

Final Questions and answers

Complying with 2020 Canadian Organic Standards

Scope, Definitions, Organic Plan - CAN/CGSB-32.310

Mutagenesis or cisgenesis	1
Genetic engineering – Cell fusion.....	1
Visually indistinguishable	1
Biodegradability	2
Definition of ‘production unit’	2
Recordkeeping – Format	2
Records for short shelf- life products	2

Mutagenesis or cisgenesis

Do seeds resulting from mutagenesis or cisgenesis fall within the Standard’s prohibition of genetic engineering? (255)

Mutagenesis and cisgenesis by way of genetic engineering are prohibited by the Standard (3.31). The use of these techniques is limited to producing plant materials through traditional breeding techniques.

Genetic engineering – Cell fusion

Is cell fusion allowed in organic production? (199) No. Cell fusion which combines plants of different taxonomic families (such as sagebrush and grape) is not allowed. Cell fusion is only allowed between members of the same taxonomic family. See the definition of ‘Genetic engineering’ in 3.31 of 32.310.

Visually indistinguishable

What is the criteria or definition for “visually indistinguishable” (3.52) ? Is a crop considered visually distinguishable if can be identified by an expert such as a grader or plant breeder OR must it be visually distinguishable to a common person?

(349) The criteria for ‘visually indistinguishable’ is that a common person could not distinguish one from the other if the products were positioned side by side.

Biodegradability

What is the definition of biodegradability as it pertains to the Canadian Organic Standards? (263) Biodegradable is defined in the standard as “capable of microbial decomposition within 24 months in soil (with the exception of plant biomass), one month in aerated water, two months in anaerobic water, with minimal impact on the environment” (see 3.11 in 32.310).

Definition of ‘production unit’

What is the definition of production unit for agricultural enterprises? Does each field, each greenhouse or each livestock building constitute a production unit or is it all fields, greenhouses, buildings managed by a company? (403) A production unit is defined as “identifiable portion of an operation in which production or preparation of an organic product occurs.” Therefore, each field, greenhouse, or livestock building – even a contiguous portion thereof that is identified separately in an operation’s organic system plan – would be considered a separate production unit if requirements pertaining to segregation, traceability, buffer zones, organic integrity, etc. were maintained for that identifiable portion. All production units shall have distinct, defined boundaries (5.1.6 in 32.310).

Recordkeeping – Format

Is there is a specific format required for recordkeeping? (100)

No. There is no specific format for record keeping prescribed in the standard. Records must be readily auditable and contain sufficient detail to satisfy the requirements of 4.4.

Records for short shelf- life products

Do operators producing short-shelf life products need to keep 5 years of daily production records to satisfy 4.4.5 of CAN/CGSB 32.310? (469) – 2 December 2019
Yes.