



December 2013

## Standards Interpretation Committee – New Comment Period

### Questions and Answers on issues related to the Canadian Organic Standards

**Are herbicidal soaps allowed under the Standard?**

**When calculating summer ration for ruminants, can pasture be considered “long-fiber forage”?**

**Revised answer to the following question: Can conventional straw be used as a compost feedstock for compost that is used to grow organic mushrooms?**

The Organic Standards Interpretation Committee (SIC) provides interpretive guidance to the Canada Organic Office on issues related to the National Standards for Organic Agriculture (CAN/CGSB 32.310 and CAN/CGSB 32.311). [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 December 5<sup>th</sup>, ending February 5<sup>th</sup> 2014.** All comments regarding these answers should be sent to [OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca)

#### Archives - Final Questions and Answers

All final questions and answers are posted on [OFC website](#) (as pdf).

## The Review of the Canadian Organic Standards

The CGSB Committee on Organic Agriculture (Technical Committee) will meet in Gatineau on December 11-13 for the first meeting of the Canadian Organic Standards Review.

During October and November, twenty-three meetings of the six main Working Groups were held to prepare the 116 recommendations that will be discussed by the Technical Committee members.

The CGSB has reestablished the Technical Committee, with an aim of having a balance of producers, users, regulators and general interest members, such that one group cannot out-vote other members or dominate the proceedings. The Technical Committee has approximately 100 members (including voting members, alternates and ‘information’ [non-voting] members). Of these 100 members, 43 are voting members, responsible for the technical content, approval and maintenance of the standards. The current list of voting members can [be reviewed here](#).

#### Pertinent information about the COS Review

For more information about the funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to the Organic Federation of Canada to support the review, [click here](#).

To view the list of the Canadian Sponsors supporting the COS review to match AAFC funding, [click here](#).

To view the list of the Working Groups Conveners, [click here](#).

For general information about the COS Review Project, [click here](#).

At the COS review, we have to discuss about....

## Substances grown on GE substrates



Some substances are grown on GE substrate, and there is no residue of this GE substrate in the final product.

But 1.4.1 states that use of GE is not compatible with organic principles. Would the total prohibition of GE result in losing access to many important crop inputs? Substances grown on GE Soy substrate: bacillus subtilis, yeasts, yoghurt & cheese cultures, microbials such as rhyzobium, compost starters, enzymes, riboflavin, antibiotics & vaccines. Should the problem of commercial availability be considered as a serious concern?

## The organic standard is everyone’s business

**We encourage all businesses that depend on strong organic regulations to contribute generously to funding the COS revision.**

In Canada, the organic sector has the power to decide how organic food is produced and processed, and the COS review is the way in which this decision-making takes place. This is why the OFC is asking you to contribute financially to the review: the organic standard is the foundation of the whole industry, and an obsolete standard cannot – and will not – sustain the growth of the sector.

Suggested minimal cash contributions have been set at \$500.00. However, please consider higher amounts based on your business’ turnover. **Remember – AAFC will triple your cash contribution!**

<b>Budget -Review of the Canadian Organic Standards</b>	
Costs covered by CGSB	\$ 680,000
Costs covered by industry	\$ 379,000
AAFC funding	\$ 297,000
Industry contribution	\$ 82,000
<b>Total budget for COS Review</b>	<b>\$ 1,059,000</b>

Sponsor the COS review to benefit from the following privileges:

- You will be the subject of a short article (100 words) that describes you and your business. The article, along with an accompanying photo or logo, will be distributed on all the mailing lists of the member associations of the OFC;
- You will be posted and promoted on the OFC website, in a high-traffic section devoted to the COS revision;
- You will have the satisfaction of supporting a collective exercise to update and modernize the standards that govern all organic production in Canada.

**Cash contributions by cheque or bank draft should be sent to the office of the OFC, 12-4475, Grand Boulevard, Montreal (QC) H4B 2X7.**

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