

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 (SIC). The objective of the Committee is to provide to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Office 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

February 15 to March 15, 2023

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GE Seeds in an organic field

REVISED WORDING

If GE seeds were purposefully planted in an organic system, would the 36-month transitional period be required after removal of the plants? (313.3)

No. Transition periods are irrelevant and do not apply to this scenario. Alternating in and out of organic production methods is prohibited (see 5.1.7 of 32.310). ~~the operation's certification would be cancelled for current and future crops grown on that production unit.~~

Latex paint to identify trees

Is the use of latex paint to identify trees in the buffer zone of an organic operation, such as an orchard, prohibited? (577)

No. The use of latex paint on trees in the buffer zone or elsewhere on the organic operation is permitted, provided if it is for identification purposes only (not used as a production substance), and it does not come into contact with the organic product or the vascular system of the tree.

Calculation of grazed forage

Under 32.310 clause 6.1.3 a) 1), is the minimum 30% grazed forage of the total forage intake calculated based of an average consumption of grazed forage during the entire grazing period or on the basis of daily consumption of grazed forage? (576)

The percentage of grazed forage intake is calculated based on dry matter intake (DMI) from pasture during the entire grazing period and shall not be below 30% of the total forage intake over the entire year including winter/ non-grazing forage rations.

Being an average, the minimum of 30% grazed forage does not have to be met at all times but is expected to be exceeded during periods of high forage growth (6.1.3 a) 2)).

Elimination of detergents

Regarding the annotation for the Detergents listing in Table 7.4 of the PSL, how can you determine that a detergent is "readily eliminated during wastewater treatment such that harm to the environment is minimized"? (559)

The annotation is not about the quality of the detergent or the manufacturer's ability to demonstrate that it is "readily eliminated..."; this annotation requires that wastewater treatment be in place to eliminate potential environmental harm when a non biodegradable detergent is used. The ingredients of any non-biodegradable detergent must comply with 7.1.3 (32.311) or the conditions of 8.2.3 (32.310) must be met.