

A Canada Organic Program (COP)

to grow sustainable agriculture for Canadians
and compete in international markets

Canadian farmers are already experiencing serious negative impacts of climate change due to extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, forest fires, and ocean acidification.

Aligned with what the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) proposes in terms of [Climate-Smart Agriculture \(CSA\)](#), the Canadian Organic Standards (COS) are enforcing one of the most effective food-sector-related strategies to foster the emergence of a carbon-neutral economy.

Resilient agriculture delivers ecological services and set the path for food security amid climate change turmoil by:

- reducing our agricultural sector's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions,
- sequestering atmospheric carbon in soils and
- increasing biodiversity, while buffering the impact of climate change by improving the soil's resilience to both drought and flooding, and increasing farm-based income.

Canada is considered to be the 6th largest organic market in the world; our organic sales are growing at an impressive rate ([\\$8.1 B in 2020](#)). Despite a steady increase in production, supply is not keeping up with demand, both domestically and internationally. This offers great opportunities for the future.

But our federal government is reducing support to organic farmers and processors, the operators who rely on sustainable and resilient practices

- The Canadian Organic Standards, referenced by law, define ecological agriculture as the basis of the whole industry; the standards need to be maintained and updated, but the current government is abandoning the funding for this essential regulatory reference.
- Under the Canada Organic Regime, the Standards Interpretation Committee harmonizes the certification process by providing independent guidance to CFIA on issues related to the standards. But CFIA is cutting funding to the SIC.
- The growth of the market depends on the creation of a permanent database to identify certified organic operators, protect organic integrity and enforce the value chain.
- Organic operators grow our food while protecting air and water quality, soil health and human health, while increasing biodiversity. They should be reimbursed for their certification fees because they deliver these sustainable services.

The Canadian organic industry needs a Canada Organic Program to grow Canada's competitiveness and increase adoption of sustainable agriculture

- The USDA and EU fund the maintenance of their organic standards.
- The European Commission has set a target of 'at least 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming and a significant increase in organic aquaculture by 2030'.
- The USDA funds the Organic Cost Share Certification Program (OCCSP) which provides [cost share assistance to producers and handlers](#) and has created the [USDA Organic Integrity Database](#) to promote the growth of agricultural ecological practices and prevent fraud.

A Canada Organic Program is a must: organic agriculture maintains soil health, prevents climate change and promotes biodiversity.

This is the responsibility of our federal government as this affects organic consumers, processors and the thousands of farmers who grow organic food and feed!