

Questions and Answers Regarding National Standards for Organic Agriculture

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency, in partnership with the Organic Federation of Canada, has developed the Organic Standards Interpretation Committee (Agri-SIC).

The objective of the Committee is to provide to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency interpretive guidance on issues related to the National Standards for Organic Agriculture (CAN/CGSB-32.310 and CAN/CGSB-32.311).



Below are proposed answers to questions raised by organic stakeholders, regarding the National Standards for Organic Agriculture. The proposed responses are subject to a 30-day comment period. All comments regarding these answers should be sent to cfia.opr-rpb.acia@canada.ca.

Public Comment Period – October 11 to November 11, 2022

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SPECIAL NOTIFICATION

Withdrawal of a Final Q&A

As there is no commercial availability conditions in clause 6.2.3.3 applicable to the conversion of herds and individual animals from within or from outside an organic operation, the Standards Interpretation Committee has decided to withdraw the following Question and Answer from the list of [Final Q&As](#) posted on the website of the Organic Federation of Canada and to submit the question to the 2025 review process of the Canadian Organic Standards.

Is it permitted for an organic dairy operation to sell organic calves or heifers born on-farm instead of keeping them as replacement breeding stock while purchasing non-organic breeding stock to convert to organic with a 12-month transition period for organic milk production (as per 6.2.3.3 a)? (555.2)

No. Per 6.2.4 a), breeding stock shall be organic unless not commercially available. In the example questioned, replacement breeding stock is available from within the operation.

Under public comment

Organic Principles and Management Standards

Status of crops grown after first application

Can crops grown during the season of the first inspection of a new COR applicant be stored and sold as organic in the following year after the client receives certification? (570)

No. Per 32.310 5.1.1, the standard needs to be fully applied (after application) for 12 months on the production unit before the first harvest. Therefore, only crops seen at the second inspection will be eligible for certification.

Rock mineral compounds as mineral fraction

Can rock mineral compounds, such as dolomite or gypsum, added to a soil/growing media be considered part of the mineral fraction as required in containerized production (7.5.2.1 e)? (563)

Yes. Sand, silt and clay as described in 7.5.2.1 e) refers to particle size and would encompass rock mineral compounds (excluding perlite and vermiculite) permitted by this standard. The use of actual sand, silt and clay soils is permitted, but not required.

Permitted Substances Lists

Detergent as a cleaner

Is a detergent considered a cleaner under clauses 7.1.2 and 7.1.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 (PSL)? What differentiates a detergent from a cleaner? (558)

Per PSL 7.1.1, any substance used to remove dirt, filth and foreign matter from organic products and organic product contact surfaces is a cleaner. A cleaner is only a detergent if specifically

formulated for cleaning through the process of detergency as defined by ISO 862:1984(en) - Surface active agents <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:862:ed-1:v1:en>. Detergency is result of the action of several physico-chemical phenomena and a detergent is a combination of many components including surfactant, chelating agent, enzyme, and dispersant.