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“ Money will come when you
Are doing the right thing. ”

- Mike Phillips

Money

“The greatest wealth is to live content with little.” ~ Q u o t e s I L o v e

BoC holds interest rate, but warns of downstream effects of Iran war

The Bank of Canada held its principal interest rate at 2.25 per cent last week, but warned rising oil and natural prices caused by the war in Iran will push up inflation in the short term.

In its latest monetary policy decision, Canada's top bankers painted a picture of a weaker-than-expected economy that is facing new levels of uncertainty because of the war.

“Canada's economy is dealing with a lot. And now, we face more volatility,” Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem said in his opening remarks at last week's rate announcement.

Data released by Statistics Canada recently shows inflation dropped to 1.8 per cent in February from 2.3 per cent in January. Both reports represent data largely collected before the U.S.-Israeli strikes. The March CPI data, Macklem said, will be higher.

But how big the war's impact will be, the bank says, depends on how high oil prices go and how long the conflict lasts.

“Inflation in Canada has been close to the two per cent target for more than a year,” Macklem said. “But, as we've seen, the war in Iran is causing oil prices to move sharply higher and this will push up inflation in the short term.”

Despite that warning, central bankers are holding the policy interest rate for the third consecutive time. It was lowered in October from 2.5 per cent. Macklem says the bank does not believe it will see goods and services rapidly increase because of higher oil prices. That, he says, gives bankers time to monitor the economy as a whole.

“As those risks evolve, as the economy plays out, we are prepared to respond as needed,” Macklem said, adding the bank can change the policy rate depending on how much support the economy needs.

The Bank of Canada will make its next interest rate decision on April 29. It will release the latest Monetary Policy Report, which provides a more detailed economic outlook for Canada, at the same time.

“We can't fix the war,” said Macklem. “What we can do, though, and what we will do, is we will ensure that if energy prices stay high that it does not become ongoing, generalized, persistent inflation.”



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After growing 2.4 per cent in the third quarter of last year, GDP shrank by 0.6 per cent in the fourth quarter. Early data from 2026 suggests the economy is expanding again, but at a slower pace than the bank forecast in its January Monetary Policy report.

The bank's January monetary policy report assumed oil would be US\$60 a barrel for the projected horizon; it is now hovering around \$100 a barrel.

Recent data from Statistics Canada also shows the labour market is soft, with job gains late last year largely reversed in the first two months of 2026. Unemployment in February rose to 6.7 per cent and the bank says there is a lot of volatility in the export data, with exports looking soft.

The combination of a slowing economy and rising inflation creates a "dilemma" for the Bank of Canada, Macklem said.

If the economy were not facing those higher inflationary pressures, Macklem told reporters, central bankers would likely be talking about lowering rates.

"But, you know, we're operating in a world where there's more than one thing going on," he said.

The bank says inflation due to higher oil prices will squeeze consumers, leaving them with less income for other spending. A lot of Canada's fresh food is imported, and higher transportation due to higher energy costs could further boost food inflation.

"It's a bit early to tell what the impacts of food inflation will be, but certainly energy is big input cost to food," said Senior Deputy Bank of Canada Governor Carolyn Rogers.

Beyond that, the central bank warns transportation bottlenecks due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz could also impact supplies of other commodities, including fertilizer, which could also pinch consumers.

"We know some of the supply can come back quickly, but not all of it," Rogers said.

Looking more broadly, the bank says stock markets are lower, credit spreads are wider and global bond yields are higher.

The housing market is also looking weaker than the bank had projected in its January outlook, a factor that also plays into the bank's monetary policy decisions.

"We need to take another look at the housing market," Rogers said. "We need house prices to come down so housing is more affordable."

But it's not all bad, the bank says. Higher energy prices will boost income from energy exports, which would support the economy.

Canada is a net energy exporter, so it has more income coming to the country, which Macklem said has helped make the Canadian currency more stable than many other countries'.



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"Relative to some other countries, we are in a pretty good position," Macklem told report.

Canada Energy Regulator projects power generation surge, with wind a major new source

A new report from the Canada Energy Regulator is projecting significant growth in electrical generation between now and 2050, in part due to new artificial intelligence data centres' thirst for power.

The federal agency gamed out four supply and demand scenarios for Canada's oil, gas and electricity markets: current measures, higher, lower and net-zero.

In all cases, power generation is projected to balloon — by 30 per cent at the low end to double today's level at the high end.

In all scenarios, wind energy makes up the bulk of the power capacity additions.

Canada's crude oil production is anticipated to grow near-term in all scenarios, but output peaks at different points in time.

Under the status quo, production would reach 6.1 million barrels per day around 2040 and level off to 5.9 million barrels per day by 2050.

New Canada-Mexico deal creates new market for P.E.I. potato growers

A new trade deal with Mexico is creating a potential new market for fresh Canadian potato exports. For growers on Prince Edward Island, it's another place to sell their crop.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency announced last week it had reached an agreement with Mexico's food-safety authority, SENASICA, on arrangements that will allow shipments of Canadian potatoes for either consumption or processing. The agency says it will work with the potato sector in the coming months as next steps are implemented.

"Mexico is a possibility now, and that's a great feeling," said Krista Shaw, director of stakeholder relations with the P.E.I. Potato Board, adding there's excitement about the deal.

Currently, the United States is the biggest buyer of fresh Canadian potatoes, taking 93 per cent of those exports by value in the 2024-25 marketing year, according to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Recent uncertainty about the future Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA, has "reinforced the importance of diversification as a complementary strategy to support sector resilience," Jennica Klassen, a spokesperson for Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Heath MacDonald, said in an email to CTV News.



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"These efforts are intended to strengthen overall market stability and support the long-term prosperity of North American agriculture," Klassen wrote.

Shaw said it's "especially advantageous" when countries can provide tariff-free markets.

"That allows us to have that extra leg up on some of the other countries that may be producing the same potato product that we are," Shaw said.

While all kinds of fresh Canadian potatoes could be sent south, one variety is the frontrunner on the Island: russets.

"We would be trying to provide the Mexican people with something that they don't have to offer down there," Shaw said. "Not in direct competition with the varieties that they grow."

Canada already ships frozen and other processed potato products to Mexico. In Mexico's 2024-25 marketing year, frozen potato imports came from the U.S. at 52 per cent, Canada at 34 per cent and Belgium at 14 per cent, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report

But according to that same report, citing Trade Data Monitor, the U.S. has been Mexico's sole supplier of fresh potato imports during the last 20 years.

However, Canadian spuds won't necessarily supplant those from the U.S., said Ray Keenan, CEO of Rollo Bay Holdings, a large agricultural company in eastern P.E.I.

He said U.S. potatoes are typically trucked across the border into northern Mexico.

"We won't be going anywhere near the north of Mexico. Our product will be going further down," Keenan said, adding potatoes will likely be shipped down by boat from Maritime ports. "It puts us in a different area of competition."

He's optimistic about the upcoming CUSMA review, saying "there's just too much" that each of the three countries needs from each other. But the new agreement is a "building block" that will require lots of work.

"We will have a significant cost to get there, because freight is expensive and it's not getting any cheaper these days," Keenan observed.

He said the opportunity could help balance supply by creating another outlet for fresh potatoes. P.E.I. produces a large crop every year – about 2.18 billion pounds, according to Statistics Canada.

Still, Keenan said growers should not treat the agreement as an immediate signal to expand production or plant more.

"At this point, this market is very premature," he said. "It's got a way to go yet, to get developed."



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The industry now has the permission to build a trade pipeline, but planning is in the early stages, with much to be determined about logistics.

Klassen added that an operational work plan was recently signed, and an audit by Mexican officials to review Canada's certification arrangement is being planned during the 2026 growing season.

For some, the hope is that potatoes planted this year could be part of the first wave.

Gardening

"The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies." ~ Gertrude Jekyll

Planting a Vegetable Garden in Calgary: Seed-Starting and Planting Calendar Guide

By Spruce it Up Garden Centre
(5 min Read)



gardeningknowhow.com

Growing a vegetable garden in Calgary can feel intimidating, especially with unpredictable weather, short summers, and the risk of frost well into spring. But with the right planting calendar, proper seed timing, and a clear understanding of when to plant indoors versus outdoors, Calgary gardeners can enjoy a productive and rewarding season.

This guide is worth reading because it walks you step-by-step through how to plant, start seeds, and plan your garden around Calgary's unique climate. Whether you're a beginner gardener or looking to fine-tune your timing, you'll learn how to protect young plants, maximize harvest windows, and choose crops that thrive in zone 3

conditions—using proven practices and trusted sources like West Coast Seeds.

Understanding Calgary's Climate and Why Timing Matters

Calgary's climate plays a major role in how and when you plant your garden. With a short growing season, sudden temperature drops, and a late last frost date, timing is everything. Many vegetables must be started indoors to give seedlings a head start before they face outdoor conditions.



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The average last frost often falls in late May, but unexpected spring frost or even a surprise freeze can occur around June. This means gardeners must pay close attention to the frost date and avoid planting tender crops too early. Hardy vegetables, on the other hand, can tolerate cooler soil and light frost.

Understanding these patterns helps ensure that seeds germinate properly, seedlings grow strong, and plants aren't damaged by cold snaps that interrupt growth or reduce harvest potential.

What Is a Calgary Planting Calendar and How Do You Use It?

A planting calendar is a seasonal guide that tells you when to sow seed, transplant seedlings, and plant crops outdoors based on the local climate. In Calgary, this tool is essential because planting too early or too late can dramatically affect yield.

The calendar is typically organized around the last frost date and the first frost in the fall. It shows which crops should be started indoors, which can be planted outdoors, and when each crop reaches harvest. Many gardeners rely on seed suppliers like West Coast Seeds for regionally appropriate guidance.

Using a planting calendar helps gardeners stagger planting times, extend harvest into late summer, and make the most of limited warm days.

When Should You Start Seeds Indoors in Calgary?

Because of the short season, starting seeds indoors is a common practice in Calgary gardens. Vegetables like tomato, pepper, broccoli, cabbage, and celery benefit from being started indoors 6–10 weeks before the last frost.

Seeds should be started in trays or peat pots filled with sterile soil mix. Keeping the soil warm and evenly moist helps seeds germinate quickly and evenly. Strong light is critical to prevent leggy seedling growth. Starting seeds indoors gives plants a crucial head start, allowing them to mature and reach harvest before fall frost returns.

Which Seeds Can Be Planted Outdoors Early?

Not all vegetables need to be pampered indoors. Many hardy crops can be sown directly into the garden once the ground can be worked and the soil is workable. These include carrot, radish, spinach, kale, beet, lettuce, and onion.

These plants tolerate cool temperatures and light frost, making them ideal for early planting. In fact, some crops like spinach and radish prefer cooler conditions and may bolt if planted too late.

Planting these seeds early helps spread out the harvest and frees indoor space for warm-season crops.



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How Does Soil Preparation Affect Plant Success?

Healthy soil is the foundation of every successful vegetable garden. Calgary soil often benefits from added compost to improve structure, drainage, and nutrient content. Compost also helps retain moisture during dry periods.

Before planting, loosen the soil to the proper soil level, remove weeds, and mix in organic matter. Avoid working the soil when it's too wet, as this can cause compaction and root disturbance.

Good soil preparation allows roots to grow freely, reduces rot, and ensures plants have access to nutrients throughout the growing season.

When Can You Safely Plant Outdoors After Frost?

Tender crops like tomato, cucumber, pepper, squash, and watermelon should only be planted once the frost has passed and the soil has warmed. In Calgary, this is often around June.

These plants are sensitive to cold and may suffer from stunted growth or death if exposed to frost. Using mulch, row covers, or temporary shelter can protect young plants from unexpected cold nights.

Planting at the right time ensures strong establishment and healthy growth throughout the season.

What Crops Grow Best in Calgary's Short Season?

Choosing the right vegetable varieties is essential. Fast-maturing crops and cold-tolerant varieties perform best. Root crops like carrots and beets, leafy greens like spinach and kale, and brassica crops such as broccoli and cabbage thrive in Calgary gardens.

Perennial vegetables, like asparagus, are also excellent long-term investments, returning year after year once established. Many vegetables can be succession-planted to increase harvest over time.

Selecting crops suited to Calgary's climate improves success and reduces frustration.

How Do You Transplant Seedlings Without Stress?

Transplanting requires care to avoid shock. Before moving seedlings outside, harden them off by gradually exposing them to outdoor conditions. This reduces stress and helps plants adapt.

Handle seedlings gently to avoid root disturbance, especially with sensitive plants like squash and cucumber. Transplant on a calm, cloudy day when possible, and water thoroughly after planting.

Healthy transplants establish faster and are more resilient to pests and weather changes.

How Do You Protect Plants from Frost and Pests?

Even after planting, protection is key. Frost cloths, mulch, and temporary covers help shield plants from sudden cold snaps. Monitoring weather forecasts helps gardeners act quickly.



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Pests can also impact crops. Regular inspection, proper spacing, and healthy soil reduce pest pressure. Strong plants are naturally more resistant to damage.

Taking preventative steps keeps plants growing steadily and productive.

When and How Do You Harvest Vegetables?

Knowing when to harvest is just as important as knowing when to plant. Harvesting at the right time improves flavor, texture, and encourages continued production. Leafy greens can often be harvested multiple times, while crops like tomatoes and squash signal ripeness through color and size.

Frequent harvesting prevents plants from becoming overmature and supports consistent yields throughout the season.

Visit Spruce It Up Garden Centre for Vegetable Seeds

If you're ready to start planting, visit Spruce It Up Garden Centre to shop for vegetable seeds in-store. We carry a great selection of quality seeds suited for Calgary's growing season, and our friendly team is always happy to help you choose the right ones for your garden. Stop by the store to pick up your seeds and get local advice to help your vegetable garden grow strong and healthy.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. When is the best time to start seeds indoors in Calgary?

A. Most warm-season vegetables should be started 6–10 weeks indoors before the last frost date to give them a strong head start.

Q. What vegetables can tolerate frost in Calgary?

A. Hardy vegetables like spinach, kale, radish, carrot, and beet can tolerate light frost and be planted early.

Q. When should I plant tomatoes outdoors in Calgary?

A. Tomatoes should be planted outdoors only after the risk of frost has passed, usually around early June.

Q. Is Calgary considered zone 3 for gardening?

A. Yes, Calgary is typically classified as zone 3, which influences plant selection and planting schedules.

Q. Do I need a planting calendar for a Calgary garden?

A. Absolutely. A planting calendar helps align seed starting, transplanting, and outdoor planting with local climate conditions.



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Key Takeaways

- Calgary's short growing season makes timing critical
- Use a local planting calendar to guide seed starting and transplanting
- Start warm-season crops indoors for a strong head start
- Plant hardy vegetables early and protect tender plants from frost
- Healthy soil, proper watering, and careful transplanting improve harvest success

With the right planning and care, a Calgary vegetable garden can thrive and produce abundant harvests season after season.

This article has been republished from Spruce It Up Garden centre blog, you can read the original at: [Calgary Planting Calendar: Seed Starting & Veggie Guide](#)

Wit

"Egg hunts are proof that your children can find things when they really want to." ~ U n k n o w n



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Observation/Remarks

“Health is not valued till.” ~ Thomas Fuller

Don't blame immigration for Alberta's health-care woes

By Nadeem Esmail and Tegan Hill
(under 3 min Read)

Alberta's health-care system, like in every other province, is struggling with long wait times, overwhelmed ERs, a shortage of medical technologies and a dearth of family practitioners—despite its high price tag. Recently, Premier Smith suggested that immigrants are putting pressure on the system, pointing the finger at Ottawa for some of Alberta's health-care woes. But the health-care system was failing long before the rise in immigration.

Let's start with the money side of the equation. Canada has, since at least the early 2000s, consistently ranked among the top spenders on universal health-care in the developed world. And Alberta has consistently ranked as one of the top spenders in the country.

And yet Albertans, and indeed all Canadians, have been getting little in return. In the early 2000s, Canada's health-care system was already ranked as one of the least accessible in the developed world, and by the late-2010s had some of the longest wait times, worst access to medical technologies and fewest physicians. Again, this all predates the large growth in international immigration in the early 2020s.

While it's undeniable that the recent large population increase had consequences including increasing the burden on an already overwhelmed health-care system, the immigrants are not the cause of the problem. The large population increase only made the health-care system's existing failures more obvious.

Alberta's health-care system has long cost more while delivering less in comparison with other universal health-care countries, and has long been unprepared for an expansion in the population or even the aging of the existing population. This is because of the policy choices of premiers Getty, Klein, Stelmach, Redford, Hancock, Prentice, Notley and Kenney. All these premiers embraced the Canadian model for health care dominated by government and delivered through bureaucratic monopolies.

Each of these past provincial governments showed steadfast loyalty to a failed set of health-care policies, rather than considering the health policies of the developed world's top performing universal health-care countries such as Australia, Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. These past governments also ignored the reality that the developed world generally was moving towards superior policy approaches and further away from the Canadian model.

Premier Smith has started to move Alberta's failing health-care system towards a higher-performing policy model. For instance, her government plans to soon pay hospitals in Alberta on a per-patient-



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treated basis, which encourages hospitals to treat more patients in a timelier fashion. Compare that to Alberta today where hospitals receive an annual budget from the government each year to care for patients, which makes each patient a cost for the hospital rather than a revenue source, and leaves very weak incentives to treat more patients or treat them more rapidly.

The premier also plans to allow Albertans to purchase some health-care privately, from physicians working in both the public and private systems. Again, this is the norm everywhere else in the developed world. No other developed country with universal health care prohibits private purchase of care. And the overwhelming majority of these countries allow doctors to work in both public and private settings. There are many other important reforms to be made, but it's at least a start.

The health-care system in Alberta is failing because of long-standing policies that currently guide it, not because of a sudden influx of immigrants. But while Premier Smith may be critiqued for blaming immigration, at least she recognizes there's a problem and is doing something about it.

This article has been republished from Fraser Institute, you can read the original at: [Don't blame immigration for Alberta's health-care woes | Fraser Institute](#)

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