

# Questions and Answers Regarding National Standards for Organic Agriculture

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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 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](mailto:cfia.opr-rpb.acia@canada.ca).**

## Public Comment Period

**June 12 to July 12, 2024**

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## Organic principles and management standards

### Organic seed search

#### **Is an organic seed search necessary if non-organic seed is carried over in inventory? (619)**

No. An organic seed search is not necessary if a documented search was conducted and verified by the certification body at the time of purchase of the non-organic seed.

### Identification of organic products in storage

#### **Are signs identifying organic products as organic required on a storage unit if non-organic products also in storage are not GE? (620)**

No. Identification as organic is only required on storage units when there is a risk of GE contamination (32-310 8.1.5 g)). However, an identification system is always required to distinguish between organic and non-organic products in any storage space (4.4.3).

## Permitted Substances Lists

### Cobalt and selenium as micronutrients

#### **Are the micronutrients permitted by the Canadian Organic Standards limited to the micronutrients as listed under PSL Table 4.2? Are unlisted micronutrients such as cobalt and selenium permitted, and if yes, are there any restrictions to the type of cobalt and selenium that can be used? (553)**

The Micronutrients listing has a definitive list, as assessed. Other micronutrients such as cobalt and selenium were not assessed. Micronutrients that are not specifically listed in Table 4.2 are not permitted but may be found in permitted substances such as Mined Minerals, unprocessed (e.g. rock dust), Kelp and kelp products, Manure and Compost.

### Treatment of naturally occurring brine

#### **Is calcium chloride from a naturally occurring brine permitted by Table 4.2 Calcium listing if the brine is first treated with lime prior to the evaporation stage of the calcium chloride? (384, 621)**

Yes, as the calcium chloride was present in the brine prior to the treatment and was not altered during extraction.

### Slaughter by-products in vitamins and minerals

#### **Does 32-310 6.4.4 e) restricting mammalian or avian slaughter by-products in feed apply to vitamins in feeds? (622)**

No.

### Omega-3 Fatty Acid in infant formula and baby food

#### **Can Omega-3 Fatty Acid for use in an organic baby food or infant formula be reviewed for compliance as a legally required nutrient under the listing of Vitamins & mineral nutrients in Table 6.4 of PSL? (624.1)**

No. It is not a vitamin or mineral. Infant formula (and not baby food) is legally required to provide a ratio of essential fatty acids (omega-3 and omega-6) per the Food and Drug Regulations and would need to be supplied by organic ingredients.

**When reviewing Omega-3 Fatty Acid, such as the docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), as an ingredient, do all sub-parts including preservatives need to comply with 32.311 Section 6? (624.2)**

The consideration of subparts is not applicable as Omega-3 Fatty Acids including DHA are not agricultural ingredients nor are they listed in Section 6.