

Info-bio

THE ORGANIC FEDERATION OF CANADA NEWSLETTER

March 2011

Standards Interpretation Committee: Active Again with one New Member and Funding!

The CFIA has renewed the funding of the SIC for February and March 2011 as the work of the SIC has been deemed to be part of the core mandate of the Canadian Organic Office. The funding should be renewed for 2011-2012 as well. The SIC agenda is busy with new questions and comments to analyze. As per the SIC terms of reference, three SIC members ending their terms have been re-elected or appointed; the full members list is: Ted Zettel (Chair), Maureen Bostock, Gérard Bouchard, Jean Duval, Rochelle Eisen, Dag Falck and Janine Gibson.

Questions about the meaning of a particular point in the Canadian Organic Standard may originate from any source and are directed to Elizabeth Corrigan of the Canadian Organic Office [by email](#) or by phone 613-773-6221.

SIC activities are also integrated in [part G of the 13th version](#) of the COO Operating Manual.

Vote on moratorium on approval of GE alfalfa to be held March 22nd

The [meeting held March 10th](#) at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agrifood to vote for a motion requiring a moratorium on approval of GE alfalfa until public research is completed has ended before a vote could be cast on that important motion for the organic sector.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agrifood will meet again [Tuesday March 22nd](#) to continue debating the motion on GE alfalfa, unless the government launches elections before that date.

So it is still time to write to the Committee members to voice your concern on GE alfalfa. You can visit the [CBAN website](#) to support the moratorium.

The Organic Sector speaks at the Hearings of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-food on Biotechnology

The use of biotechnology is contentious within the Canadian agricultural sector: the Canadian Organic Standards prohibit the use of GM seeds and substances derived from GE manipulations. Many representatives of the organic sector have been heard by the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. You can hear or read the evidence they presented.

February 15 th 2011	Jodi Koberinski, Executive Director, Organic Council of Ontario	Print version (p. 4)	Web audio: (click on "View this clip")
February 17 th 2011	Arnold Taylor, Organic Grower	Print version (p.2)	Web Audio
March 1 st 2011	Ted Zettel, President of the Organic Federation of Canada	Print version (p.2)	Web Audio

The Organic Value Chain Round Table Meets in Winnipeg

The Organic Value Chain Round Table (OVCRT) met in Quebec City on June 28-29, 2010, and there will be an upcoming OVCRT meeting in Winnipeg on March 22-23, 2011.

The Bulletin of the Quebec Meeting, now available on the [AAFC website](#), reports on the research currently being undertaken, such as:

- The [Carbon Footprint Study](#) which had a goal of determining if sufficient evidence exists to substantiate organic product differentiation claims, based on its carbon footprint. The report states that organic products can be differentiated on its low carbon footprint.
- In addition, the following studies are currently in progress:
 - **The Organic Seed Study**, which has an objective of "assessing the current and potential organic seed markets in Canada, identify barriers to the development of the organic seed sector, and provide recommendations on how to structure and develop the Canadian organic seed sector";
 - **The GMO Study**, which has an objective of "assessing the agronomic and economic impacts of GMO contamination and explore solutions to address the issues while maintaining the long term sustainability of the organic sector".

Next version of the Canadian Organic Standards Published in April

The CGSB is planning to post in April the revised version of the Organic Production Systems Standards following the meeting held in January 2010 in Cornwall.

The COO issues a communiqué to announce the end of the Stream of Commerce Policy

The communiqué of the Canada Organic Office can be read at the link <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/orgbio/20110310inde.shtml>