

# 2021 Organic Sector Survey / Enquête sur le secteur biologique

## Organic Sector / Filière biologique

### Question 11.3

- **What are the most pressing issues facing the organic sector that the organic industry needs to address? Please rank in order of priority, with 1 being most important.**
- **Quels sont les problèmes les plus urgents auxquels est confronté le secteur biologique et que l'industrie devons résoudre? Classez par ordre de priorité, 1 étant le plus important.**

#### Comments / Commentaires

Note: The comments below were submitted to the survey by individuals, and do not reflect the views of the Organic Federation of Canada, Canadian Organic Trade Association, the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada or the Canadian Organic Growers.

Remarque : Les commentaires publiés ci-dessous ont été soumis par les participants au sondage et ne reflètent nécessairement pas le point de vue de la Fédération biologique du Canada, de l'Association canadienne du commerce biologique, Centre d'agriculture biologique du Canada, ou de Cultivons Biologique Canada.

#### Priority 3

- Lower seed costs - hay and pasture seed for large acreage prohibitive
- Coûts pour les producteurs
- Distribution
- Human welfare (supports to help organic farms afford to pay their staff good wages)
- La santé de la plante
- Action and implementation of the above and in the face of climate change, rather than more studies, surveys.
- inspection facilities for organic grains
- Price difference between organic and conventional
- Importation de produits «bio »
- Biodiversity loss
- implication des inspections pour vulgariser la disponibilité de semences biologiques
- Organic needs GMOs allowed in standard
- non transparency of ingredients

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- Slow speed of interpretations from both SIC (standard) and CFIA (regulation), inconsistencies between accreditors.
- Une seule et unique liste des substances permise émise par l'ACIA.
- Access to a variety of good, organic seeds
- Informer les gens
- Coût des certifications
- conventional 'consumer confidence' efforts
- Nouveaux créneaux et mise en marché (farines et grains spécialisés)
- Keeping up with technological change in the agriculture and food industry
- Rebuilding small and medium scale processing, like abattoirs.
- Insufficient funding for organic research and knowledge transfer
- Creation of farmers markets for certified organic producers
- availability of affordable land to start a small farm
- Division within the organic sector; between large & small farms and those with differing values.
- Maintaining relevance, ensuring we remain the best solution
- bifurcation within the organics community - on the prairies, there are some very large organic production operations whose innovation needs will differ from small acre (<250 acres) production systems. It is difficult to understand where to focus R&D
- Easing barrier of entry for farms interested in transitioning
- Investir dans la promotion.
- Avoir des données statistiques sur la production bio (superficies, rendements, production, exportations, importations, demande, stocks)
- Growth of the sector will rely on informed policies/certification/regulation. The organic sector needs to ensure there are avenues for growth for all, i.e. small-acre farmers but also accommodate the needs and opportunities of large/exporting operations.
- Most wholly Organic Farms operate on volunteer or WOOFER help
- Organic fraud
- availability of seed suitable in organic production
- The integrity of the label, in the face of large corporate certification.
- Access to Local / Canadian Organic Products in stores
- Marketing support - by the broader commodity groups (ie- dairy board)
- Entreposage et gestion de la germination (pour les pommes de terre)
- ajuster les modes de production avec les changements climatiques

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- Competition vs collaboration
- Climate Crisis: Water/Food Crisis - Project Draw-Down: Plant-rich diets and reducing food waste is urgently required.
- certification costs
- Lack of Representation for Organic Sector in Government / lack of support. No one in Government tasked with Organic.
- La différence entre grande culture biologique et petite agriculture biologique
- making customers aware
- Consumer skepticism about organic being better after seeing poor land/water/waste management by big organic producers
- Further extend organic production to animal production
- Weeds
- Promote the Canadian organic products
- Having a collaborative clear cohesive voice on the national scale, we are becoming too fractured
- consistent prices for producers
- Ease of record keeping
- Cost of cheap imports.
- Consumer education regarding benefits to their world - help them understand sustainable, environmental organic production methods
- Positionner l'agriculture biologique comme solution aux changements climatiques
- improvement of organic import requirements and import oversight by the CFIA - better regulation/oversight of importers/brokers
- Health of the soil means more than adding only organic inputs
- Inability to access labour on existing farms in the organic sector
- Green washing : The resurgence of other terms, labels and narrative that could dilute the basic principle that organic soil and farming should be the base for any other practices : biodynamic, regeneration, permaculture, agro-forestry...etc
- Supply Management - We need more programs like the Artisanal Program from the Chicken Farmers of Ontario. This would allow a smoother transition into the supply management system
- Étiquetage clair des produits bio
- NO dilution of high standards for certified organic product
- Funding
- Fight organic fraud



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- Large food corporations that put profit ahead of the well being of planet, consumers and workers
- lack of programs/funding to encourage transition from conventional to organics
- consumer awareness of organic benefits
- misleading claims ie natural
- We need grants to fund Canadian workers, not migrant workers.
- confusion about labels - natural, gluten free, non gmo, regenerative.
- Free educational courses in rural areas to encourage the organic production
- lack of suitable inputs in my region
- Why do we have Canadian standards more difficult for Canadian growers, when American apples are imported?
- Need provincial government backing for certified organic , not allowing non certified farmers to use the word organic.
- lack of broadband to stay current
- Global warming- volatile weather
- Access to market
- Better pricing for organic goods produced in Canada.Regulation/taxing on foreign organic.
- Risk of GMO crop contamination
- better access to organic food grown in Canada
- Grower knowledge on the profitability of organic farming
- Less red tape for producers
- Fake instant organic crops from hydroponic sources
- Better varieties
- Intense lobby from the Agri business companies to the Canadian government
- Cost
- Practical advice on cover cropping
- Hang in there with government. We're close to tipping point. Don't fall for the temptation to compromise on the principles of organic now to reach a bigger audience or get the ear of government.Consumers will drive this in time, we just have to stay on with the pressure. The gates will open soon.
- Lack of recognition of certification by consumers
- Lack of government support for organic
- Lack of consistency among organic certifiers
- Environment and soil health

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- Honesty in organic marketing
- Pesticide residues
- Organic standards and regulation becoming overly complicated
- Moving confidently into Organic 3.0 with standards that address missing pillars in our progress towards greater 'sustainability' (e.g. addressing diversity, equity, and justice within the OG systems we design)
- Public Perception
- Funding the organic certifying bodies so they can do a better job and rely less on volunteers
- General consumer awareness, confidence, and perception (e.g. respect for and trust in our organic system)
- Stop use of single use plastic mulch. Terrible for our soils
- Tillage
- Consumer education
- Keeping the Canadian standards current
- The press/industry is lauding genetically engineered crops and hydroponics. In order to be nutrient dense plants need to grow in soil.
- Support for reduction in input costs
- Better federal and provincial support of certified organic farms
- Public access to certification protocols in an easily digestible format
- What are the labour laws for Organic farming
- Market stability
- Replicated cost of certification during transecting
- confiance des consommateurs: vu les changements de réglementations et la force des fausses informations sur internet, il faut renforcer la confiance dans le secteur et démontrer la preuve de "sécurité" du secteur bio
- Diversification
- GMO migration
- Dilution of philosophy with poor certs for big producers
- Loss of access to seed due to cancellation of older, non-PBR/non-UPOV 91 varieties
- The extra costs involved because of unfair carbon taxing
- Policy supporting transitioning producers during the time lag or other challenges when changing from conventional agricultural practices

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- There needs to be a solution or help put in place to help farms with pest control (voles) using proven organic methods.
- Education of consumers as to the value of organic ingredients
- Too many fees to be organic, stop all the non profit hog wash and only have one body e
- linking smaller producers with each other so they are stronger as a network and can offer support to one another
- Visibility of CSAs, Farmers Markets, direct sales
- Organic Crop insurance - on non-commodity crops
- Accessibility
- Financement de la recherche et de la mise à jour des normes
- encouraging/providing resources to organic farmers to incorporate more regenerative organic practices. Make visible to consumers and the larger agricultural community that as organic is non-gmo, also at the heart of COR is regenerative
- Educate public about the benefits of organic produce
- Lack of funds to get started in organics
- Improving collaboration between all Organic organizations to improve delivery of services
- Strengthen the organic code to address animal feeding and care issues and to build healthier soils.
- domestic supply not meeting demand
- lobby institutions to buy locally produced food stocks
- Organic production that does not focus on soil health
- Quality and availability of workers.
- Advocating for organic standards and the funds to support on-going standards updating
- understanding how to benefit scale for local organic farming
- Robust and committed support from CFIA to maintain the COS
- Public Perception
- issue around hydroponics
- organic standards interpretation
- Human capital issue with insufficient trained inspectors and reviewers. No \$\$ support for mentoring beginning inspectors.
- Time that it takes for a land to be certified organic
- costs of inputs
- Reliance on farmers volunteering their time to keep their local Certification Body running - not sustainable



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- Cost of organic farm products
- younger generation mistrust in certification – seeing it as government or benefitting big ag .
- energy efficiency in all aspects of food production and transportation
- Education on soil health
- Transparence et représentativité du processus de révision des normes
- Supply the market with what the consumer wants
- access to inputs
- Simple instructions for Crop Rotations, what to plant after what. A poster will suffice.
- Branding recognition and promotion
- consistent ability to supply the demand BECAUSE there is not a steady supply from the farmer to the consumer
- Contrôle de la certification et la qualité des grains importés comme étant biologiques
- engaging with young farmers
- The rising price of commodities driving land prices up.
- the "beyond organic movement"
- Look forward and use technology that fits into the organic space
- Movement to downplay organic by a push for yet one more label with Regenerative Organic.
- promoting organic food
- Market
- Access to good compost/manure that is guaranteed free of persistent herbicides (like Grazon)
- Forming cooperatives where small growers could pool their products to reach larger markets
- venture capitalists buying up land/farms
- Data/ag stats
- Support growers financially in their 3 years transition
- Land prices
- Conventional farms should have barrier strips!
- Small production base
- Lack of focus/funding for the CFIA's organic office. diversify the organic products
- Labour issues are always big, getting enough help to do the work
- Policies to help organic operation to expanding international markets
- Des politiques et des règlements qui prennent en compte la spécificité bio (mise en marché, vente aux institutions)

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- potential contamination of crops with neighbors' gmo crops and sprays
- Cost effective fertilizers ( not manures) and compost
- The amount of paperwork that comes with being certified organic.
- Les difficultés à trouver des petites terres pour les nouveaux maraichers diversifiés
- Avoir un logo ou une marque apposable sur les produits bio ou étant autorisés en production biologiques
- Incorporating ecological principals into oreganic production curricula and practices
- 2020 organic premiums have not kept pace with conventional I sold organic for less than conventional This will not keep growers growing organic
- increasing consumer awareness
- Exclusion of non-certified, but organic in spirit producers being left out of the movement
- Need more support for farmers (even if they are older)
- Diversity
- Hydroponics in Organic
- Lack of consumer knowledge of the benefits of organic farming to the waterways, topsoil, and health of animal stock and consumer health
- Markets for organic beef have been difficult
- Establishment of penalties for operators found to have committed fraud
- le canada doit faire des lois normes de déclarations des producteurs conventionnels.
- availability of processing facilities (ie slaughterhouses)
- Seed patenting
- Creating organic standards which can be used globally, or are of equivalent standards
- lack of peer reviewed data of organic inputs - no reviews on efficacy



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### Question 11.4

#### Priority 4

- Establish consultation schedules between organic growers and agriculture liaisons
- Marges des distributeurs
- Animal welfare (more rigorous and stringent animal welfare standards)
- Accroître la productivité par unité de surface cultivée
- Leveraging the critical mass of success to help small and medium-sized producers be a part of scaling organics across Canada.
- Fraud
- contamination ogm
- lack of education of consumer
- No funded regime for standards updates
- Soutien du fédéral dans tous les enjeux lié aux bios
- affordability of food vs. paying farmers a living wage
- prix de vente ne couvrant pas le cout de production
- Countering misinformation spread by organizations like Croplife Canada and misinformation put out as part of public trust initiatives.
- The need to incorporate regenerative practices into the Canadian Organic Regime
- Introduction of consulting schedules between organic producers and government liaisons
- Lack of funding to support the maintenance and improvement of the COS and the system as a whole.
- Grow the sector
- Faire progresser la recherche agronomique dédiée au secteur bio.
- Quantifier les bienfaits environnementaux de l'agriculture biologique (ou se comparer à l'agriculture régénératrice)
- Production issues as noted below as "barriers" in question 8.
- Access to sustainable economy tools-solar tractors etc.
- Provincial organic standards Ontario
- GM labelling to inform the public
- Animal welfare.
- Affordability of Organic Products
- Santé des sols (travail du sol fréquent)

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- Subsidies reallocating from animal ag to stockfreeorganic growers
- Fraud / Consumer Trust
- Le prix vendu en épicerie versus se que l'agriculteur reçoit
- Low carbon footprint processing and distribution chain
- Development of preseeding or in-crop inputs designed to enhance organic crop growth
- maintaining the integrity of the organic standards, the standards really got watered down during the last revision
- Impact of chemical use around Organic farms eg Bees, spray drift.
- Pest control products that meet approval for organic production
- CFIA follow up on fraud complaints in an effective, efficient, open and transparent fashion
- The need to further educate the consumer on the benefits of organic production
- Research: More studies showing the benefits of organic farming and concrete difference in nutrition content, taste, pest resistance, etc
- Le prix des produits bio
- Education of all producers of the economic advantage of producing goods through organic certification vs. with poisons
- Market place
- In order to address the increased consumer focus on sustainability, should a sustainability component be added to organic standards?
  - consumer awareness
  - lack of trained labour
  - global pandemic pushing environmental considerations to lower importance
  - lack of abbatoirs
- We need grants to fund small scale farms and small scale projects. These are the farms that support local communities with food security.
- lack of local processors
- Price control for organic products
- increase in similar terms, confusion - ecologically grown, agroecological, regenerative
- Respond to untruths of mis/disinformation that big anti-organic conglomerates advertise that organic is no better, reduced yields, can't feed the planet, not any healthier, etc.,etc.
- kid friendly campaigns
- The consumer confusion when the Canada Organic Label is assigned to goods produced outside Canada.

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- funding for the next review of COR standards.
- Costs of certification
- Not addressing plastic/packaging issues our products are packed in
- Education
- Higher prices for organic products and need for certification which is too expensive for small producers
- Paperwork
- Root out organic fraud both domestic and imports. Demand stronger enforcement and investigative rigour from regulators.
- Excessive new entrants to farming claiming to be organic but not certifying
- Lack of credible research on fertilizers
- Confusion about regeneration in comparison to organic
- Consumer awareness of benefits of organic food
- Organic buyers purchasing products from outside their own country because it is cheaper.
- Livestock - Organic Feed availability at a reasonable cost
- Tillage
- Maintenance of organic standards
- Funding the Canadian standards
- Convenience of getting organic products. We can only attend one or two markets a week and most customers are already on side. We need to reach the wider group of consumers
- Support for value add
- Better federal and provincial support in promoting Canadian Organic
- What does Organic do for sustainability
- Certification
- hybrids without history. mutants
- Concentration of ownership of organic buyers - driving prices down, capturing premiums for themselves
- The willful destruction of vital industries by government
- Systemic food waste
- Education of all consumers not to denigrate people who do not have the same beliefs of obtaining food; it is better to educate and exhibit the differences.
- making/keeping the certification standards simple to translate and implement



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- Networking to support other organic farmers (eg we have a hard time sourcing organic straw in Sask)
- Pushing for GMO labelling
- supporting organic farmers on the prairies to transition some acres into local food production, supporting new organic farmers to do the same
- Professional advice
- Inconsistent rules and lack of good database for inputs
- To lobby federal government for environmental stewardship practices and payments e.i. ALUS.
- Federal and Provincial government policy
- protect producers from fake imported organic produce.
- Organic production that does not focus on human health
- Availability and drop in the cost of inputs
- Helping farmers shift to organic programs
- Global real estate bubbles that financially strain and disempower the mass of humanity. This abstract and created need lessens societies capability in both energy and money to support the true cost of conscientiously directed food production.
- organic import market saturation
- breeding appropriate varieties or animal breeds
- Insufficient regular meetings for trust & communication between certifiers, also key to fraud prevention
- very difficult for young farmers to sell to local food retailers and allow them to repackage for their needs and still be labelled as organic.
- addressing climate change
- cost of land
- Simple instructions for cooler Spring/Fall Crops vs hotter Summer Crops. A poster will suffice.
- Public trust and awareness
- finding certified organic cleaning facilities or butchering facilities within a reasonable distance (increases price and time driving)
- gender equity
- Large institutional investors, domestic and foreign controlling farmland in Canada.
- Huge expenses to certify land & animals.
- Movement by conventional to suggest that Co-opted Regenerative Conventional is comparable.
- helping distribute organic food grown by small rural farms

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- Pricing of produce
- Too expensive for new entrants to apply!
- can't make a living doing small scale agri because of above issues,
- customer education of certified organic and what it entails
- improve the segregation between conventional products and organic products
- New technologies to improve soil health increase soil fertility
- Attacks in the press and elsewhere from conventional agricultural interests and organizations
- Seed bred for organics
- The fact that non-organic companies don't have to pay more than we do. We are doing it right so why punish us?
- Salaires trop bas
- Favoriser les achats de produits locaux (manufacturer au Canada, plutôt qu'à USA ou autres) si possible.
- Need for participatory guarantee certification for smaller farms. Don't just make it about the paper trail.
- Seeds
- Organic fraud – specifically for items being imported – and that Canada does a very poor job on enforcement
- Lack of stable funding for organic regional non-profits
- étiquetage ogm nécessaire par les conventionnel et sur produits transformés. sera une donnée pour choix des consommateurs
- Protecting our water
- Increased consumer awareness of organic

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### Question 11.5

#### Priority 5

- Accroître le nombre de producteurs bio
- Public image that people buy organic for nutrition - which is hard to prove - when focus should be on environment and animals
- La qualité des produits & Innocuité
- Public awareness
- pratiques culturales efficaces
- lack of advertising of benefits
- Lack of legal / financial consequences for fraudulent operators
- Lack of consumer awareness of what organic actually (especially compared to regenerative, non-GMO...)
- Moving away from trend to larger farms, removal of fence rows and fewer farmers.
- Lack of government support for those wishing to transition to organic production
- Baisser les prix payés par les consommateurs.
- Financer un programme d'amélioration génétique et de recherche sur le biologique
- Government which operates by policy and not by principle. the former stifles innovation
- overspray from neighboring farms
- Shifting more to looking at outcomes, rather than inputs.
- Access to Organic Products
- Policy development and education
- Organic Inputs
- Getting rid of think-tank organizations that state they are helping the organic industry but are just mining data for government funding to fill their own pockets.
- incorporating more of Organic 3.0 in Canada
- Seed Varieties that is adapted to area and weather conditions.
- Cost of organic products vs. non-organic
- strengthening of organic regulations
- Investigate new and better ways to address soil health ( reduce summerfallow etc)
- Communication: Increased information and communication along the supply chain will allow the organic sector attract more followers and supports. The media has an important role to play



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- Réciprocité des normes bio international
- Organic Seed availability
- local seeds
- Standards that are true to the values of organic farming but at the same time are sustainable, workable and practical to the modern farm.
- accessibility
- small bio-diverse farms not able to compete, rural fabric disintegrating
- kid friendly education campaigns
- We need to teach conventional farmers about organic methods of pest control. This education should be mandatory.
- Pesticide residue in organic crops (glyphosate)
- Make sure the sources of organic inputs (from seeds to pesticides) for importation are reliable
- climate change! need to demonstrate potential of local/organic agriculture
- fake news
- GMO Alfalfa entering Canada
- Cost
- All non-organic/non GMO should be labelled for what they are, including which herbicides/pesticides used
- Aggressively address the discrimination against organic farmers in government and financial institutions like crop insurance, loans, and current and future carbon/environmental services payment programs.
- Failure of government, lack of support
- Inability to address organic farmer concerns. Industry seems to be run by non farmers.
- Land Availability
- Tillage
- mandatory regulation within provinces
- Lack of enforcement on imported organic products
- Green washing by industrial level organic production. To be sustainable over the next 50+ years small scale is vital
- Price of Organic
- Marketing
- constant replacement as opposed to repair of consumer inputs.
- Negative impacts of block chain technology and other big data application

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- Competing labels from provincial certifiers
- increased support for smallholder farms
- Streamline input approval process
- opening more markets for organic commodities and finished products
- Allowing people to use the word organic without being certified
- To pressure government to provide essential R&D funding to the organic sector.
- skilled work force
- Government support for key organic regulatory programs, particularly crop insurance
- Lack of education in around what is organic, why it is important and same for the reality of food production in general.
- Standards enforcement
- support for transition
- Glyphosate off label use as dessicant contaminating organic field crops due to endemic use.
- lack of verification officers/cost in more remote areas
- Skills development and Extension services (training, science and innovation, best management practices)
- marketing as an individual farmer takes an incredible amount of time, energy, and potential profit
- government support
- Lack of young farmers willing to take on the burden of being certified organic.
- Spray drift and other contaminants making it more expensive to market with additional testing and rejection because of tight levels for importing countries.
- connecting researchers with farmers to improve organic management techniques
- Government policy
- Need accessible training on the standards and record keeping (online, evening, free or very low cost)
- not paying farm workers living wage
- Management practices to control pests
- Labeling of organic foods as GMO free
- Development and deployment of Bio controls
- Misinformation about pesticides and herbicides that are approved for organic use.
- Loss of cohesion in the organic sector (ROC, regenerative). Already consumers don't understand what organics means.

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- Farm Succession
- Addressing "invisible" and unlabeled items in the Organic Standards (like nanomaterials/nanotechnology, new breeding techniques, micro-plastics, etc).
- Very few agricultural university or college programs teach or have information about organics. These people then become agricultural decision makers or researchers. It's important that we get more involved at universities and colleges.
- Protecting our pollinators
- Maintain animal welfare
- Dairy farmers getting hundreds of millions of dollars which will lead to unfair competition in buying land
- Organization for certifiers
- lack of advertising of benefits