	335
62. Hudson Bay Company created (1670)	330
63. Invention of the horse drawn drill & mechanical seed planter (1701)	299
64. Horses reached the Canadian plains (from US) in 1730 causing a revolution in Native hunting techniques	270
65. Settlement begins in Halifax (1749)	252

66. Battle of Quebec (1759)	241
67. Agriculture in Newfoundland kick started by American Rev. (1775)	225
68. Ontario agriculture begins in earnest with settlement (1780)	220
69. Native agriculture in Canada important in provisioning the fur trade until late 18th century	210
70. First agricultural society (England) founded in 1793	207
71. York (Toronto) made the capital of Upper Canada (1794)	206
72. First European farming in BC-Daniel Harmon at Stuart Lake (1811)	189
73. River lot agriculture at the Red River Colony (1812)	188
74. Beginning of machine agriculture (1850)	150
75. Agriculture in BC gets boost from gold rush (1858)	142
76. Canadian Confederation (1867)	133
77. Edmonton-settlement outside of fort begins (1870)	130
78. Winnipeg incorporated (1873)	127
79. Heinz Ketchup is developed (1876)	124
80. Agriculture in BC gets another boost by railway building (1880)	120
81. Farming in the Okanagan (fruit) & Fraser Valley vegetables/milk well established (1880)	120
82. City of Vancouver incorporated (1886)	114
83. Beginning of marked crop yield intensification through plant breeding mechanization and fertilization	100
84. World's first agricultural motor competition in Winnipeg (1908)	92
85. Federal gov't (Canada) buys 1,000 Ford tractors to sell to farmers (1918)	82
86. Every Canadian farmer is a horseman-3.5 million horses in Canada (1921)	79
87. Draft horses peaked in the U.S. in 1920's	75
88. Beginning of rapid heavily mechanized farming in North America (1935)	65
89. In 1945 horsemen were in the meat business in Canada as the use of horses on farms declined	55
90. Intensive (industrial) agriculture develops	55
91. Environmental concerns related to agriculture begin to influence agricultural practice	30
92. Land Commission Act establishing the Agricultural Land Reserve passed in BC (1973)	27
93. Agricultural Land Reserves designated in BC (1974)	26
94. Quebec passes Agricultural Land Preservation Legislation (1978)	22
95. Biotechnological development (1980)	20

Primary Sources: (1) The Canadian Encyclopedia 2000 World Edition, McClelland & Stewart & (2) Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia, Version 7.0.2, Grolier International, 1995

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