



June 2015

## Review of the Canadian Organic Standards Launch of the final ballot

The Canadian General Standards Board has launched the final ballot: the voting members of the Technical Committee on Organic Agriculture are called upon to vote to approve all the modifications proposed by the Working Groups since the beginning of the review in October 2013.

The Organic Federation of Canada is posting on its website the drafts of the standards CAN/CGSB-32.310-2015 [General principles and management standards](#) and CAN/CGSB-32.311-2015 [Permitted Substances Lists](#) put to the vote.

The ballot will end July 19. The Working Groups will then reconvene to resolve negative votes and determine the final content of the organic standards that will guide the work of Canadian organic operators over the next five years. The OFC has recently published a summary of the proposed modifications; [click here](#) to read them again.

## About the use of biodegradable mulches with petroleum products The Canadian General Standards Board publishes an exemption for the users of these mulches

The CGSB Technical Committee on Organic Agriculture has determined that a [Standards Bulletin](#) is needed to apply the following annotation for biodegradable mulch films as of June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015 until the new version of the Canadian Organic Standard CAN/CGSB-32.311 Organic Production Systems — Permitted Substances Lists is published and comes into effect later in 2015.

The new annotation is consistent in principle with the current wording of CAN/CGSB-32.311; but contains an allowance for producers to access a temporary exception which permits the use of biodegradable mulch films that are on the market but do not meet the requirements for biobased sources.

The temporary exception was deemed necessary by the Technical Committee on Organic Agriculture due to the lack of consistency in the application of the standard since the last publication. It was approved at the May 11-13, 2015 meeting and shall be incorporated into the final standard to be published in 2015.

### Biodegradable mulch films

100% of biodegradable mulch films shall be derived from biobased sources. Biodegradable polymers and Carbon Black from genetically engineered or petroleum sources are not permitted. Any other formulants or ingredients shall be listed in Tables 4.2 or 4.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311.

The following temporary exception is permitted: biodegradable mulch film products used on organic farms in 2014 but that do not meet the petroleum source requirement as indicated above may be used without removal until January 1, 2017.

### Certification for small-scale organic farms

## Two certification models are proposed – Please comment!

As part of the review of the Canadian Organic Standards, the Organic Federation of Canada struck a working group to look at the issues of Small Scale Organic Certification. A number of options were considered. After reviewing the concerns and hopes of the certified and not-certified organic farmers, the working group proposes two models: [a self-](#)

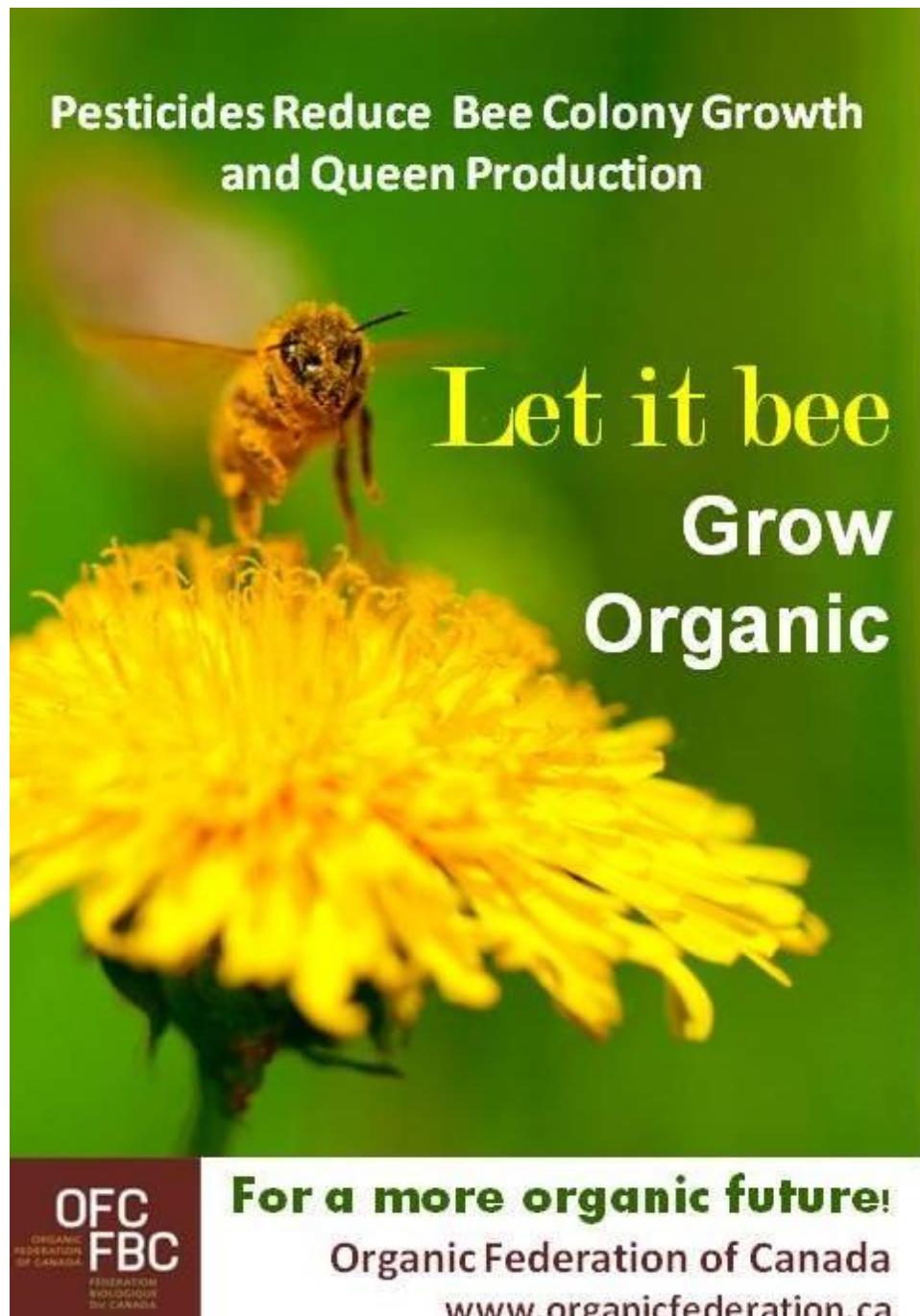
[declaration organic pledge](#) and a [peer review certification process](#). These two proposals would work for organic farmers who direct market their products.

**The pledge and peer review proposals use the Canadian Organic Standards.** These proposals are not a change to the standard. They are an alternative way of documenting compliance with the standard from the existing 3rd party certification process required for interprovincial and international trade. They would not be useable to make an “organic claim” for sales to retailers, wholesalers reselling the farm products.

**Please take a look at the proposals for the self-declaration and peer review proposals and share your thoughts and comments on OFC Blog!**

Blog - English - <https://ofcfbc.wordpress.com/>

Blog – French - <https://fedbio.wordpress.com/>



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