

February 2013

OFC AGM in Vernon February 22, 9-12 am PT
A Organic Meeting for the Canadian Organic Sector

The Organic Federation of Canada will hold its Annual General Assembly Friday, February 22nd, at 9 am at the Aberdeen Room of the Prestige Hotel in Vernon. This is a public meeting.

The OFC members have been very active, facing common challenges such as the lack of intraprovincial regulations and of financial sustainability to promote the growth of the local organic sector. [Click here](#) to read their interesting reports (and attached).

The AGM agenda is as follows:

Annual General Meeting
February 22nd 2013 - 9:00 – 12:00 PT

Aberdeen Room, Prestige Hotel
4411 32nd Street, Vernon, BC V1T 9G8
Dial-in numbers: 866-613-5223 or 416-204-9354
Access Code: 9610448

9:00 am PT **Note: Documents with titles in bold and underlined can be consulted – click to read them**

- 1 15 min Convene and introductions – Roll call of the delegates of the members and of the sector participants – Establishment of quorum
- 2 5 min Adoption of Agenda
- 3 5 min Adoption of [minutes of AGM 2012](#)
- 4 30 min Report from the President (including questions)
- 5 50 min **AGM Panel - Should certification be mandatory for all organic products on local, regional and provincial markets?**
 - Rochelle Eisen will present the BC project about small scale certification, to identify the barriers to certification, find innovative ways to minimize barriers, and explore solutions to suit the needs of all organic producers, including alternative certification models.
 - The OVCRT report by Laura Telford – [The Case for Provincial Organic Regulations – The Regulatory Gap](#) will be summarized
 - Paddy Doherty will talk about various models of certification and inspection applied in other countries

10:45 am PT - Break 15 min

11:00 PT Committee reports

- 6 10 min Organic Science Cluster Report
 - 7 10 min Standards Interpretation Committee Report
 - 8 10 min Organicinputs.ca – National Organic Input Brand Name Directory
 - 9 20 min Funding the maintenance and review of the Canadian Organic Standards
- 10 11:50 PT Financial reports and Administration
- 10 min Resolution to amend [Bylaws](#) and [Policies and Procedures](#) with regard to representation of National Trade Interests – [click here](#) to consult the motion
 - 11 10 min [OFC Financial Report](#) April 1st 2011- March 31st 2012
Appointment of the auditor for April 1st 2012 – March 31st 2013 fiscal year
 - 12 5 min Appointment of directors for the coming year
 - 13 Adjourn – 12:15 PT

More reports will be shared at the AGM. Welcome to all organic Stakeholders, in-person or by teleconference!

The COABC commemorates its 20th anniversary

This year, the COABC commemorates its 20th anniversary; the theme of the conference is *Organics: Past, Present and Future*.

Mary Forstbauer, the President of the COABC, speaks about the Conference



Who created the COABC 20 years ago?

For four years, BC producers gathered as the BC Organic Alliance, and from this group COABC was created. We worked together with government and developed the organic standards for BC under what was then the Food Choice and Disclosures Act (now the Food Choice and Quality Act). The BC Standards and Logo are legislated in BC; however, the participation in the program is voluntary.

The COABC experience is quite unique in Canada. Is this a system that you would recommend for all Canadian provinces?

I believe the program is a good one, however the word "organic" is not protected in the act. Protection of "organic" could make the standard and program better for the consumer, especially since, under the COR, our producers are not supposed to use the term "certified organic". I also believe that having a provincial accreditor strengthens the voice of the organic sector.

Where do you want to be 20 years from now?

In 20 years, I believe that COABC will continue to be on the leading edge of innovation in agriculture. The entire agriculture sector is changing the way that farmers farm, largely because of what we do in the organic sector. In 20 years, we will have extension workers for all of agriculture in BC, with organic extension will be leading the way. Those involved in agriculture in BC will be working together, having created an infrastructure that is respectful of all agriculture partners.

Why should stakeholders attend the COABC conference?

Spending time together, sharing goals and visions, encourages dialogue and creates a bond. That bond will help to make the vision and goals become a reality. By attending the COABC conference, stakeholders have the opportunity to hear what others have as their goals and visions, as well as a chance to share what they believe will be the path that we should embark upon.

We are at a crossroad right now. As conventional agriculture looks to the organic sector, we need to show how we are a part of the picture, not a new picture or a spot on the canvas. We are not separate! Working together with all of agriculture creates a unified voice to government and consumers. By attending the conference, stakeholders are better able to help paint the picture.

The COABC Conference, held from February 22-24, 2013 at the Prestige Hotel in Vernon, BC., provides educational and networking opportunities for new and established farmers, as well as the general public. Knowledgeable speakers who are experts in their field will be present. [Click here](#) to consult the full program.

Building Sustainability - The Organic Way Organic Alberta is holding its conference February 26 & 27 at Olds College, Olds, Ab.

Highlights include:

- **Keynotes:** How Farming to Manufacturing Contributes to Community, Regulating Canada's Organic Food
- **Livestock:** health management, finishing organic beef, grassfinishing
- **General Production:** grain production smart practices, organic seed varieties, bio-control in vegetable production, oat production
- **Marketing workshops:** social media, preparing product for retail, grain buyers session, value adding
- **Introduction to Organic Production sessions**
- **Business Development Seminars:** enterprise analysis, organic distribution
- **Organic Social!**

[Download the program](#) for full details or [visit the website](#) of Organic Alberta.

Questions and Answers on issues related to the Canadian Organic Standards

Under the Canadian Organic Standards, can commercial or logistical challenges outside the operator's control? (e.g. a shipment held up by border inspection) be included in the definition of catastrophic circumstances?

Is the space requirement for cattle (6.8.8) the same for all breeds or can an adjustment be made for smaller animals such as Jerseys?

In 8.2 of the Standard, what does the term "constituent of an ingredient" mean?

[Click here](#) to consult the proposed answers to the various questions (also attached), raised by organic stakeholders, regarding the National Standards for Organic Agriculture.

The proposed responses are subject to a 60 day comment period starting January 23rd and closing March 22nd 2013.

All comments regarding these answers should be sent to OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca

Archives - Final Questions and Answers

All final questions and answers are posted on [OFC website](#) (as pdf); the [COO website](#) will be updated soon.