

# 2021 Organic Sector Survey / Enquête sur le secteur biologique

## Market Analysis / Analyse de marché

### Question 6

- **In your opinion, are there any gaps in the services and products provided by your organic association memberships that would be of great value to you if addressed? If yes, please specify below:**
- **À votre avis, y a-t-il des lacunes dans les services et produits fournis par ces associations qui, si elles étaient comblées, vous seraient d'une grande valeur? Si oui, veuillez préciser ci-dessous:**

Answered/ Ont répondu: **75**

Skipped/ N'ont pas répondu: **744**

### Comments / Commentaires 75

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

- Up to date market data for organic food - Nielsen / Mintel
- It would be great to have a certifier working group outside of CFIA's meetings.
- Export and equivalency work that is being done is important for our clients but we do not always know the most recent developments - we know that COTA is doing this work
- I feel that the COABC is moving in a positive direction in terms of assistance and services offered. I always think that more support and encouragement for transition is needed.
- The associations I belong to need more resources in order to do more and better advocacy, more and better research and more and better knowledge transfer.
- Not a gap but continued work to protect the integrity of the Organic Standard and brand.
- No, but just encourage the continued work of these organizations to advocate for organic integrity, strong national standards, federal support to aid in encouraging farms to transition to certified organic, federal support for an education campaign around the benefits of supporting local and organic farmers, acknowledgement and reward for farmers working to benefit the environment and their ecosystems through organic regenerative practices... and so on.

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- The cost of Organic certification is too high. The backbone of Organic production is diversification and the more diverse the farm becomes the higher the cost of certification. Too much paperwork if I wanted to become a Bureaucrat or academic that is what I would have done instead of producing good food and seed for people's health
- From a distributor's perspective I think COTA is doing an excellent job of providing the types of products and services that are needed across such a broad spectrum of industry sectors and scales of operation.
- Un manque de fond gouvernemental et faible capacité de lobbying face au Gouvernement Fédéral
- Based on what I have noticed the above organizations need to explore more opportunities to work with the media, local, national, and international to develop campaigns that would constantly inform and attract diverse audiences to support their initiatives and goals.
- More importance placed on identifying and solving issues in the organic sector. For example, the lack of organic abattoirs in Ontario
- On the contrary, there is some overlap.
- There are so many organic organizations, maybe we need to be a member of more organizations. But in order to make that decision, it would be nice to see a clear outlay of the role each organization is playing. Ideally, and if practical (especially when there are overlapping functions) it would be good if some organizations are merged or at least work together to capture synergies.
- mixed farms
- closed loop
- I think you should work more closely with the EFAO (Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario)
- I would like my organization to lobby my interests to the provincial and federal governments.
- Cannot comment at this point.
- Mixed farms
- closed loop practices
- I enjoyed having a joint membership in previous years with Acorn & COG
- Market Intelligence. Grain stocks and market outlook.
- Organic processing of raw materials
- Could there be a better link/more parallel certification with CanadaGAP, as it seems like what is required for Organic Certification is many of the same tracking and record keeping, and with only a few more steps could there possibly be an addition for the CanadaGAP standards, as to not have to be "doubly certified" with lots of redundancy?



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- Crop insurance education regarding organic farming
- Don't have enough knowledge to identify gaps
- Gaps in communication. I want to be notified about what the organizations are do for me and my farm. If sent by email, I want single issue emails with the benefit specified in the Subject line. "COTA works to improve organic standard" or "MOA meets with producers" or some such subject line.
- Increase good messaging about what the positive aspects of organic is, not just the things that organic avoids. Help consumers understand how organic is the original regenerative agriculture, and what place it takes in the regenerative conversation. A lot of confusion to help sort out. Every effort needs to be made to prevent organic to be "thrown under the bus" by shifting focus on regenerative, especially conventional "regenerative".
- We need to have funding to cover organic certification fees and other extraordinary costs such as freight on certified amendments that address not available on our province.
- More direct and clear connections between on-farm research, grower participation and results, and policy makers; more direct and clear connections to assist growers in co-operative purchasing of goods and services that align with OG farming systems (i.e. support to build the supply side for and with OG growers and suppliers)
- I wish there was a comprehensive list of approved products across the province. There are attempts but they seem very lacking
- More emphasis on long term sustainability and improving soil health rather than just having customers think "lack of pesticides" when they see "organic".
- I can get certified organic inputs but they may have to be shipped from long distances - hardly sustainable.
- Je pense qu'il manque un outil de vulgarisation de la réglementation bio en place au Canada / province
- Un outil didactique pour apprendre des faits, comparer avec d'autres (USA par exemple)..
- I would like more independent research done and information published on the effectiveness of various organic pesticides and fungicides in Canadian conditions. Vegetable growers are very well informed about what is available and under what conditions it is effective. Last year we had quite a few problems with mildew. I tried several costly organic fungicides - none of which made much of an impact in my opinion. Felt like a total stab in the dark and a waste of money and time.

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- I also think we need to set up registered apprenticeship training schools to train farm employees and future farmers for small-scale, local, organic agriculture. At present it is possible to do a 4-year "Red Seal" apprenticeship in hair dressing but not for farming. That is so absurd! If we are serious about growing a significant quantity of our food, we need have a system to train people to the state of the art of the profession of growing food.
- Organic World crops grown in Canada, especially to serve the very large ethnic market in Toronto Ontario are not on the radar of COG.
- Way too many organizations, and the politics associated with the COABC are absolutely ridiculous, I question if the COABC have shares in the Bc eco seed coop. Not to mention bias in some of the certifying organizations. An example, if a farmer sells less than 10k in Organics, the fee is mandatory to be part of COABC, and the fee is almost 10% of all your revenues!!! So how are you trying to build Organics if it is not even remotely justified to try to be organic?
- Organic grain facilities in more locations. Trucking products costs a fortune.
- To my knowledge none in particular. I believe their primary role is to work to strengthen the sector about producers and to help shape government policies and funding programs. Although COTA tries to work on educating consumers/eaters, the org. simply hasn't the funds to make much a dent on that front.
- None that I am aware of.
- I am curious about From a systems perspective, which system enables Organic to thrive; and how do we see this in the operations of COG and its partners?
- Most gaps are associated with government supports and lack of adherence to obligations and policy.
- Yes funding for the COS and SIC and all aspects of certification should be covered by the Canadian government, as it is in Denmark. COG COTA and OFC should have the government support needed to make resilient organic agriculture the cornerstone of responding to the climate crisis. Agriculture can lead the way.
- The food on food proposal currently in the hands of Health Canada
- So many different associations that it all gets rather confusing.
- Bigger organic farms do not get a lot of attention from COG
- research priority setting
- All associations need to do more advocacy work with the consumer base. We need to show the effects that the farming system used has on the nutritional value of the food produced.



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- Présence au Québec. Explication du Bio
- Need more work done on market access
- More sharing of practical farming practices and products available to organics.
- Our organization is entirely volunteer, no paid staff. All are farmers. It would be useful to have one person on staff to take care of business. Also we do need more extension help from the govt but it doesn't seem forthcoming.
- Do not see any trade/regulatory meeting invites from the organization.
- EFAO has some of the netter videos and conference material available for growers. Not much of that available east of Quebec now that ACORN has reduced capacity
- Latest consumer insights and shopper behavior/trends
- lobbying
- An organization similar to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture or the National Farmers Union....but for Organic (perhaps similar to the Organic Farmers Association in the U.S.) that is specifically focused on policy/lobbying for organic farmers.
- It would be great if COG worked with the prairies more to create content/events. They seem to do a lot of great work with EFAO but often that content is very transferrable to the prairies.
- small farm collaboration to improve financial viability (decrease production costs, increase sales opportunities)
- The Organic Food Council of Manitoba is no longer active so there is no strong Manitoban voice. We need to re-organize.
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- In Ontario COG has good representation on farms in E. Ontario and minimal farm coverage in the rest of Ontario. They are strong with consumers in Ottawa and Toronto
- COG has GEO-O program that has evolved over the years. Their new B2B approach where they address issues in a provisioning chain by gathering all stakeholders together has really helped.
- Consumer education
- Networking in the organic community.