

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 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

January 3 to January 31, 2025

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Organic principles and management standards

Honey bottling

What is the maximum heating temperature for the bottling of honey? (625)

The temperature when bottling honey shall not exceed 47 °C (116.6 °F), the maximum temperature for decrystallization. If heated above this temperature, the honey can only be used as an ingredient in a multi-ingredient product as per 7.1.16.4 (CAN/CGSB-32.310).

Status of components in a multi-component ingredient

Per 9.2.1 and 9.2.2, organic products shall not contain an ingredient in both organic and non-organic form. A cookie contains organic sugar, plus a multi-component ingredient (such as chocolate chips) that contains non-organic sugar. Is using organic sugar as an ingredient and non-organic sugar as a sub-part of a multi-component ingredient (chocolate chips) prohibited by 9.2.1 or 9.2.2? (636)

No. The single component ingredient (organic sugar) and the multi-component ingredient (chocolate chips) are different ingredients.

In ingredients made up of sub-parts, the status of the sub-parts is not considered individually. It is therefore acceptable for a product to contain non-organic sugar as a sub-part of a non-organic ingredient, and organic sugar as a single ingredient.

Permitted Substances Lists

Composting obligation

Can the requirement of composting be eliminated if the compost feedstocks are heat treated to a temperature of 55° C for a period of four consecutive days or more? (635)

No. Compost feedstocks shall be carefully managed in an aerobic process by which biological materials are digested by microorganisms as per the definition of **Compost** (3.19 - CAN/CGSB-32.310) and comply with all conditions set out in the annotations of **Compost feedstocks** and **Compost from off-farm sources**, and **Compost produced on the farm** in CAN/CGSB-32.311.

Ammonia water

Is ammonia water derived or extracted from an anaerobic digester permitted as a soil amendment? (627)

No. Regardless of the source, ammonia is not listed in Table 4.2 of CAN/CGSB-32.311; therefore, it is not permitted.

Use of collagen casings

Are collagen casings listed in Table 6.4 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 permitted for use in the preparation of pork, beef or veal sausages? (639)

No. Collagen casings are permitted only for poultry sausage as indicated in the listing annotation.