

# COABC: Keeping You Up-to-Date

Prepared by Karen Fenske, Administrator ♦ June 30, 2008

## What's New

- ✓ The Organic Federation of Canada proudly launches its new website: [www.organicfederation.ca](http://www.organicfederation.ca) visit the OFC website to learn about OFC activities.
- ✓ The grand opening of the Nicomekl Community Organic Farm and K.A.L.E CSA (Keeping agriculture locally empowered) occurred on the property that Jim and Mary Boughen worked in Langley. Many of the CSAs members were there and the people from TLC who are part of the new operation. Steve Galager is the Farmer on this project so hats off to Steve. MP Mark Warawa was at the event and spoke of federal land protection initiatives. COABC was mentioned many times. It is great to see 40 acres in the Fraser Valley staying organic. *Submitted by Brad Reid, President, Thomas Reid Farms Ltd*
- ✓ **An Organic Program Regulation (OPR) & Canada Organic Standard (COS) Update for July 08**  
Following an evaluation of the risks involved with implementing or not implementing the OPR on December 14 2008, the Federal Minister of Agriculture has directed the CFIA to implement the OPR on December 14 2008, as originally planned – this date is now firm.

To facilitate this process the CFIA has developed a rough timeline for consultation regarding the Regulatory amendments. By end of July blue-stamping (an internal government process), approval within the CFIA by September 25, pre-publication of the Regulation by October 8th – public comment period from October 8 until November 3rd. COO is proposing that they will consult with the organic sector during August regarding the amendments to Regulation.

Simultaneously in attempt to speed things up following the outcome of the third Standard ballot (votes were due early July) the department of justice will review the updated standard and the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) and Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) will work in parallel to complete the standard ratification. Hopefully the standard will be published sometime in November.

With regards to the Canada organic logo – the logo was assessed against the new product of Canada guidelines announced by the Prime Minister – the CFIA Management team told the Canada Organic Office (COO) to remove the word 'Canada' from the logo – also to remove the phrase 'Canada Organic' from the OPR. Stay tuned for more news on this front as the details are worked out.

Negotiations are going well identifying the differences between US and Canada standard, so too with the EU. A plan of action is being developed to address these variations. *Submitted by COABC COR Committee*

- ✓ A proposal based on a collaborative partnership between COG, International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA) and the Organic Trade Association (OTA) has been presented to COABC. A series of trainings during the last few months of 2008 and the first 3 months of 2009 would prepare the sector verification officers for the 2009 inspection season. You can look forward to more details regarding this opportunity and process in the months to come. They have not finalized their plans except to ask for letters of support for this to move forward which COABC had completed.

## ***In the Works***

- Farm Tour: July 13, 2008 Anita Fletcher and Richard Enns 10209 Coldstream Creek Road, Coldstream BC 250-542-8302. This first year transitional apple orchard will host Rosy Smit, a soil specialist from UBC, to give a hands-on soil workshop. Areas to be discussed will be soil fertility, soil amendments, soil structure and soil building techniques. Finish up the day with a tour of the orchard and a pot luck dinner. Tour starts at 2 pm. *Submitted by NOOA*
- We are planning for the 2009 COABC Conference & AGM which will be held in Abbotsford mid-Feb. If you are interested in helping on this committee please contact me.

## ***Keep In Mind***

- Cyber-help is a great source for on-line information <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/index.html>
- The following COABC committees are seeking participants:
  - *The Capacity Development Committee*
  - *The COABC Events Committee.*
  - *The Communications & PR Committee*
  - *The Advocacy of Operators Committee*
  - *The Regional Standards Review Committee*



***Do you need prizes for a company BBQ or team shirts for an event?*** Check the promotional items list in the Grower & on the website for prices. To order, complete the order and fax it to the COABC office.