

Key facts and figures

A selection of events that shaped Canada’s forests and forest sector over time

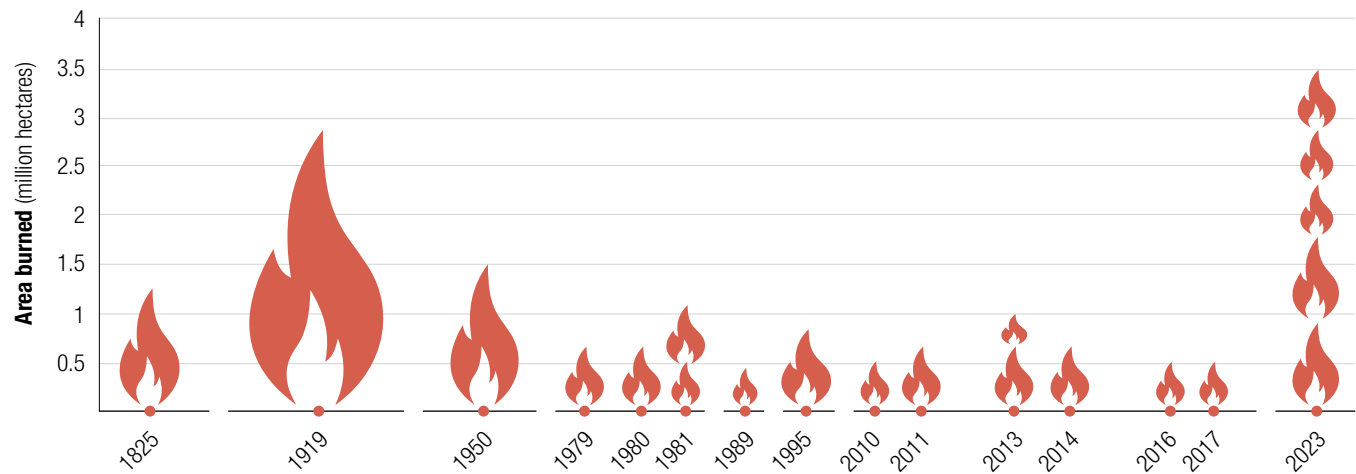
Large wildland fires account for an important part of the forest area burned yearly, in Canada

In Canada, an average of 2.9 million hectares of forest burns each year (average from 1990 to 2023).

Since 1975, wildland fire data in Canada has been collected via satellite imagery. In the pre-satellite era, fire data were collected by provinces and territories, which used diverse methods such as on-the-ground mapping and aerial photo interpretation.

21 largest wildfires recorded in Canada since 1825

Out of the top 21 largest wildfires ever recorded in Canada, 5 of them occurred in 2023 – burning a combined total of more than 3.5 million hectares.



Shifts in forest sector production over time



1600s to 1800s:

Ship construction was the largest economic sector during the colonial period, particularly in the regions that became the Atlantic provinces and Québec. The harvested wood was also used for heating and other purposes (e.g. hemlock tanning bark).



Early 1900s:

Until the mid-1800s, paper was made from cotton or linen. With new techniques for making paper out of wood, the paper sector flourished while, in the early 1900s, the sawmill

sector declined until being overtaken by paper and pulp as the forest sector’s largest output by the mid-1920s. By the end of World War I (1918), Canada was the largest pulp and paper exporter in the world.

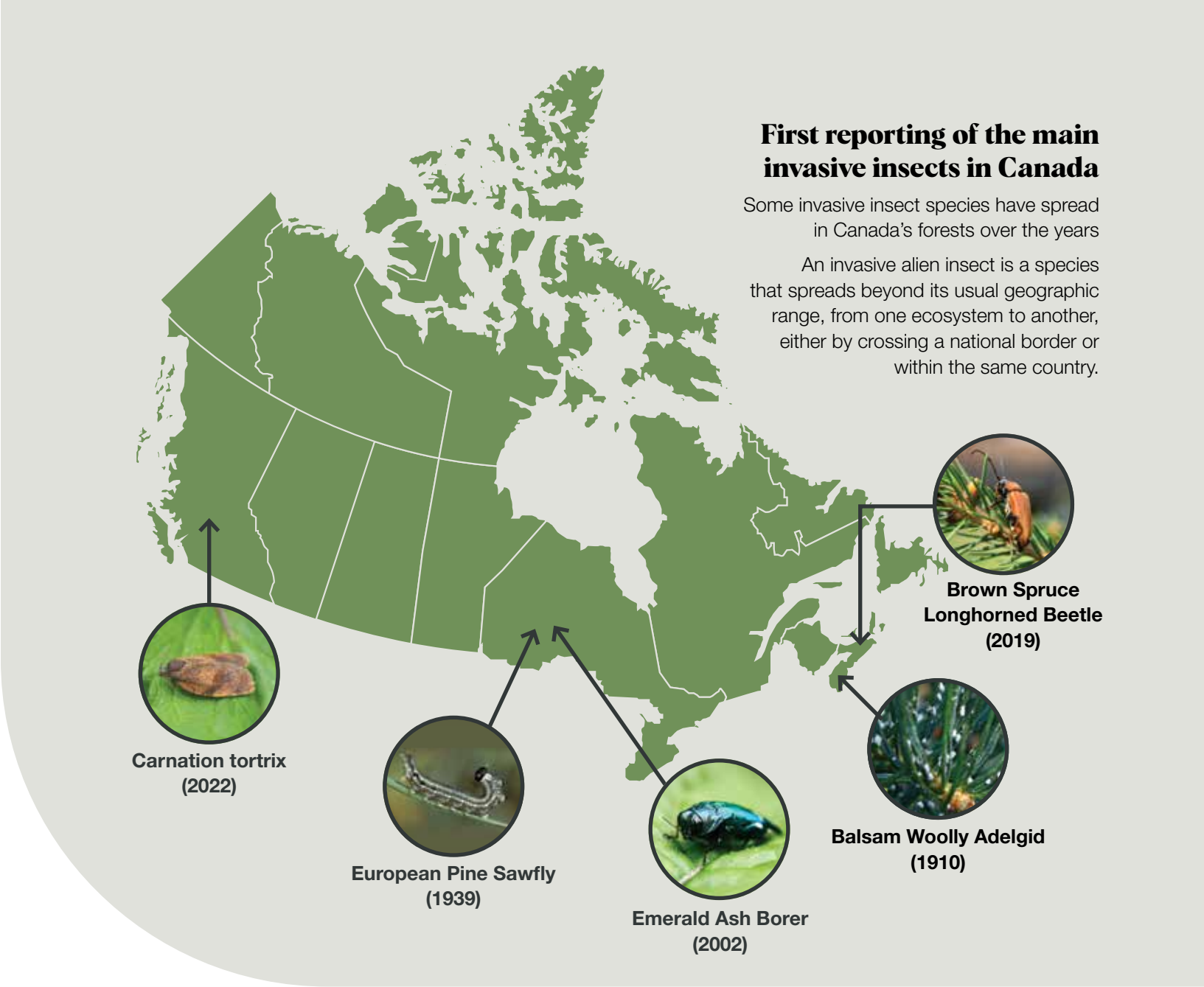


Nowadays:

Solid wood products now predominate Canada’s forest sector. For this product category, in 2023, **Canada** was the:

2nd largest exporting country (\$18.1 B)

5th largest producing country (486 M m³)



Canada’s academic institutions contribute to the transmission and development of knowledge in forestry

The first three forestry schools were established in the early 1900s in Canada. Their task was to establish a framework of professional foresters in Canada.



There are currently eight universities in Canada offering forestry programs accredited by the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board:

- Université de Moncton (New Brunswick)
- University of New Brunswick
- Université Laval (Québec)
- Lakehead University (Ontario)
- University of Toronto (Ontario)
- University of Alberta
- University of British Columbia
- University of Northern British Columbia



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