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Comparison between  
CAN/CGSB-32.310-2015 amended 2018 and CAN-CGSB-32.310-2020

**Section 7.1 – Apiculture**

Changes are highlighted in yellow

CAN/CGSB-32.310-2015

CAN-CGSB-32.310-2020

**7 Specific production requirements**

**7.1 Apiculture**

**7.1.1** Bees may be introduced to an operation and managed for production benefits, such as pollination of organic crops. If managed as a livestock species for the production of organic products (for example, honey, pollen, propolis, royal jelly, beeswax and bee venom), bees shall be managed in accordance with this standard.

**7.1.2** The operator shall prepare a detailed organic plan (see 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) that describes the source of bees, production methods, bee diet, disease and pest control, breeding and other related issues of colony management. Where applicable, the organic plan shall also describe crop management practices.

**7.1.3** Records that document all apiary management activities, including removal of supers and extraction of honey (see 4.4), shall be maintained.

**7.1.4** The treatment and management of bee colonies shall be informed by the principles of organic production (see Introduction, section II).

**7.1.5** Organic plants and undomesticated, non-agricultural vegetation shall be the primary source of nectar, honeydew and pollen. Crops treated with prohibited substances and genetically engineered crops shall be avoided.

**7.1.6** Bee health shall be based on appropriate measures such as selection of stock with disease-resistant traits, availability of suitable forage, and good apiary management practices.

**7 Specific production requirements**

**7.1 Apiculture**

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**7.1.2** The operator shall prepare a detailed organic plan (see 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) that describes the source of bees; production methods; bee diet; control of pests, including diseases, mites and insects; breeding; and other related issues of colony management. Where applicable, the organic plan shall also describe crop management practices.

**7.1.3** Records that document all apiary management activities, including removal of supers and extraction of honey (see 4.4), shall be maintained.

**7.1.4** The treatment and management of bee colonies shall be informed by the principles of organic production (see Introduction, clause 0.2).

**7.1.5** Organic plants and undomesticated, non-agricultural vegetation shall be the primary source of nectar, honeydew and pollen. Crops treated with prohibited substances and genetically engineered crops shall be avoided.

**7.1.6** Bee health shall be based on appropriate measures, such as selection of stock with disease-resistant traits, availability of suitable forage, and good apiary management practices.

**7.1.7** When bees are placed in wild areas, impact on the indigenous insect population shall be considered.

#### **7.1.8 Transition**

**7.1.8.1** Colonies shall be under continuous organic management for at least 12 months before products may be considered organic.

**7.1.8.2** During transition, all non-organic wax shall be replaced with organic wax. If prohibited substances were not used in the colony for at least 12 months prior to the start of continuous organic management, replacement of wax is not mandatory. However, all products produced prior to the start of continuous organic management shall be considered non-organic.

**7.1.8.3** Colonies and hives shall not be rotated between organic and non-organic management systems. Bees treated with antibiotics are subject to the requirements of 7.1.15.7.

#### **7.1.9 Introduced bees**

If commercially available, introduced bees, that is, replacement bees for established colonies, shall be organic. Replacement colonies shall be produced within the operation or come from another established organic apiary.

#### **7.1.10 Location of hives**

Where sources or zones of prohibited substances are present, that is, genetically engineered crops or environmental contamination, apiaries shall be protected with a buffer zone of 3 km (1.875 mi.). The following exceptions apply:

- a) fertilizers are permitted in the buffer zone, with the exception of sewage sludge; and
- b) if natural features that would restrict the likelihood of bee travel (such as forests, hills or waterways) and abundant organic forage are present, buffer zones may be reduced.

**7.1.7** When bees are placed in wild areas, impact on the indigenous insect population shall be considered.

#### **7.1.8 Transition**

**7.1.8.1** Colonies and hives (including brood and honey super frames) shall be under continuous organic management for at least 12 months before products may be considered organic.

**7.1.8.2** Colonies and hives shall not be rotated between organic and non-organic management systems. Bees treated with antibiotics are subject to the requirements of 7.1.15.7.

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If commercially available, introduced bees, that is, replacement bees for established colonies, shall be organic. Replacement colonies shall be produced within the operation or come from another established organic apiary.

#### **7.1.10 Location of hives**

Where sources or zones of prohibited substances are present, that is, genetically engineered (GE) crops or environmental contamination, apiaries shall be protected with a buffer zone of 3 km (1.875 mi.). The following exceptions apply:

- a) fertilizers (including those that are not listed in Table 4.2 Column 2 of CAN/CGSB-32.311) are permitted in the buffer zone, with the exception of sewage sludge; and
- b) buffer zones may be reduced if natural features that would restrict the likelihood of bee travel (such as forests, hills or waterways) and abundant compliant forage are present.

### 7.1.11 Forage and feeding

7.1.11.1 Organic honey and pollen shall be the primary food source for adult bees. Adequate food supplies shall be maintained in the colony, including sufficient food reserves for the colony to survive dormancy periods.

- a) In the event of a feed shortage due to climatic or other exceptional circumstances, temporary feeding of colonies is permitted. However, feeding shall only occur between the last honey harvest and 15 days before the start of the next nectar or honeydew flow-period.
- b) Organic honey or sugar shall be used. When the health of the colony cannot be maintained with honey or sugar that is organic, non-organic, refined sugar may be used.

7.1.11.2 Feed shall not be provided less than 30 days before the harvest of honey.

### 7.1.12 Colony management

7.1.12.1 Hives shall be clearly and individually identified, and shall be monitored regularly, that is, at one- to two-week intervals, depending upon the colony, weather conditions and time of year.

7.1.12.2 Wing clipping of queen bees is prohibited.

7.1.12.3 Bees shall be removed from hives with bee escape-boards, shaking, brushing and forced-air blowers.

### 7.1.11 Forage and feeding

7.1.11.1 The primary food source for adult colonies shall be nectar and pollen collected from sources conforming to this standard and food sources stored by the bees in the hive (honey, pollen, etc.).

a) In the event of a regional or seasonal shortage of forage and for winter feeding of colonies, the following is allowed in order of preference:

- 1) organic honey from within the operation;
- 2) organic sugar (e.g., inverted, syrup, fondant);
- 3) non-organic transitional honey;
- 4) non-organic, non-genetically engineered (non-GE) sugar (compliant with 1.4 and 1.5);

b) In the case of the use of non-organic, non-GE refined sugar, the operator shall:

- 1) maintain and document appropriate practices to prevent the mixing of organic and non-organic feeds in honey supers; and
- 2) develop a plan to reduce, and potentially eliminate, the use of non-organic refined sugar from the bee production system by December 2025.

[To learn more, see [“Helping honeybees survive Canadian winters the organic way.”](#)]

c) Feeding shall only occur between the last honey harvest and 15 days before the start of the next nectar or honeydew flow-period.

NOTE Article 7.1.11.1 will be reviewed by 2025.

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7.1.12.2 Wing clipping of queen bees is prohibited.

7.1.12.3 Bees shall be removed from hives with bee escape boards, shaking, brushing and forced-air blowers.

7.1.12.4 Use of synthetic materials in bee smokers is prohibited (see 1.4).

7.1.12.5 Annual destruction of bee colonies, following nectar flows, is prohibited.

#### 7.1.13 Hive construction

7.1.13.1 Hives shall be constructed of and maintained with natural materials, such as wood and metal. Pressure-treated lumber or particleboard, wood preservatives and lumber treated with prohibited substances are not permitted.

7.1.13.2 Exterior surfaces of the hive shall be painted with non-lead-based paints.

7.1.13.3 If dipped in organic beeswax, plastic foundation is permitted.

#### 7.1.14 Health care

7.1.14.1 Preventative health care practices shall be established and maintained, including the selection of bee stocks resistant to prevalent diseases and pests; the selection of colony locations considering site-specific conditions; the availability of sufficient pollen and honey; the renewal of beeswax; the regular cleaning and disinfection of equipment; and the destruction of contaminated hives and materials.

7.1.14.2 The operator shall promote strong, healthy colonies. Management practices may include: merging weaker, albeit healthy, colonies; renewing queens, if necessary; maintaining adequate hive density; inspecting colonies systematically; and relocating diseased colonies to isolated areas.

#### 7.1.15 Disease and pest management

7.1.15.1 The operator shall be a knowledgeable beekeeper who is familiar with the life cycle and behaviour of bees, related disease-causing organisms, parasitic mites and other pests. In the presence of such pests, every effort shall be made to restore the health of a colony.

7.1.15.2 Every effort shall be made to select and breed queen bees for diseases and parasite resistance.

7.1.15.3 Comb foundation shall be obtained from beeswax within the operation or, if commercially available, from other organic sources.

7.1.15.4 Pests and diseases shall be controlled with management methods or modified equipment.

7.1.15.5 Botanical compounds may be introduced into the hive provided that such remedies are listed in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311, and are not used within 30 days of nectar flow or when honey

7.1.12.4 Plant-based materials that have not been treated with prohibited substances (see 1.5) may be used in bee smokers.

7.1.12.5 Annual destruction of bee colonies, following nectar flows, is prohibited.

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#### 7.1.14 Health care

7.1.14.1 Preventative health care practices shall be established and maintained, including the selection of bee stocks resistant to prevalent pests including mites and diseases; the selection of hive locations considering site-specific conditions; the availability of sufficient pollen and honey; the renewal of beeswax; the regular cleaning and disinfection of equipment; and the destruction of contaminated hives and materials when appropriate for pest management.

7.1.14.2 The operator shall promote strong, healthy colonies. Management practices may include: merging weaker, albeit healthy, colonies; renewing queens, if necessary; maintaining adequate hive density; inspecting colonies systematically; and relocating diseased colonies to isolated areas.

#### 7.1.15 Managing pests including insects and diseases

7.1.15.1 The operator shall be a knowledgeable beekeeper who is familiar with the life cycle and behaviour of bees and related disease-causing organisms, parasitic mites and other pests. In the presence of such pests, every effort shall be made to restore the health of a colony.

7.1.15.2 Every effort shall be made to select and breed queen bees for resistance to diseases and parasites.

7.1.15.3 Comb foundation shall be obtained from beeswax within the operation or, if commercially available, from other organic sources.

7.1.15.4 Pests (including diseases) shall be controlled with management methods or modified equipment.

7.1.15.5 Botanical compounds may be introduced into the hive provided that such remedies are

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**7.1.15.6** Therapeutic applications of pest, parasite and disease control substances listed in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 are permitted.

**7.1.15.7** Synthetic allopathic drugs (for example, antibiotics) are prohibited. However, where the imminent health of the colony is threatened, substances listed in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 are permitted. Before treatment, hives shall be removed from the foraging area and taken out of organic production to prevent the spread of antibiotics within the apiary. Treated hives shall be placed in isolation and undergo a 12-month transition period. Wax shall be replaced with organic wax and all veterinary treatments shall be clearly documented.

**7.1.15.8** Destroying the male brood is only permitted to contain infestation with varroa mites.

#### **7.1.16 Extraction, processing and storage**

**7.1.16.1** Extraction of honey from a comb with live brood is prohibited.

**7.1.16.2** The quality and organic integrity of honey and other products of apiculture (see 7.1.1) shall be preserved and protected as specified in 8.1.

**7.1.16.3** Surfaces in direct contact with honey shall be constructed of food-grade materials or coated with beeswax.

**7.1.16.4** Heating of honey for extraction shall not exceed 35°C (95°F) and the decrystallization temperature shall not exceed 47°C (116.6°F). If organic honey is heated above those temperatures, then it can only be used as an ingredient in a multi-ingredient product.

**7.1.16.5** Gravitational settling shall be used to remove debris from extracted honey. Sieves are permitted for removal of residual debris.

**7.1.16.6** Honey shall be packaged in airtight containers.

**7.1.16.7** Facility cleaning, sanitation and pest management are subject to the requirements in 8.2 and 8.3.

listed in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311, and are not used within 30 days of nectar flow or when honey supers are on the hive.

**7.1.15.6** Therapeutic applications of substances to control pests (including parasites and diseases) listed in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 are permitted.

**7.1.15.7** Allopathic drugs (for example, antibiotics) are prohibited. However, where the imminent health of the colony is threatened, oxytetracycline is permitted (See *Antibiotics, oxytetracycline* in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311). Before treatment, hives and colonies shall be removed from the foraging area and taken out of organic production to prevent the spread of antibiotics within the apiary. Treated hives (containers present during treatment) along with the bees present during treatment (excluding queens) shall be placed in isolation and undergo a 12-month transition period. Wax present in the hives during treatment shall not be marketed as organic.

**7.1.15.8** Destroying the male brood is only permitted to contain infestation with varroa mites.

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