

# 2021 Organic Sector Survey / Enquête sur le secteur biologique

## Certification

### Question 23

- **What is your organic certification status?**
- **Quel est le statut de votre certification biologique?**

Answer Choices/ Responses

Fully certified organic / Entièrement certifié biologique: **57.98% (149)**

Partly certified organic / Partiellement certifié biologique: **5.45% (14)**

In the progress of (next 12 months) becoming certified organic (in part or fully) / Bientôt certifié biologique (dans les 12 prochains mois) (entièrement ou partiellement): **3.50% (9)**

Aspiring to become in part or fully Certified organic (+1 year) / Aspirant à la certification biologique (entière ou partielle) (dans plus d'un an): **4.67% (12)**

Seriously considering transitioning in the next 3 years / Envisageant sérieusement d'entamer la conversion dans les 3 prochaines années: **3.89% (10)**

Was previously certified organic but chose not to re-certify / A déjà été certifié biologique mais a choisi de ne pas recertifier: **5.06% (13)**

Not certified with no plans to certification / Non certifié et sans intention de le devenir: **7.00% (18)**

Not applicable / Pas applicable: **12.45% (32)**

Answered/ Ont répondu: **257**

Skipped/ N'ont pas répondu: **562**

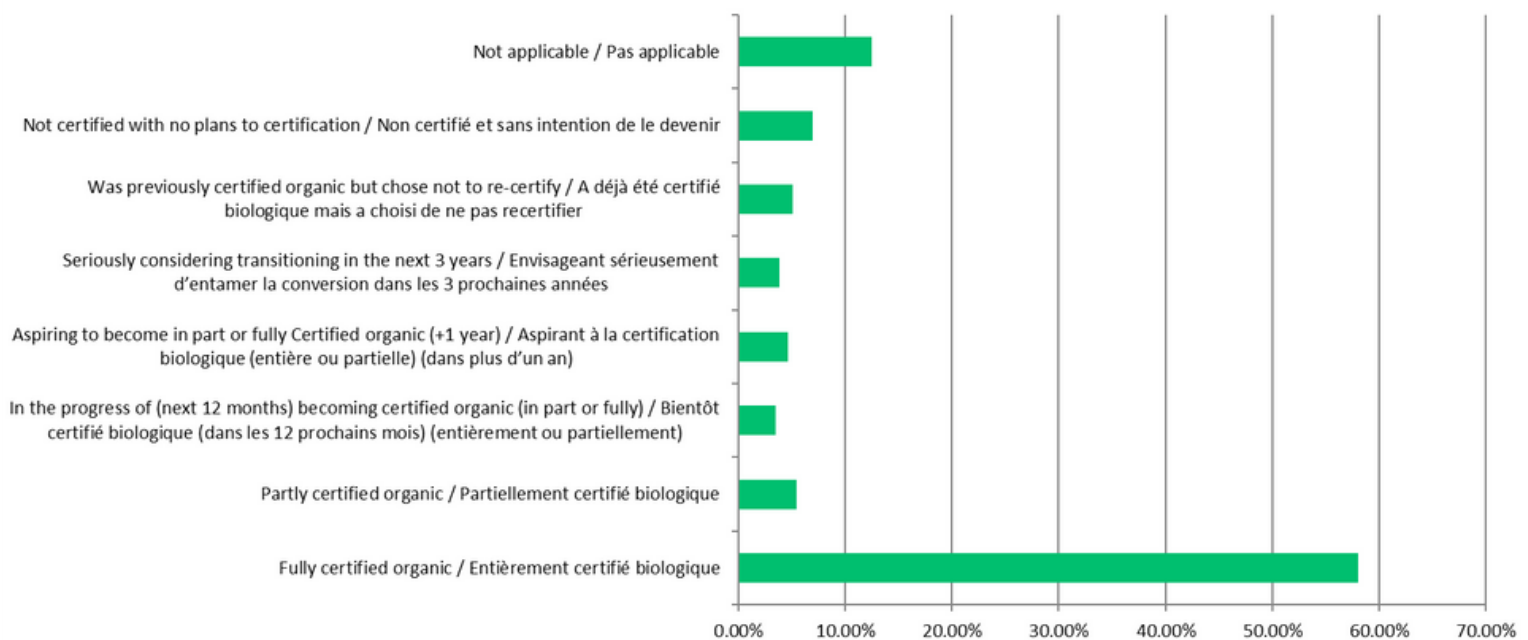
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What is your organic certification status?



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- How important is organic certification to you?
- Quelle est l'importance de la certification biologique pour vous?

#### Answer Choices/ Responses

Extremely important / Très importante: **54.86% 141**

Important / Importante: **24.12% 62**

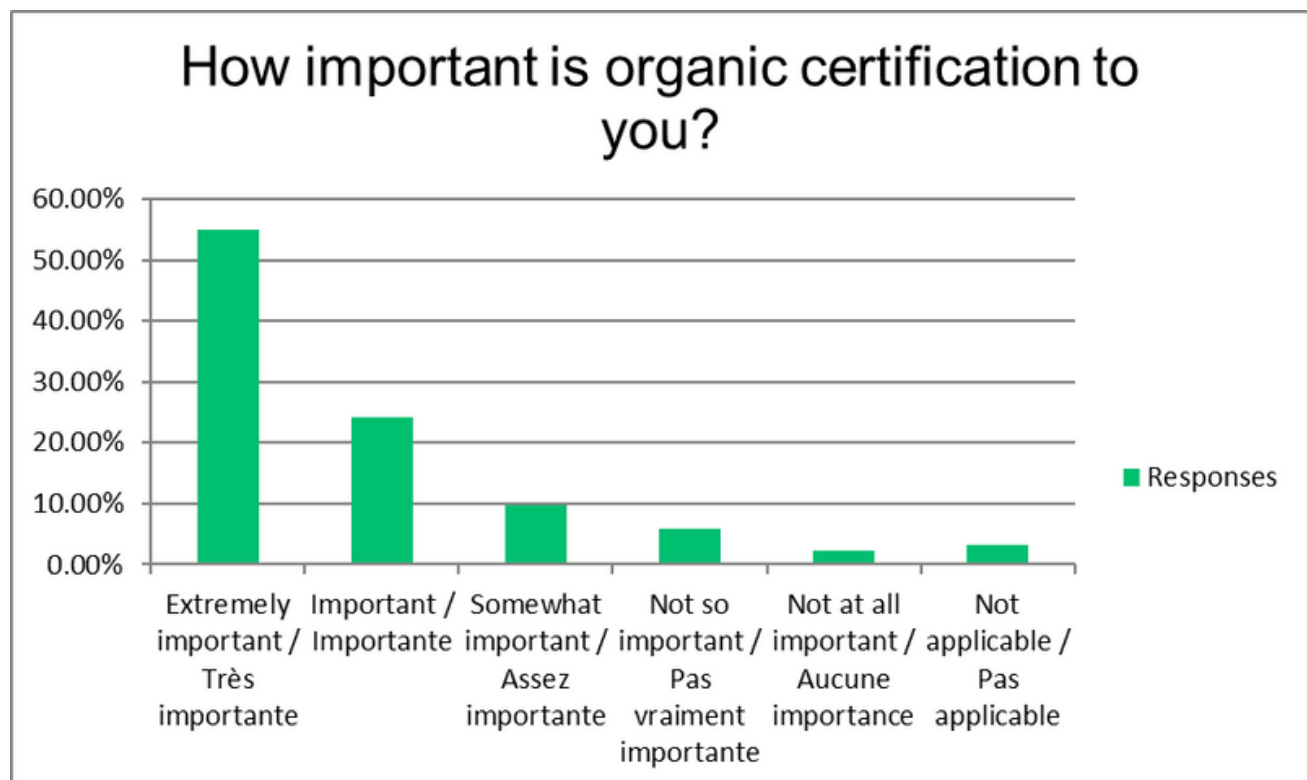
Somewhat important / Assez importante: **9.73% 25**

Not so important / Pas vraiment importante: **5.84% 15**

Not at all important / Aucune importance: **2.33% 6**

Not applicable / Pas applicable: **3.11% 8**

Please explain why or why not/ Veuillez justifier votre réponse: **76**





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**Please explain why or why not/ Veuillez justifier votre réponse**

### 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 ou, le Centre d'agriculture biologique du Canada de Cultivons Biologique Canada.

- on principal and adds to my market access
- C'est ce qui nous permet de se démarquer, c'est notre accès à ce marché niché
- My farm is very small and without organic prices for my grain, my farm will not survive
- Independent inspection verifies I am doing what I say I am.
- "It all boils down to dollars and cents. If the cost of maintaining an organic operation
- is prohibitive – the grower/ producer will have no choice but to drop out of organic production."
- I don't want my farming to be tied to one set of tools, when different ones may be required.
- As a small urban farmer it would be a benefit to be certified to obtain a premium price.
- I believe that certified organic food is essential for human health.
- I support certification in principle, but not in my particular case.
- ça assure la qualité du produit et la validité
- We are a small operation and direct market to our customers. They can visit the farm and see how we do things. We are transparent in our practices.
- I want buyers to know my products are grown to organic standards
- We are small scale, local, direct-to-market producers, and, like many others our scale and relations, we feel less served by organic standards.
- Was certified for a long time but the cost and pepper work got prohibitive. All so I have customers have trust in me and the way I farm We farm for soil health and Animal welfare and select grow seed for our soil and weather conditions.
- Certification is needed to capture organic pricing
- It provides more credibility, a sense of structure, procedures, rules to follow and justify higher prices.
- Organic certification maintains the standard necessary to ensure the health of the consumer and the health of this planet.

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- My farm practices go beyond what is required for certification. I have a huge following at market and my customers know me and trust me. The certification would need to be free for me to certify my farm at this point as I get top dollar for my product now and cannot charge my customer more. Certification would just be an added expense at this point.
- I believe that organic certification holds a high degree of integrity. That is why we must be vigilant in insuring the rules are followed and that consumers understand the checks and balances behind the certificate.
- I'm a consultant not producer.
- The problems with certification outweigh the benefits.
- small producer; certification costs and paper work
- as an organic grain farmer, it is unlikely that I will meet the end customer unless selling farm direct. Currently, farm direct sales are less than 1/2 of our sales.
- Integrity based certification is the only difference and therefore the only reason for producers to receive a premium for not ruining the environment
- I'm a backyard gardener now for 1 person. Years ago I gardened for my family. It's has always been important to me to grow organically and I never used chemical fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides to this day.
- I sell direct to consumers so I can tell them exactly what I do.
- it allows us to be competitive in our niche market
- Pesticides are over used. We must prove that organic food production is viable, productive and provides a decent farm income.
- I live in a small community that knows our farm. We haven't changed our practices except we haven't been certified in over a decade. I nearly recertified a few years ago. My test was if I could keep up the necessary bookkeeping I would do it, but I really couldn't find a program that worked for me. I've been able to do better each year with my kids working with me, but we aren't likely to re-certify.
- Because there is an audit trail and a permitted substance list and protocol that must be followed.
- Basis of our production for the last 20 years
- We could double our business overnight if we offered conventional products along with the organic listings. There is so much that isn't available as organic, and some of our customers ask us to include conventional crops. We haven't and never will because certified organic production is part of our core values.
- Questioning its worth because of direct to consumer model. Certification is less necessary



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- we should not have to pay the burden of certification as organic producers.
- It used to be more important, but now we honestly feel like we could give it up and still garner the price and following from our customers (we mostly direct market in our region). I believe certification is good though, so we maintain it, but often we are frustrated with our CB and provincial body- at times like that we consider dropping certification.
- I would like to be certified but I have access to local non-certified inputs. If I want to change to certified inputs they are shipped from many miles away (not sustainable) and are much more expensive.
- It makes it easier to communicate what we do to our customers.
- Cost overall is too much.
- Retired.
- depends on my knowledge of the farmer if I'm buying from them. as a very small farm I can reach enough customers personally for it to not be worth it. would be different for a larger farm ie wholesale
- We sell only direct to customer so I don't need a third party involved.
- Organic certification has legitimacy. We know that the claims made about our farm are true. We are proud to be organic farmers. Being certified organic is not just a label - it is taking a stand for the kind of agriculture we want and need in the world.
- Our operation is 100% organic
- Because my focus is on selling to organic retailers only.
- We are a contract food blending facility and our customers who require organic certified products are very important to us.
- Getting frustrated by it as it just seems to be about the fees and funding for the non profits and not really helping farmers at all.
- I believe it tells of a standard, one which we as farmers are willing to put the work in to adhere to. It's not just "yeah, I grow organically... (when it suits me)"
- just wish coa felt same way about field grown organic cannabis - edibles are a food - people don't eat wine grapes
- Growing nutritionally better food, safer, healthier food.
- It lets the consumer know how it was grown and that there are health benefits to organic produce
- We have a lack of consumers for organic products
- Market place puts higher value on a relationship with the farmer
- I'm a believer. There are a lot of shady producers that use and abuse terms. I care about the future.
- I sell entirely CSA and my customers don't care.

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- Although the cost of certification is a big challenge to me as a small-scale farmer, it feels important to show my customers that I am growing to a certain set of standards, and they can trust my growing practices.
- It follows our sustainability practices and our consumer demand
- i believe in it. It is my niche. I remember where there weren't organic standards and honour the work done to create it – despite Big Ags erosion of organic standards.
- Organic farms are my markets. My product (OF) must be verified organic.
- It is aligns best with our farming methods
- for consumer confidence
- I feel like it is a lot of money we have to spend to certify our land & cattle herd but we don't get anything from it in return aside from feeling good which doesn't pay the bills. I like having the certification as proof of our farming practices
- Third party oversight makes for appropriate oversight as opposed to speculation and false claims. Provincial jurisdictions should disallow a production unit to claim organic without a certification. This permission as it stands now leads to lack of credibility with the public.
- Super important because it's the only way to prove you're growing the way you say you are, because it's verifiable. However--I am a new farmer on the steep learning curve of farming...and tried to start out organic...wanted support to get up to speed on the basics of the standards and processes and record-keeping. I quickly became overwhelmed with what seems to me like exponential layers of complexity, from the many different certifying bodies to choose from, and no easy way to compare them without personally contacting each one...and found that I should start the application process (and pay big sums) just to get on the path. I'm setting up new beds, building my infrastructure--I need to focus on my operation--and an organic start-up guide for new entrants who want to certify in the coming year(s) would have been super helpful.
- It used to be important. But we are a small producer with a small market. And frankly, we are close to reconsidering our certification. It is costly, and the application process is onerous. Certification might not be worth it.
- I don't like so much paperwork and expensive
- have been a direct to consumer farm – do not sell to third parties
- Nous avons des clients qui sont certifiée biologique, il est donc important pour nous que nos produits correspondent à leur attentes



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- It is important to be able to sell our products at a premium price and because some buyers only want certified organic. However, we have been using the same growing principles since day 1 (in 2013) but have only become certified 2 years ago.
- I would not change anything I do if I was not certified but I get frustrated with certification when things don't make sense or I cannot get answers to my questions. The cost is too great for what I receive (or don't receive).
- I appreciate it as a quick way to communicate with my customers at least part of what we do. However, many of our farm practices go above and beyond the organic standards. Also, the issues in the U.S. organic sector around allowing hydroponics and CAFOs, and just very large farms (like Driscoll's) with suspicious values and practices has led many of our customers to lose trust in Organic overall.
- Allow to sell outside of province
- My thoughts - organic food and food products are better in every way for humans and animals. With this in mind, I'd be more likely to support a sector that cares about health and well-being and the deteriorating state of the planet. It is the right thing to do. There is a shift happening and we need to continue to nurture the organic sector!
- cannot be certified anymore since conflict of interest /working also for organic certification body.
- Core part of my marketing strategy. My crops this year will be certified organic for the first time. I am building a feed mill and will be selling certified organic feed next year. Certification is key.
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