



THE ORGANIC FEDERATION OF CANADA NEWSLETTER

December 2011

### **OFC Blog on the prohibition of the claim “Certified Organic”**



#### **Intraprovincial regulations will put an end to the confusion around the organic claim**

OFC summarized the comments received on their blog and prepared a position paper on the need for intraprovincial regulations to put an end to the confusion around organic claims. This paper will be presented to each provincial government, in an effort to convince provincial governments to implement internal organic regulations.

The OFC Board stated that the objective is to have one seamless standard from coast to coast, with CFIA and the provinces having the capacity to decide on various ways of monitoring the internal organic market, as the agricultural sector is accustomed to asymmetrical arrangements in the management and monitoring of its activities.

### **Organic Aquaculture Standards**

#### **A Majority of the Votes Cast are Affirmative**

The members of the Committee on Organic Aquaculture have adopted by a majority the latest draft of the Aquaculture Organic Standards. The Chair and working group chairs have reviewed the negative comments and circulated resolutions and actions to resolve the remaining negative votes; the members of the Committee have to respond by



January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 to the proposed actions. If the Committee agrees with the proposed actions, the standard will advance for a second level review and a review by the Standards Council of Canada. The second level review by the CGSB Panel on Process Assurance entails a procedural review of all actions related to the approval of the standard, ensuring that relevant CGSB and Standards Council of Canada policies and

procedures have been adhered to. Following these approvals, the standard shall be published, hopefully in the spring of 2012. The countdown has begun...

Being a member of the Committee on Organic Aquaculture, The Organic Federation of Canada strongly recommends that when the new aquaculture standard is balloted and becomes active, it should be accompanied by a public relations and communication strategy to explain the standard and to illustrate the reasoning behind some of the more contentious clauses, thus preventing the spread of misinformation which creates a public perception of distrust. The issue of the ecological impact of salmon farming and the low availability of organic feed for organically farmed fish are not fully resolved and the reputation of the Canadian organic industry is of primary importance.

### **Quebec adopts the Canadian Organic Standards**

### **The Filière Biologique du Québec invites**

### **OFC, COTA, COO and CARTV**



**Ted Zettel and Alain Rioux (FBQ)**

Ted Zettel, speaking to the Quebec participants in the Forum Réglementaire held in Drummondville (QC) last December 6<sup>th</sup>, voiced that the Filière biologique du Québec (FBQ) is considered a leader on the national organic stage; its experience with provincial regulation, its history of strong, well developed and well funded farm lobbying gives FBQ the ability to cooperate and get things done. Quebec farmers were very attentive, especially since they have now to harmonize their practices with the Canadian Organic Standards. The requirements for exercise and outdoor access for livestock may well make them modify their barns and organic plans. But, compliance with one standard alone can be much simpler. The FBQ has clearly stated that it will now focus on standards revision funding, intraprovincial organic regulations in provinces where Quebec certified products compete with non-certified products and on the issue of GMOs.

Ted Zettel reaffirmed the main objectives of a strong national organic voice:

- ⦿ A robust effective regulatory regime
- ⦿ Consistent enforcement across the country
- ⦿ Maintenance of Standards as a “living document” respectful of the original organic principles
- ⦿ Protection of the consumer against false and misleading claims
- ⦿ Opportunity for growth



**Denis-Paul Bouffard (CARTV), Ted Zettel (OFC) and Michel Saumur (COO) discussing the adoption of the COS by Quebec at the FBQ meeting in Drummondville (Qc) last December 6<sup>th</sup>.**

**The Canada Organic Office is pleased with the Quebec adoption of the COS.**

Michel Saumur presented to the participants the Equivalency Agreements with the US and the EU. But, for Quebec operators, the harmonization of organic maple syrup standards with the US remains a major issue. If harmonization is not in place, Canada could well consider organic maple production as a critical variance between the COS and NOP standards.



**OFC's Blog**  
**Why do you like being an organic farmer?**

Farmers are playing a vital role in our modern lives and we tend to forget how important they are. Broccoli does not grow on grocery shelves!

To produce organic food, farmers have to respect standards, maintain records, be audited every year by an inspector that will scrutinize their production practices and, most of all, find the appropriate market to sell their products. And pay certification fees!

These are the burdens; but what are the positive aspects? What is the satisfaction linked to organic farming? The merit of working close to nature? The pride of harvesting a rich crop?

**Please share with us what you enjoy about being a farmer, and above all, an organic farmer on the OFC Blog at <http://ofcfdc.wordpress.com/>**



## **Best organic wishes for the year 2012**

The directors of the Organic Federation of Canada wish you all  
a very productive year 2012! That is....

- ....a funding mechanism for organic standards revision;
- ....a Canadian Brand Name List of allowable inputs in Canadian organic agriculture;
- .... intraprovincial organic regulations in all Canadian provinces;
- ....good federal policies to prevent GE contamination of organic crops;
- ....a very successful scientific organic conference in Winnipeg...

**.....but, mainly, success and happiness  
for all Canadian certified organic operators!**

**OFC/FBC**

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