



British Columbia  
Certified Organic

## **CERTIFIED ORGANIC ASSOCIATIONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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### **News Release**

**For Immediate Release November 14 2003**

## **BC Certified Organic Program Receives USDA Recognition**

As of today, the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has recognised the BC Certified Organic Program according to the following:

"The Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has determined the following foreign government conformity assessment programs sufficient to ensure conformity to the technical standards of USDA's National Organic Program (NOP). These determinations allow organic certification organizations in good standing, under the programs listed below, to apply the NOP technical standards to certify operations that produce or handle agricultural products that will be sold, labeled or represented as organic in the United States. Production or handling operations certified by an organization that is recognized under these determinations may only use the USDA organic seal on their products when those products have been produced and handled in accordance to the NOP regulations.

**"II. British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries-----  
Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia (COABC)**

**Effective Date of Recognition:** November 3, 2003

**Status:** Current

**Certification Organizations in Good Standing as of November 3, 2003"**

This information is posted on the NOP website (Regulations and Policies/Trade issues/Recognitions).

The USDA recognition follows two years of work by the COABC and the BCMAFF to develop and implement an ISO 65 compliant accreditation program. The COABC has assured access to US markets the 'hard way'; (recognition, instead of USDA accreditation) it took longer, but has resulted in local control of organic accreditation.

The US agreement compliments earlier recognitions by the United Kingdom Register of Organic Food Standards and the Conseil d'accréditation du Quebec. Together, the BCMAFF and the COABC have assured organic trade access to British Columbia's major organic markets.

Further information may be obtained from the COABC - address above.