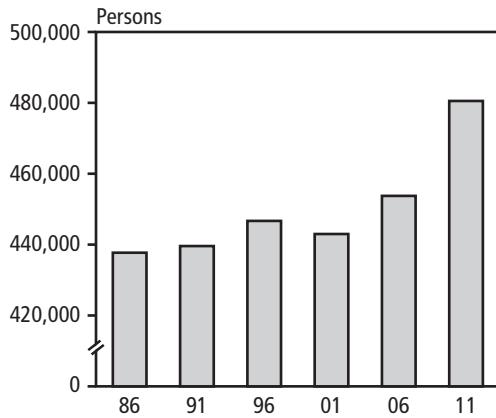


■ Appendix 2: GROWING RURAL MANITOBA – INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Population – Rural Manitoba



Source: Statistics Canada

Unprecedented flooding along the Assiniboine, Souris and Qu'Appelle Rivers affected local communities and farmland, and washed out hundreds of municipal and provincial roads and bridges. The estimated \$1 billion flood in 2011 demonstrated the resilience and strength of local communities to work together to meet the challenges of rising flood waters.

Much of southwest Manitoba continues to rebuild and develop new flood protection systems following the flood of 2011. The recovery is well underway with the support of the Manitoba government working with local municipalities and residents. By the end of 2012, the Manitoba government had provided \$697 million for financial assistance and \$344 million for flood fighting, restoration and flood proofing, including the construction of the Lake St. Martin outlet channel.

Rural Manitoba will continue to grow and make important economic and cultural contributions to the well-being of the province with the support of the Manitoba government. Programs such as the federal-provincial Growing Forward 2 initiative and Growing Green focus on the strengths of Manitoba's rural regions.

Rural Manitoba had some of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada between 2006 and 2011.

- La Broquerie grew 42 per cent.
- Steinbach increased its population by 22 per cent.
- Winkler grew 17 per cent.

The overall rural population increased 8.4 per cent since 2001 – more than the nearly 8.0 per cent growth across the whole province. Population growth comes from immigration, people moving from other provinces and a growing Aboriginal population. At the same time, between 2006 and 2011, many smaller municipalities showed a decline in population, mainly due to aging populations and people moving to urban areas.

Rural Economic Drivers

Investments in infrastructure, the green economy and value added industries have helped drive tangible successes such as:

- upgrading highways and infrastructure across Manitoba under the 10-year \$4 billion highway plan, now in its seventh year;
- supporting positive immigration numbers in Winkler, Steinbach, Arborg and throughout rural Manitoba;
- investing in regional composting in southeastern Manitoba;
- encouraging hemp industry development in Dauphin and Gilbert Plains;
- supporting biomass processing in Carman;

- investing in 100 water treatment projects worth \$250 million since 1999; and
- partnering with the food processing industry to create Buy Manitoba, which is a program to help consumers identify and buy Manitoba products.

Rural economies are mostly driven by agriculture, mineral development, manufacturing and services that support farms, local businesses and communities. These traditional sectors continue to present more new opportunities. For example, renewable bioproducts such as biomass for heating, biofibre for a number of industrial uses and bio-energy to replace fossil fuels and a wide spectrum of functional foods, nutraceuticals and advanced health products build on the traditional rural economy. China and India are providing more opportunities for food, agriculture products, animal genetics, machinery, specialized expertise and services. Development and commercialization of innovative products, paired with market opportunities at home and abroad, will help expand and diversify the rural economy.

Oil and gas extraction, including support services in southwestern Manitoba, has seen 100 per cent growth since 2000, with 4,440 wells producing in 2012. The mining, oil and gas industry directly employed over 5,700 workers in 2012 and spent \$1.3 billion in capital expenditures. The sector is expected to continue to expand rapidly.

The government is helping municipalities amalgamate with neighbouring communities to create efficiencies and attract more funding for much needed infrastructure. Combining local expertise and experience will help communities make the transition to more affordable local government operations.

Investing in the Future

The Manitoba government is committed to providing programs and services that help communities seize their own unique opportunities, become more self sufficient and meet the challenges they face. The following are specific areas of focus.

- **Green economic opportunities:** Growing Green, The Manitoba Bioproducts Strategy, supports manufacturing development in the green economy and is projected to more than double bioproduct manufacturing to \$2 billion by 2020.
- **Innovation and commercialization:** the government will continue supporting a strong rural economy by increasing its investments in strategic initiatives through the federal-provincial Growing Forward 2 policy framework to further enhance innovation and the long-term competitiveness and resiliency of Manitoba's agriculture and food industry.
- **Infrastructure:** the commitment to provide the equivalent of one-seventh of the provincial sales tax to support investments in municipal infrastructure complements the government's \$4 billion highway plan and gives municipalities the ability to meet local needs.
- **Stronger municipalities and communities:** Partners 4 Growth will support regional economic development planning and action in rural Manitoba, and investments will continue to help communities share information and support growth.

The Foundation for Rural Growth

- building on Manitoba's natural assets
- skilled labour
- infrastructure
- strong municipalities and communities
- regional and government partnerships
- sharing knowledge and best practices by communities
- quality of life

- Skilled labour: streamlining the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program for skilled workers will increase the attraction of new immigrants; the Rural and Northern Apprenticeship Strategy will provide rural Manitobans with practical training options to build successful careers close to home; the new Journeyperson's Business Support Program will provide financing to help rural journeypersons set up their own businesses; and ten additional trade training courses will be delivered online.
- Strengthening services: new CancerCare treatment centres are being established, and there are more doctors and nurses serving rural Manitobans. The government provided \$1.7 million to redevelop Assiniboine Community College's Parkland Campus in Dauphin in 2010; and \$400,000 to build Red River College's mobile training labs to reach more rural and northern communities.

The Manitoba government will continue to work with local communities to build on strengths and share expertise among regions. Developing new economic opportunities through value-added enterprises and green economic opportunities, opening up new markets and renewing infrastructure will be important hallmarks of future investments.