

The review of the Canadian Organic Standards

Discussions with government to determine the funding mechanisms for the maintenance of the COS are ongoing



Paddy Doherty, co-chair of the Organic Value Chain Roundtable, Nicole Boudreau, OFC, Tia Loftsgard, COTA, Minister Lawrence MacAulay, Lloyd Longfield, MP for Guelph, Ashley Sy Hilaire, COG

Minister Lawrence MacAulay [announced](#) last January 26 that “the Government of Canada will provide the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) the necessary funds to cover costs associated with 2020 Canadian Organic Standards review”.

Some of the government support for the review will go directly to the [Canadian General Standards Board](#) (CGSB), which is an agency of the federal government that currently owns 350 standards relating to various industrial activities, ranging from transportation of dangerous goods to textiles, and including Government of Canada forms, protective clothing, transportation fuels and organic agriculture.

The CGSB manages the review process of their standards by creating technical committees composed of members from industry that have the expertise to assess and modernize the standards that regulate their own activities with which they shall comply.

The content of each standard is determined by the concerned industry that, in return, pays the CGSB for the management of its review; CGSB remains the owner of the standards that it maintains and revises.

Consequently, the Government of Canada will cover the CGSB fee for the review of the Canadian Organic Standards, but the review of any national standard also includes other significant costs.

To ensure transparency and consensus, any review is first based on industry-wide consultations held to hear the industry concerns and prepare the recommendations that the CGSB Committee will consider.

We are currently in discussions with the Government of Canada regarding funding mechanisms to support these consultations.

The CGSB requires that industry be notified and invited to submit requests for modifications that would clarify or modernize the standard. Once compiled, the industry requests are examined by Working Groups that will draft recommendations that will later be evaluated by the CGSB Committee. Significant costs are incurred by this crucial phase of the review that incorporates the industry-wide consultation, the creation and coordination of the Working Groups, and the preparation of the positive or negative recommendations by the Working Groups.

OFC, COG and COTA are in discussions with AAFC to help government find the mechanism to fund these preliminary consultations. Discussions are still ongoing against a backdrop of the generous support that Canada's competitive jurisdictions, the United States and the European Union, provide. These jurisdictions fund the entire review process of their organic standards from the preliminary industry consultation phase to the publication of the revised standards.

An OFC survey – please participate!

How to prevent GE contamination?

The Canadian Organic Standards (COS) contain directives to prevent contamination of crops by GMOs (clauses 4.4.4 and 5.2.2 d). Producers now have to design prevention plans in order to mitigate contamination of their organic crops.



But what are good measures to implement?

How can contamination be prevented? How should the standard address the contamination issue?

The OFC would like to know the measures that you apply to prevent GE contamination of your organic crops and the effectiveness of those measures.

Collected data are confidential; they will help support the concerned producers and determine how the COS can better outline this issue.

[Click here to respond to the survey.](#)
Deadline is March 5 2018

We thank you very much for your cooperation. We will publish a detailed report in March.



Australia likes chickens ACCC releases guidance on free range egg standard

The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) has released guidance for egg producers on its approach to enforcing the new National Information Standard on free range eggs, which comes into effect on 26 April 2018.

Under the new Standard, egg producers cannot use the words 'free range' on their egg cartons unless the eggs were laid by hens that:

- had meaningful and regular access to an outdoor range during the daylight hours of the laying cycle
- were able to roam and forage on the outdoor range
- were subject to a stocking density of 10 000 hens or less per hectare, and that outdoor stocking density is prominently displayed on the packaging or signage.

"Shoppers are willing to pay a premium for free range eggs, but only if the chickens genuinely have regular access to an outdoor range. From April 26, free range must only be used by compliant egg producers so consumers can have confidence in the products they are buying," ACCC Chairman Rod Sims said. [Read more.](#)

We certainly wish that this initiative will inspire Canadian producers and consumers.

The revised organic aquaculture standard is published

Still a voluntary standard until the enforcement of the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations, the National Standard of Canada - *CAN/CGSB-32.312-2018 - Organic Production Systems - Aquaculture - General Principles, management standards and permitted substances lists* - has been revised and is made available at no cost at the links

<http://www.publications.gc.ca/pub?id=9.851011&sl=0>



www.organicfederation.ca
www.federationbiologique.ca

