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THE ORGANIC FEDERATION OF CANADA NEWSLETTER

May 2012



“If I was the Minister of Agriculture or the Dean of this college (U of M), I would insist that a minimum of 40% of the budget goes to organic agriculture research, simply because we would be learning more interesting things for all farmers.”

**Dr. Martin Entz
Professor,
University of Manitoba**

In the video [Impact of Research on organic agriculture](#)

Canadian Organic Standards’ Interpretation

- The budget for the Standards Interpretation Committee has been renewed for 2012-2013. To enhance the interpretative process, [SIC members](#) will meet twice a month to answer new questions raised by stakeholders.
- **Reminder:** A list of Questions and Answers is currently undergoing the public comment period. Please [click here](#) to review the answers issued by the SIC. Comments can be sent to opr.rpb@inspection.gc.ca. **The current comment period closes July 12th.**
- The full archive of Q&As is posted on the [COO website](#) and the [OFC website](#).
- Do you want to direct a question to the Standards Interpretation Committee? Please [consult the guidelines](#) that will help you draft a clear question.

Recent statistics 37 million hectares are cultivated organically on our planet, while 160 million hectares are cultivated with GE crops. The organic sector needs to continue developing to outbalance the production of GE crops.

Government Policy Makers & Members of the Organic Sector Met at the Organic

Value Chain Round Table on May 7 & 8 to discuss organic branding, mitigation of organic crop contamination by GMOs and the funding of the maintenance and revision of the Canadian Organic Standards, and to formulate strategic plans for the coming 5 years.

Launched to build a shared understanding of organic agriculture's competitive position, create consensus on how to improve it, and put plans into action, the OVCRT is composed of [members](#) representing a wide cross section of the Canadian organic sector including producers, processors, distributors, retailers and exporters.

Bulletins about the work of the OVCRT are regularly posted on the [AAFC website](#). Round Table research reports are available by special request by contacting RoundTable-TableRonde@agr.gc.ca. The Value Chain Roundtable Secretariat reserves the right to withhold documents that contain sensitive or proprietary information.

Canadian Organic Aquaculture Standards are now available on CGSB website

In organic aquaculture, antibiotics are prohibited. The stocking densities are set according to the species; for salmon, the stocking rate is about half the density in conventional aquaculture. Pesticide treatment is never the first course of action and is strictly regulated. Feed cannot contain growth-hormones, GMO ingredients, artificial colorings or synthetic appetite enhancers. Many other directives also govern the organic aquaculture industry, in an effort to make it comparable to the agricultural organic industry. But, many stakeholders oppose the allowance for open net-pen operations for producing salmon.

Ted Zettel, president of OFC and a member of CGSB Technical Committee for aquaculture, states that "The restrictions in the standard give Certifying Bodies the ability to ensure that any net-pen operations that successfully gain the organic designation are models for ecological sustainability within their community."

Time will confirm whether organic aquaculture deserves bearing the "organic" label; in the meantime, the new standard is voluntary and does not fall under the scope of the Canada Organic Office.

In Quebec, where the "organic" designation is regulated internally on the intraprovincial market, there are plans to accept as organic any aquaculture products certified organic under the Canadian standards, so long as they are certified by a Canadian accredited Certifying Body.

Anyone can purchase the Organic Aquaculture Standards on the [CGSB website](#). The standard is available at a cost of \$86.00, as Fisheries and Oceans Canada has not sponsored the standard's availability online.

Organic producer/researcher partnership for the next Organic Science Cluster

As an organic stakeholder, what is the main barrier or opportunity you would like to have addressed?

What is the research question you want answered that will allow you to address this barrier or opportunity?

The [Organic Science Cluster](#) will be renewed in 2013 and the **producer/researcher partnership** is now promoted in order to initiate research projects that will have a real impact on organic production, on your work.

You do not need to master scientific language to express barriers and opportunities that you would like to see addressed. The OACC will assess your ideas and determine the likelihood of success of the research that would answer to your needs, the cost, and the researchers available that can do the work.

Contact: Andy Hammermeister, Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada

Email: ahammermeister@nsac.ca Ph: 902-893-8037

View the YouTube video [Organic Farmers and Researchers Sharing Knowledge](#) to learn about how Canadian organic producers and researchers are cooperating together.



The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network and the organic sector are campaigning against the approval of a genetically modified apple in Canadian orchards.

Contamination from GM apples threatens the future of organic apples, and the farmers who grow them.

To take action, click on [CBAN website](#).

Canadian Organic Faces



Hugh Martin (retired OMAFRA organic specialist - left) receives a lifetime achievement award, presented by Ted Zettel, Board Member of the Organic Council of Ontario and Chair of the Organic Federation of Canada, at the 2012 Ontario Organic Awards, hosted by the Organic Council of Ontario.

Photo by: www.AshleyCamara.ca



Researchers in BC organic orchards, Gerry Nielsen, Soil Specialist, AAFC, Linda Edwards, organic grower, Tamara Richardson, graduate student, Louise Nelson, Associate Dean Research, UBC, and Molly Thurston, graduate student in a thriving organic apple orchard. Photo by: Andy Hammermeister, OACC.

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