

April 2013

The News about the Canadian Organic Standards

- A Memorandum of Understanding between the [Canadian General Standards Board](#) (CGSB) and the [Standards Council of Canada](#) (SCC) to allocate funding for the review of the Canadian Organic Standards has been signed, and an official announcement will be made soon. The CGSB will receive \$600,000 for the review, with a workplan soon to be presented to the sector.

While the CGSB is responsible for the review procedure, the organic sector is responsible for the review of the content of the COS, which will be performed through an extensive consultation with the Canadian organic sector. Work lists (WL), that include hundreds of accumulated items and issues raised by operators/stakeholders since the COS were first published by the CGSB, are already in place and will be the base for the review of the COS.

The Committee on Organic Agriculture (also known as the Technical Committee), which is responsible for submitting amendments to the COS in order to improve unclear statements or to add new directives, will be reorganized prior to the beginning of the review. OFC has applied under the Agri-Marketing Program's *Assurance Systems Stream* for funding to allow for the coordination of consultations with the organic sector.

This will be the first full review done since the Organic Products Regulations came into effect and since the Equivalency agreements with the EU and the USA were established. OFC will keep you updated on this important full review, which is slated to take place every five years. More information to come soon.

- A set of **Questions & Answers from the Standards Interpretation Committee** (SIC) are currently under public review. Please visit the [OFC website](#) to read the proposed answers to questions raised by organic stakeholders.

The Standards Interpretation Committee wants to hear your comments. Maintaining efficient communications with the sector guarantees a uniform application of the standards' directives. Any questions that cannot be answered by the SIC due to unclear wordings are being transferred to the CGSB, to be added to the list of issues that will be resolved through the coming review.

- Comments received about the Questions & Answers from the comment period that ended March 22nd have been processed. A report is attached that indicates which questions are back to the SIC working table, and which questions have been incorporated in the Final Q&As, as listed [here](#).

Antimicrobial resistance is on the increase, confirms Quebec Ministry of Agriculture

Bacteria sampled from chicken, beef and pork raised in Quebec are becoming more and more resistant to major antibiotics used in human health treatments, states the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture (MAPAQ) (from newspaper La Presse).

There is a significant upward trend in the resistance to ceftiofur, a very important antibiotic used in human medicine. In 2011, it was found that 27% of poultry isolates tested did not react to antibiotics, with 18% not responding in 2012. For pork isolates, resistance increased from 10% to 22% in one year.

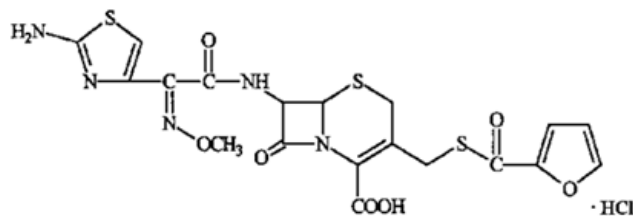
“This trend continues to rise with each passing year,” states Dr. Marie Nadeau, director of the Quebec program for monitoring the development of resistance to antimicrobial agents in bacteria from animal origin, which has observed these trends since 1999.

It is disturbing because, “Ceftiofur is a cephalosporin of third generation, linked to another antibiotic found in humans, ceftriaxone,” explains Dr. Nadeau. Doctors use this antibiotic to treat severe and invasive infections, and alternative treatments are limited.

It is unbelievable, but this precious antibiotic is “...Given as a preventive treatment to poultry, in the eggs (in ovo) or at one day old to prevent nephrotic enteritis,” says Dr. Nadeau. Ceftiofur is not registered for use in poultry, but Canadian veterinarians have the right to use this medication without respecting the label directions, and many veterinarians do so.

Forbidding ceftiofur?

Poultry producers voluntarily stopped using ceftiofur in 2005-2006, and results were significant: resistance diminished by 65% to 75% in poultry isolates. But, ceftiofur was reintroduced and resistance went up again.



Use of ceftiofur is forbidden in the USA. Dr. Michel Major, Chief Veterinarian of MAPAQ, argues that it would not be effective to forbid ceftiofur in Quebec if other provinces continue to allow its use.

Salmonellas are also more resistant.

Poultry, pork and beef salmonellas are also increasingly resistant to many antibiotics. Half of salmonellas from pork and beef are resistant to at least four types of antibiotics. These bacteria can easily be transmitted to humans consuming contaminated meat or through direct contact with animals. *E. coli* resistance to enrofloxacin – another very important antimicrobial agent in human health – has also clearly increased in Quebec since 2006. Registered for the treatment of respiratory problems in cattle, this medication is related to another crucial antibiotic for humans, ciprofloxacin.



Organic agriculture promoted in Quebec newspapers

An article from a new series of 8 newspaper articles called *L'univers bio* (*The Organic World*), written in cooperation with the daily newspaper Le Soleil (in Quebec City), is now being published every Wednesday. The articles, co-produced by the Filière biologique du Québec, are also featured in the print publications and web sites of the members of the [GESCA Group](#). The first four articles can be read at <http://www.lapresse.ca/le-soleil/dossiers/lunivers-bio/> (in French only).

The Organic Science Cluster II proposal has been submitted



The OFC wants to acknowledge the dedicated work of Dr. Andy Hammermeister, OACC Director, Margaret Savard, Program Officer, and Joanna MacKenzie, OACC Website Coordinator, for the preparation and submission of the

application for the second Organic Science Cluster, proposed under AAFC's AgriInnovation Program. [The proposal](#) submitted to AAFC includes many research activities, as well as knowledge translation and transfer activities and components. This work encompasses over 200 collaborating researchers, affiliated with over 30 research sites within AAFC, universities, provincial governments and other organizations. Approximately 100 industry collaborators committed cash or in-kind support for the Cluster, and 115 letters of endorsement for research activities for the cluster as a whole were received. The overall OSCII submission included approximately 2,500 pages of documentation.

The Canadian organic sector is very lucky to be supported by the [OACC team](#). Research will certainly support the sector's growth and prosperity. AAFC is now assessing the proposal and we sincerely wish good luck to OACC and to the researchers involved in the OSCII.

Larry Black, OFC Director representing the MOA, celebrates a century of farming with his family

On August 4, 2013 the [Black Family](#) will celebrate 100 years of Organic Production! The original Black Family homestead @ NE2-2-22 was purchased in 1912 and first occupied in 1913. This land has never been farmed with commercial sprays or fertilizers. Larry and his wife Sue are farming in partnership with their son Dave and his wife Ashley.

The celebration activities will include:

- Century Farm Sign presentation and organic crop tours
- BBQ Supper (please RSVP) and campfire and sing-along

There are a number of options for overnight stays, including camping, + cabin and motel rooms at Lake Metigoshe (6 miles from farm). There is also David & Maggie's Straw Bale house, and a number of local B&B's. Please contact Sue, by July 1, either by email @ lasue@mynetset.ca or by phone @ 204 747 2867.



The wonder of nature

Flies raised on diets made from organically grown produce had greater fertility and longevity

Organic food is good for everyone. Organic Alberta's April E-Update reports that "Scientists may be split on whether organic foods are better for human health. But a new study presents evidence that organic foods help you live longer and make more babies — if you're a fruit fly". [Read more...](#)

Organic Inputs.ca | ORGANIC FEDERATION OF CANADA

It is spring time! Time to consult OFC Organic Inputs Directory!

<http://organicinputs.ca/>

Day of Action to Stop GM Alfalfa, April 9, is a great success

Almost 40 Action Days took place across Canada on April 9, with supporters calling for a moratorium or complete halt on the approval of GM alfalfa (extract from OCO report). To see or read about about some of the Action Day:

In Ontario : <http://www.organiccouncil.ca/news/gm-alfalfa-a-tortoise-in-the-race>

In Montreal: <http://www.lapresse.ca/videos/actualites/201304/09/46-1-manifestation-contre-la-luzerne-ogm.php/71a6339bd99b40dca9d2d6cf0d98c974> La Presse

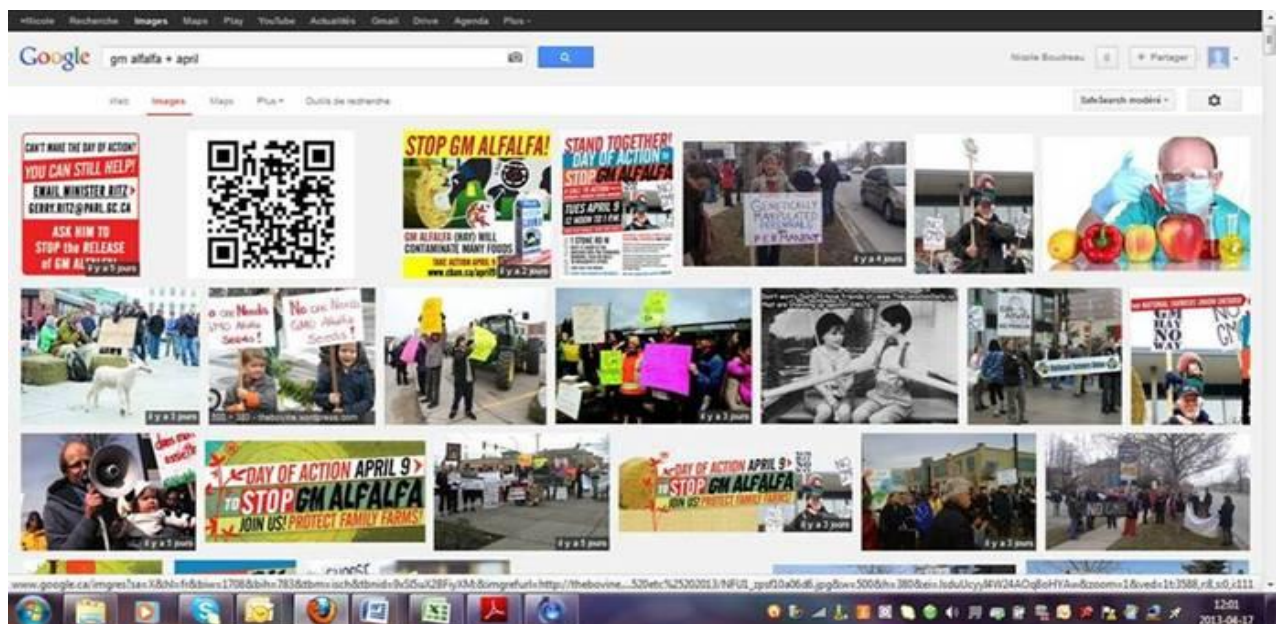
In Guelph - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEThtRcqWYE>

In Alberta - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0HBQsiX6m8>

In London ON http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7pmOuW3_OI

In Nova Scotia http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f_DbKJqFnQ

Finally, a Google image search tells it all.



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