

# BRITISH COLUMBIA CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCTION OPERATION POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT STANDARDS VERSION 9

BOOK 2

## Certified Organic Management Standards

*Certified Organic  
Associations  
Of British Columbia*



*British Columbia  
Certified Organic*



**BRITISH COLUMBIA CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCTION  
OPERATION POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT STANDARDS  
VERSION 9**

**BOOK 2**

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202 3002 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Vernon, BC V1T 2L7

T. 250-260-4429 F. 250-260-4436

>Office@certifiedorganic.bc.ca< >www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca<

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**December 2009**

## **Forward**

This document replaces the one entitled "British Columbia Certified Organic Operation Policies and Farm Management Standards, Version 7 Book 2 Certified Organic Management Standards."

The "British Columbia Certified Organic Production Operation Policies and Management Standards Version 9 contains two books. Book 1 is titled "Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia Operation Policies and Procedures" and details the structure of the British Columbia Certified Organic Program. Book 2 (this document) is titled "Certified Organic Management Standards" and details the management standards required for certification of organic enterprises under the British Columbia Certified Organic Program.

## **About the COABC**

The Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia is the Administrator of the Organic Regulations under the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act of British Columbia. Details of the Policies and Procedures of the COABC and the British Columbia Certified Organic Program can be found in Book 1 "COABC Operation Policies and Procedures".

COABC ensures compliance with the standards by administering the accreditation and auditing process in partnership with the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture.

The COABC is committed to representing the British Columbia organic sector in provincial, national and international forums. In order to do this, the COABC endeavours to collect information and communicate issues that affect the provincial organic sector. The British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture provides critical support to the COABC in formulation of positions to deal constructively with these issues.

Consumer recognition and support of the organic sector and the British Columbia Certified Organic Program is vital to the development of the organic sector. The COABC actively seeks out opportunities to educate consumers about what it means to be "British Columbia Certified Organic." The COABC has developed a program and promotional materials that encourage use of the Program Symbol by licensees and provides program information to consumers.



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# **What is Organic Farming?**

Organic farming is an agricultural production system that promotes and enhances biological diversity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain, and enhance ecological harmony.



## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. BC Certified Organic Program

The BC Certified Organic Program is the system of accreditation and certification administered by the COABC under the Organic Agricultural Products Certification Regulation under the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act. This program is documented in a two-part manual, "British Columbia Certified Organic Production Operation Policies and Management Standards". This document is Book 2 "COABC Certified Organic Management Standards." Book 1 is the "COABC Operation Policies and Procedures" and is an integral part of the program.

### 1.2. Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia

- 1) The Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia (COABC) is empowered by the Organic Agricultural Products Certification Regulation under the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act of British Columbia to carry out the function of accrediting members.
- 2) The purposes of the COABC as described in its Constitution are:
  - a) to promote organic agriculture and to provide public education on organic agriculture and organic foods;
  - b) to represent members in matters relating to the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act of British Columbia;
  - c) to develop and administer an organic certification accreditation program for members;
  - d) to grant permission for use of the phrase "British Columbia Certified Organic" on product labels by agri-food enterprises certified by members;
  - e) to develop and implement a verification officer training program.
  - f) to facilitate research and marketing activities on behalf of members;
  - g) to provide information to the public on behalf of the members;
  - h) to develop and maintain an approved list of materials for use in the production of organic agricultural products by agri-food enterprises certified by members; and
  - i) To be responsible for incidental matters related to the above-referenced activities.
- 3) The responsibility to provide organic certification remains the domain of the certification bodies that are members of COABC.
- 4) The COABC grants to the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture the right to audit the process of accreditation carried out by COABC.
- 5) The COABC is incorporated as a society in the province of British Columbia.
- 6) The COABC requires as a condition of membership in the program that its members and any licensees enrolled in this certification program adhere to all provincial, federal and municipal laws, regulations and standards affecting the agriculture industry.
- 7) The COABC does not require that any of the policies or standards of this program be applied to any other program that a member or licensee participates in.

### 1.3. Statement of Principles

The BC Certified Organic Program has adopted the Principles of Organic Farming as originally developed by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). In 2005 IFOAM restated their principles as the principle of health, the principle of ecology, the principle of fairness and the principle of care to inspire the organic movement, stating that "Principles are the roots from which organic agriculture grows and develops. They express the contribution that organic agriculture can make to the world and a vision to improve all agriculture in a global context." Organic operators should abide by these principles as far as possible in their interactions with human populations, domestic and wild animals, and the environment in which we live.

### 1.4. Principles of Organic Farming

- 1) To produce food of high quality in sufficient quantity.
- 2) To interact in a constructive and life-enhancing way with natural systems and cycles.
- 3) To consider the wider social and ecological impact of the organic production and processing system.
- 4) To encourage and enhance biological cycles within the farming system, involving microorganisms, soil flora and fauna, plants and animals.
- 5) To develop a valuable and sustainable aquatic ecosystem.
- 6) To maintain and increase long term fertility of soils.
- 7) To maintain the genetic diversity of the production system and its surroundings, including the protection of plant and wildlife habitats.
- 8) To promote the healthy use and proper care of water, water resources and all life therein.
- 9) To use, as far as possible, renewable resources in locally organised production systems.
- 10) To create a harmonious balance between crop production and animal husbandry.
- 11) To give all livestock conditions of life with due consideration for the basic aspects of their innate behaviour.
- 12) To minimise all forms of pollution.
- 13) To process organic products using renewable resources.
- 14) To produce fully biodegradable organic products.
- 15) To produce textiles which are long lasting and of good quality.
- 16) To allow everyone involved in organic production and processing a quality of life, which meets their basic needs and allows an adequate return and satisfaction from their work, including a safe working environment.
- 17) To progress toward an entire production, processing, and distribution chain which is both socially just and ecologically responsible.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1. Certification References

- 1) **Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act** – Act of the British Columbia legislature to which the COABC subscribes.
- 2) **Agricultural Product** - Any product or commodity of agriculture, raw or processes, including any commodity or product derived from livestock that is marketed for human or livestock use or consumption.
- 3) **British Columbia Certified Organic Program** (BC Certified Organic Program)– Refers to the accreditation/certification program administered by the COABC under the Organic Agricultural Products Certification Regulation following the *Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act*.
- 4) **Buffer zone** - A clearly defined and identifiable boundary area bordering an organic production site that is established to limit application of, or contact with, prohibited substances from an adjacent area.
- 5) **CB** - Certification Body. May also be referred to as Certifying Body, Certifying Agency, Certification Agency, or Certification Agent.
- 6) **Certificate** – A written assurance that identifies at least the name and address of the enterprise certified, effective date of certification, certification number, categories of organic operation, name and address of certification body, and standards to which the enterprise is certified.
- 7) **Certification** – The procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a clearly identified process has been methodically assessed such that adequate confidence is provided that specific products conform to specific requirements.
- 8) **Certification Body** – The body that conducts certification.
- 9) **Certification Committee** – A group of persons delegated by the membership of the CB the responsibility of assessing applications for certification.
- 10) **Certified Organic Product** - A product that has been produced and handled in accordance with organic standards by a certified organic enterprise as verified by a valid organic certificate.
- 19) **COABC** – The Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia. The administrator of the Organic Regulations following the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act (BC). A competent body for accreditation to ISO Guide 61 compliant standards.
- 20) **Commercially unavailable** - the documented inability to obtain a production input or ingredient in an appropriate form, quality, quantity, or variety to be feasibly and economically used to fulfill an essential function in a system of organic farming, processing, and/or handling.
- 21) **Compost** - the product of a carefully managed aerobic process by which natural materials are digested by microorganisms.
- 22) **Contaminant** - a residue of a prohibited substance that persists in an organic product or the environment.
- 23) **Contamination** - the introduction of prohibited substances to organic products, ingredients, production areas, handling processes, or to the environment.
- 24) **Conversion** (transition) - the act of establishing organic management practices in accordance with organic standards.
- 25) **Conversion period** (transition period) - the time between the start of organic management and qualification of the crop or livestock production system or site as organic.

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- 26) **Crop rotation** - the practice of alternating the species or families of annual, biennial, and/or perennial crops grown on a specific field in a planned pattern or sequence so as to break weed, pest, and disease cycles and to improve soil fertility and organic matter content.
- 27) **Drift** - the physical movement of pesticides, fertilizers, genetically engineered organisms, or other materials onto a certified organic field, farm, or facility.
- 28) **Enterprise** – A production or processing or handling business or establishment.
- 29) **Extract** - the act of producing a substance by dissolving the soluble fractions of a plant, animal or mineral in water or another solvent; or the product thereof.
- 30) **Feed additive** - a substance or combination of substances added to the basic livestock feed mix or parts thereof to fulfill a specific need. Usually used in micro quantities and requires careful handling and mixing. Includes substances added in small amounts to livestock feed to enhance, stabilize, preserve, or otherwise alter it.
- 31) **Fertiliser** - any substance containing one or more recognized plant nutrient(s) which is used primarily for its plant nutrient content and which is designed for use or claimed to have value in promoting plant growth.
- 32) **Field** - an area of land identified as a discrete and distinguishable unit within a farm operation.
- 33) **Food additive** - An enrichment, supplement or other substance which can be added to a foodstuff to affect its keeping quality, consistency, color, taste, smell or other technical property.
- 34) **Forage** – vegetative material in a fresh, dried, or ensiled state (pasture, hay, or silage), which is fed to livestock.
- 35) **Genetic Engineering** is defined as anything made with techniques that alter the molecular or cell biology of an organism by means that are not possible under natural conditions or processes. Genetic engineering includes recombinant DNA, cell fusion, micro-and macro-encapsulation, and gene deletion and doubling, introducing a foreign gene, and changing the position of genes. It shall not include breeding, conjugation, fermentation, hybridisation, in-vitro fertilisation, or tissue culture.
- 36) **Greenhouse** - A permanent heated glass or poly-covered structure covering an area greater than 3000 sq. ft (315 sq. m).
- 37) **Handling** (handler) means any operation or portion of operation that receives or otherwise acquires agricultural products for resale, except that such a term shall not include final retailers of agricultural product, who do not process and substantially transform, repack, or re-label such products.
- 38) **Ingredient** - any substance used in the preparation of a food or fiber product that is still present in the final product as used or consumed, even if in a modified form.
- 39) **Inspection** - On-site visit to premises for the verification of compliance with standards.
- 40) **Irradiation** (ionizing radiation) - High energy emissions from radio-nucleotides, capable of altering a food's molecular structure for the purpose of controlling microbial contaminants, pathogens, parasites and pests in food, preserving food or inhibiting physiological processes such as sprouting or ripening.
- 41) **Labelling**- Any written, printed or graphic representation that is present on a product, accompanies the product, or is displayed near the product.
- 42) **Licensee** – The person (or enterprise) that is in possession of a valid certificate.
- 43) **Operator** – Any person, firm, or organisation that produces handles or processes with a view to the subsequent marketing thereof, products referred to as BC Certified Organic. In general, an operator describes a person; an enterprise describes an entity.
- 44) **Organic** means a method of food production conforming to the standards described by the BC Certified Organic Program provided by the COABC, and amended from time to time.
- 45) **Organic integrity** - the qualities of an organic product which are obtained through adherence to organic standards at the production level, which must be maintained

## Section 2-Definitions

through handling to the point of final sale, in order for the final product to be labeled and/or marketed as organic.

- 46) **Parallel production** - the simultaneous production, processing or handling of organic and non-organic (including transitional) crops, livestock and/or other agricultural products of the same or similar (indistinguishable) varieties.
- 47) **Perennial crop** - any crop, other than a biennial crop, that can be harvested from the same planting for more than one crop year, or that requires at least one year after planting before harvest.
- 48) **Processing** - cooking, baking, heating, drying, mixing, grinding, churning, separating, extracting, cutting, fermenting, slaughtering, eviscerating, preserving, dehydrating, freezing, dying, sewing, or otherwise manufacturing, including packaging, canning, jarring, or otherwise enclosing in a container, other than normal post harvest packing of crops performed by producers.
- 49) **Processing Aid** - Any substance or material, not including apparatus or utensils, and not consumed as a food ingredient by itself, intentionally used in the processing of raw materials, foods or its ingredients, to fulfill a certain technical purpose during treatment or processing and which may result in the non-intentional, but unavoidable presence of residues or derivatives in the final product.
- 50) **Production aid** (crop) - substances used in conjunction with other materials, which may or may not be directly applied to the crop or soil. Examples include adjuvants, equipment cleaners, insect traps, and plastic mulch.
- 51) **Production Unit**- A portion of an enterprise that produces an agricultural product under a specific management plan.
- 52) **Regulation** - Organic Agricultural Products Certification Regulation under the BC *Agriculture and Food Choice and Quality Act*.
- 53) **Sanitise** - To adequately treat produce or food-contact surfaces by a process that is effective in destroying or substantially reducing the numbers of vegetative cells of microorganisms of public health concern, and other undesirable microorganisms, but without adversely affecting the product or its safety for the consumer.
- 54) **Standards** – Organic production, processing or handling standards.
- 55) **Split operation** (split production) - an operation that produces or handles both organic and non- organic agricultural products.
- 56) **Third party** means the decision-maker has no direct financial interest in the affairs of the member being certified, including an interest in the marketing of that member's products.
- 57) **Transition** - The act of establishing organic management practices in accordance with this standard.
- 58) **Transition Period**- the interval between the start of implementing a program of organic management of a production unit and the completion of the production unit as organic in accordance with this standard.
- 59) **Transitional Product** - A product from an enterprise that has completed one or more years of the transition period towards becoming a certified organic enterprise and is in a COABC recognized certification program.
- 60) **Transplant** - a seedling or cutting raised to be replanted in another situation in order to raise an agricultural product.
- 61) **Verification Officer** means a person contracted by the certification body to gather information relating to an operators application for certification. A verification officer must be a member in good standing of the International Organic Inspectors Association.
- 62) **VO** – Verification Officer.

## **2.2. Inputs in Organic Agriculture**

The Permitted Substances List (PSL) of the Canadian Organic Standard (CAN/CGSB 32-311) is the reference document used by the BC Certified Organic Program. It lists the materials that can be used as inputs on organic operations. The criteria for inputs are outlined in CAN/CGSB 32-310 section 10. Substances can be petitioned for addition on the PSL.

In general the following applies:

- a) Synthetic materials are prohibited unless specifically permitted. "Synthetically compounded" is defined as a process which chemically changes a material extracted from naturally occurring plant, animal or mineral sources, excepting microbiological, mechanical and heat processes. This definition is adopted as a definition for the purposes of this program.
- b) Materials, which degrade the health of organisms necessary for healthy soils, are prohibited.
- c) Materials, which cause negative acute and chronic health effects, are prohibited.
- d) Materials, which are persistent in the environment and are damaging to the environment or break down into compounds, which are persistent and damaging, are prohibited.

## **2.3. Statement on Genetic Engineering**

The use of genetically engineered organisms or their products are prohibited in any form or at any stage in organic production, processing or handling.

### **3. Certification Procedures**

#### **3.1. General Requirements**

##### **3.1.1. Certification Committee**

- 1) Certification bodies shall establish certification committees for evaluating enterprises' compliance with the BC Certified Organic Program.
- 2) Certification Committees shall act in a fair and impartial manner and shall maintain confidentiality about the records of the certification body.
- 3) Members of certification committees shall be required to sign an agreement of confidentiality.

##### **3.1.2. Certification Standards**

- 1) Certification Bodies shall have certification standards that conform to the minimum standards provided by the BC Certified Organic Program.
- 2) Certification Bodies must comply with all aspects of the BC Certified Organic Program.

##### **3.1.3. Application Procedure**

- 1) The enterprise becomes a certification body member. (Membership fee schedule as determined by certification body. This is in addition to the COABC membership fee).
- 2) The operator contacts the certification body for organic certification information and application.
- 3) The operator completes and submits according to the schedule distributed by certification body:
  - a) application for certification and the organic plan (see CAN/CGSB 32-310. 4);
  - b) land use/history information if applicable;
  - c) an affidavit, statutory declaration, contract or memorandum of understanding (a declaration may be incorporated into the organic plan document); and
  - d) Certification fees
- 4) Upon review of the documentation provided and acceptance of the enterprises' application, the certification body notifies the verification officer and issues all pertinent information.
- 5) The verification officer conducts the Inspection.
- 6) The verification officer submits the Inspection report to the certification body.
- 7) The Certification Committee determines the status of the enterprise according to minimum criteria documented in the BC Certified Organic Management Standards.
- 8) The Certification Body notifies the enterprise of the Certification Committee decision and provides a copy of the VO report.

##### **3.1.4. Certification Status and Categories**

1) Certified Organic  
Conversion requirements for organic agricultural production are documented in the Canadian Organic Standard (CAN/CGSB 32-310, 5.1, 6.2 and 6.3). Enterprises which meet the criteria described in section 4.1 of this document for specific production units, may be issued a certificate for those production units, provided all other requirements of the BC Certified Organic program have been satisfied.

2) In Conversion or Transitional

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A certification body may issue a Letter of Confirmation of transitional or in conversion status for product that does not yet meet the requirements of the BC Certified Organic Program. If a CB wishes to issue a transitional/in conversion certificate, it must be markedly different to those issued for certified organic production. See COABC policy #15 for further guidance. The program symbol may not be used on transitional product or on the Letter of Confirmation or certificate.

### 3) Under Review

Assigned when information gathered at the inspection was insufficient or inconclusive. The issuing of this status is accompanied by a letter from the Certification Body to the producer stating why the inspection was inconclusive. There are no rights to label products available under this category.

### 4) Inactive

Assigned when the enterprise has demonstrated compliance to the standard but is not operational, i.e. not currently producing product for sale. A certificate may not be issued if an operator is currently inactive.

## 3.2. Certification Documents

### 3.2.1. Undertaking

A certification body wants to obtain an operator's written promise or undertaking to comply with the certification standards as well as a statement of the truth of the utterances of fact. The agency can choose from three types of documents: an affidavit, a statutory declaration, or a contract. Depending on the document, the extent of the formality required will vary. Operators may need to have the document witnessed, or take an oath as to the truth of its contents. The document is submitted at the time of the initial application.

### 3.2.2. The Organic Plan

The Organic Plan is part of the initial and renewal applications and it solicits information about every relevant topic addressed in the standards. The plan must be detailed enough to indicate a reasonable level of knowledge about organic production, processing or handling practices and principles, as well as to reveal any problems or concerns in adhering to the standards. For processing facilities the plan must describe the plant design and the flow of raw product through the plant to the finished product.

### 3.2.3. Enterprise Records

- 1) A certification body requires operators to keep accurate records of techniques and inputs used in production and processing, amounts produced and sales made, to ensure that a verifiable audit trail exists of products for which organic status is claimed.
- 2) Clear records must be kept by the producer for confidential inspection by verification officers. The information from these records may need to be summarised annually by each producer on specific, required forms in the certification body organic certification application packet.
- 3) A clear record of all materials (inputs) applied to fields and crops or used in processing is part of the audit trail necessary to validate products for which organic status is claimed. All input substances must be documented. Required information includes:
  - a) date brought onto the enterprise
  - b) amount brought on
  - c) type of materials
  - d) source/brand name
  - e) field location

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- f) date applied or used
  - g) volume applied or used
  - h) Crop applied to or product used in.
  - i) Categories of most likely farm, or handling inputs include but are not limited to:
    - i. soil amendments, organic matter and mulch
    - ii. fertilisers
    - iii. growth promoters, activators and inoculants
    - iv. seeds, seedlings, transplants, nursery stock
    - v. stock animals
    - vi. products to control fungi, diseases, insects, mites, nematodes, animal pests, weeds
    - vii. post-harvest inputs
    - viii. packaging materials
  - j) Categories of most likely processing or handling inputs include but are not limited to:
    - i. ingredients
    - ii. additives and processing aids including lubricants
    - iii. packaging
- 4) Production/Processing/Handling Records
- a) Farm or firm files must contain dated records showing the amounts of crops harvested, products processed or handled, listed by crop or product, and field, production unit, processing or handling facility. Amounts may be determined by weight, volume, or unit, but should be kept consistent throughout the records.
- 5) Sales Records
- a) Records must be kept, by crop or product and field, production unit, processing or handling facility of the dates, buyers, and amounts of crops or products sold. In the case of processors and handlers, precise records of products purchased or acquired from other sources are required, including copies of certificates verifying the certified organic products.
  - b) Records of farm gate or product sales need only include total volume by crop or product and date of sale. These records do not need to report the dollar values of the sale. Wherever possible, consistent identification of products and materials within records, by means of invoice numbers, tags or lot numbers, should be maintained.
  - c) Such records shall be maintained for at least FIVE (5) years after the crop or product is sold and delivered.

### 3.3. Enterprise Inspections and Reports

#### 3.3.1. Frequency of Inspections

- 1) Unless otherwise prescribed according to 3.3.2, all enterprises will have a minimum of one inspection per year. More may be required at the discretion of the certification committee and/or the verification officer.
- 2) It is recommended for livestock producers with animals confined to paddocks for winter-feeding, that some of the inspections take place during the winter season.
- 3) On and off farm processing and packing plants need to be inspected yearly by a verification officer who has sufficient knowledge of the process being inspected.
- 4) Slaughterhouse, transport companies and storage facilities do not have to be certificate holders, but organic integrity must be maintained and assessed by the certification body; this may include inspection.

### **3.3.2. Inspection Frequency Based on Risk Assessment**

- 1) Certification Bodies may alter inspection frequency to a minimum of one inspection in three years according to the following criteria:
  - a) Enterprise must not be exporting organic product out of BC
  - b) Enterprise must not practice parallel production
  - c) Enterprise must not have outstanding conditions
  - d) Enterprise must have received a valid organic certificate in all of the previous three years
  - e) The enterprise must be assessed for risk, and receive a low-risk ranking from a certification committee.
- 2) This option is only available for enterprises that do not wish to participate in the Canada Organic Regime or use the Canada Organic Logo.
- 3) Certification Bodies that allow for reduced inspection requirements must develop a Risk Assessment Program. See Book 1 Annex 1 and Annex 2 for details.

### **3.3.3. Inspection Process**

- 1) When a certification body requires an Inspection, the certification body notifies the verification officer, who will set a time for the inspection. The verification officer conducts this visit. A representative of the enterprise being inspected must be present unless there are extenuating circumstances. The verification officer then submits a report for the Inspection. The certification body sends a copy of the Verification Officer's report and the final Certification Fee invoice to the enterprise. The certification body sends verification of certification status and permission or denial to use the phrase "British Columbia Certified Organic" and the program symbol to the enterprise.

### **3.3.4. Confidentiality**

- 1) An inspection with all its documentation has a highly confidential nature. The verification officers, as well as the certification body and the COABC must maintain the strictest confidence in these matters. It is strictly prohibited for the VO and the Certification Body to transfer technology, product profile recipes, and other know-how from one inspected enterprise to another.

### **3.3.5. Responsibilities of Verification Officers**

- 1) Verification officers are required to meet all applicable deadlines. The inspection schedule for a producer depends on whether the enterprise is a new applicant or a renewal. The Certification Body is responsible for insuring that a verification officer has an inspection schedule that is reasonable. Verification Officers must keep all information gathered at an inspection visit confidential between themselves and the appropriate officers of the Certification Body.

### **3.3.6. Inspection Report**

- 1) A verification officer makes a written report to the certification body, after each inspection. The Certification Body shall send a copy of the Farm/Facility Inspection Report to the enterprise after each inspection.

### **3.3.7. Inspection Procedures**

- 1) The inspection visit consists of:
  - a) an interview with the producer, processor or handler to review the application;
  - b) examination of the production, processing or handler records pertaining to the application including a complete audit trail from farm to final sale (final sale means when the product leaves the possession of the enterprise in question)
  - c) complete visual inspection of the farm, processing or handling operation during the production season or in the case of processing when the products targeted for certification are being processed, packaged or handled;
  - d) If there is split production the inspection must also include observation of the non-organic units if there is high risk of cross contamination and must allow visual determination of what is being planted in all cultivated fields within the production unit.
  - e) If necessary it must be possible for the inspection to include all premises owned or administered by the responsible managers, and for the VO to take samples of inputs, products etc. when instructed by the CB.
  - f) for processing/handling, inspections must consist of a technical part, in which the aspects mentioned in the standards are verified, and of an administrative part, in which the amounts of input and output are compared (audit trail).
  - g) the taking of any samples if necessary; and
  - h) discussion of any problems or concerns. In the case of the ISO compliant CBs this takes the form of an exit interview where the findings are summarized and written down providing an opportunity for the producer/handler to confirm the accuracy of information collected during the inspection.

### **3.4. Fees and Assessments**

All applicants for certification must be members in good standing of the certification body. Prompt payment of all applicable fees is required to maintain membership status.

### **3.5. Assignment and Surrender of Certification Status**

#### **3.5.1. Date of Approval**

Certification status begins on the date of approval by the certification body. The date must be indicated on the certificate. Certification bodies may issue certificates for a fixed 12 month period (e.g. June to July) and in that case would replace an initial certificate as necessary to bring it into line with their procedures.

#### **3.5.2. Surrender for Non-compliance**

The certificate is used by the enterprise for marketing purposes. It must be surrendered to the certification body if the enterprise no longer meets the certification criteria of the BC Certified Organic Program.

### **3.6. Term of Certificate**

- 1) The term of a certificate as indicated in Section 8 of the BC Regulation, is 12 months from the date of issue.
- 2) The certificate remains valid until a renewal certificate is issued or the certification body revokes it. Provided a renewal application is received by the Certification Body before the expiration of the previous certificate; and all other policies and standards have been met, the certificate will be renewed.

## Section 3-Certification Procedures

- 3) If a renewal application is not received, status ends on the expiration date marked on the certificate and the enterprise must surrender their certificate.
- 4) Products that remain in inventory after the term of a certificate expires may be marketed under that certificate upon written permission of the certification body. A certification body must require appropriate documentation and may require inspection consistent with the requirements for certificates, so long as the product remains in inventory.

### **3.7. Yearly Renewal**

The possession of a certificate is not, by itself, a guarantee of certification. The certification body must issue a new certificate in each year.

### **3.8. Revocation of Certificate**

When a certification body issues a notice of cancellation or revocation, the certificate is by that act, invalidated. Any person may contact the certification body for this information; it shall not be considered confidential.

### **3.9. Withdrawal of Certification Status**

#### **3.9.1. Voluntary withdrawal:**

Operators must inform the certification body of the withdrawal from the certification program of any production unit or processing facility due to use of a prohibited practice or material. If conditions exist for which the producer, processor or handler anticipates the use of prohibited practices or materials, the certification body strongly recommends consultations with the appropriate experts and the certification body, close monitoring of the actions and the effects, and detailed documentation.

#### **3.9.2. Decertification**

Assigned to operations which were certified, but no longer meet the production or processing standards and the certificate is revoked.

### **3.10. Use of the COABC Name and Program Symbol**

The descriptive phrase "British Columbia Certified Organic" and the program symbol may only be used by enterprises operating in the province of British Columbia and certified by member certification bodies.

#### **3.10.1. Rules Governing Use of the Program Symbol**

- 1) A Certification Body, which has been accredited by the COABC, may grant the use of the BC Certified Organic Program Symbol to certified organic enterprises enrolled in its certification program, subject to the following conditions:
  - a) The enterprise must have a valid 'certificate' issued by the Certification Body. This must be re-issued annually.
  - b) The enterprise must be registered with the COABC. (The CB provides a list of certified enterprises to COABC annually and updates the list as necessary throughout the year.)
  - c) The enterprise must sign and return a "Consent To Use Official Marks" form to the certification body who, in turn, has signed an agreement with COABC. This need only be completed initially.
  - d) The enterprise must be in good standing with the Certification Body and have paid the COABC fees.

## Section 3-Certification Procedures

- e) Physical use of the BC Certified Organic Program Symbol is governed by the "Symbol Users Guide", issued by the COABC and amended from time to time.

**3.10.2. Labelling of certified products.**

Certification Bodies must ensure that any labels affixed to certified products and making an organic claim meet the requirements in 5.3 and 5.4 of this document. In situations where the company marketing the product under its own brand name does not manufacture the product or hold a certificate, private label agreements between the certifier and the company are required.

## 4. Production Standards

COABC has adopted as the management standards of the British Columbia Certified Organic Program, the Canadian Organic Standard as detailed in CAN/CGSB 32-310 and CAN/CGSB 32-311. Additional guidance for certifiers and operators is provided in the following sections. When a new or revised version of the standard is published, certifiers may allow operators up to 12 months to make the appropriate changes to their production system.

### 4.1. Transition to Organic

#### 4.1.1. Certification Status

- 1) A Certification Status or category applies to specific plots of land, production units, or processing/handling facilities, not to the farm, farmer, processor, or handler.
- 2) An enterprise is "in transition" from the time of its initial application to the BC Certified Organic Program, until the operator receives a certificate. There are no provisions for the marketing of "transitional" product within the BC Certified Organic Program, but individual Certification Bodies may develop procedures for transitional product on their own.
- 3) British Columbia Certified Organic status may only be granted if the appropriate transition period (as set out in CAN/CGSB 32-310 5.1.1, 6.2. & 6.3 for each type of operation) has been completed and the land, product or herd is being produced and handled in accordance with the standards. This must be verified on a yearly basis by a recognised certification body accredited by the COABC. Transition periods may have been completed under another certification agency if the agency uses the Canadian Organic Standard and is accredited either by COABC or under the Canada Organic Regime.

#### 4.1.2. Transition period

- 1) For soil-based crops
  - a) The period of transition is 36 months from the last application of a prohibited substance during which time the implementation of an appropriate soil management plan must be documented. Products may be stamped 'transitional' after the first 12 months of transition are completed, when approved by the Certification Body.
  - b) If the applicant can provide documentation that the land and crops have been managed in accordance with these Standards, but were not verified by a certification body, a certification body may accept documentation rather than 'certification' as a verification of compliance with these Standards. An applicant must apply to a certification program body program recognised by the COABC at least 15 months before the day on which the first certified product is expected to be marketed. This also applies to syrup production. The enterprise must receive at least two inspections before a certificate can be issued.
  - c) If a certified enterprise is adding land to the production unit producing the same crops as already certified and records demonstrate compliance to the standard, the 15 month requirement may be waived.
  - d) Non-organic perennial transplants must go through a year (from the date of planting) transition period before the crop may be sold as certified organic. All other standards for soil-based crops must be complied with. Non-organic perennial transplants can only be used if it has been clearly substantiated that

## Section 4-Production Standards

organic sources of equivalent quality and quantity, are not commercially available.

- 2) For transplants and plants in containers - Enterprise has received appropriate inspections sufficient to verify compliance to the requirements specified by the BC Certified Organic Program. All other crop production standards must be complied with and verified before a certificate may be issued.
- 3) Mushrooms - Enterprise has received appropriate inspections sufficient to verify compliance to the requirements specified by the BC Certified Organic Program. All relevant crop production standards must be complied with and verified before a certificate may be issued.
- 4) Sprouts - Enterprise has received appropriate inspections sufficient to verify compliance to the requirements specified by the BC Certified Organic Program. All relevant crop production standards must be complied with and verified before a certificate may be issued.
- 5) Meat Animals (excluding poultry) – Animals must be maintained by an enterprise that has been certified under the BC Certified Organic Program (or an equivalent and recognised program). When a herd or flock is being converted to organic production, these conditions apply from beginning of third trimester of in-utero development. Pastures must be certified organic. Provisions for transition of pastures are the same as those required for crops grown in the ground.
- 6) Eggs – Birds must be maintained by an enterprise that has been certified under the BC Certified Organic Program. Poultry must be raised under organic management beginning no later than the second day of life. Pastures must be certified organic (or in the final year of transition according to CAN/CGSB 32-310 6.3.3). Provisions for transition of pastures are the same as those required for crops grown in the ground.
- 7) Meat poultry – Birds must be maintained by an enterprise that has been certified under the BC Certified Organic Program (or an equivalent and recognised program). Poultry must be maintained under these conditions beginning no later than the second day of life until slaughter. Pastures must be certified organic. Provisions for transitions of pastures are the same, as those for crops grown in the ground.
- 8) Milk - Animals on a farm undergoing transition or purchased from a conventional source must be managed according to the BC Certified Organic program standards (CAN/CGSB 32-310 & 32-311) for 12 months before they can be certified organic. Pastures must be certified organic or when a whole herd is being transitioned, in 3rd year transition to satisfy this requirement. Provisions for the transition of pasture are the same, as those required for soil-based crops.
- 9) Honey - Colonies must go through a 12-month transition from the last application of prohibited inputs before honey can be harvested as certified organic.
- 10) Processing - Enterprise has received appropriate inspections sufficient to verify compliance to the requirements specified by the BC Certified Organic Program.

### 4.1.3. Split Production

- 1) Maintenance of a non-organic management system on a farm (split operation) enrolled in an organic certification program may be allowed if adequate distinction is provided. Approval of the certifying agency must be obtained. The producer should be able to demonstrate that appropriate soil building techniques are used to maintain organic matter content and to reduce erosion of the soil on the non-organic portion of the farm, and that only inputs are selected that have the lowest possible environmental impact. The producer must have available for review input and

## Section 4-Production Standards

production records for both portions of the farm to the certification body on a yearly basis.

- 2) GE crops not allowed in the non-organic part of a split operation - see 4.2.3 below.
- 3) Organic and non-organic production may co-exist in enclosed operations such as a greenhouse or mushroom operation especially as the operation moves through the transition period. The division between organic and non-organic must be completely clear and verifiable. The minimum requirements are as follows:
  - a) Organic production must be contained in structures separate from conventional (non-organic) production. Structures can not be alternated between organic and non-organic production.
  - b) There shall be separate ventilation systems to prevent drift of prohibited materials.
  - c) Liquid fertiliser systems in non-organic greenhouses shall be separate from organic greenhouses to prevent contamination with prohibited materials; organic fertigation lines must be separate from non-organic fertigation lines.
  - d) Each structure shall be conspicuously labelled according to production methods such as "Organic" or "Non-organic."
  - e) Soil mixing equipment and other tools shall be thoroughly cleaned before use for mixing organic potting soils. A cleaning log must be kept for such equipment. Cleaning log must contain signatures and dates of clean-outs between organic and non-organic operations.
  - f) The same crop shall not be produced organically and non-organically in an operation owned or managed by the same certified producer unless the crop varieties are visually distinguishable when in a saleable state.
  - g) Separate records must be maintained for organic and non-organic production methods. Both sets of records must be available for inspection by a verification officer.
  - h) Adequate physical facilities, (as determined by the certification body based on information provided by of the Verification Officer), shall separate organic and non-organic plants in storage or product holding areas for shipping. Distinctive shipping containers must be maintained for both the organic and conventional brands. Adequate records shall also be kept and be available for inspection.
  - i) No prohibited materials may be used in structures that are dedicated to organic production.
  - j) In cases where there is any concern about the possibility of contamination from adjacent areas, a minimum buffer zone of 25 feet is required from the potentially contaminated area.

### 4.1.4. Parallel Production - Prohibited

Production of the same crop or similar crops, which are not easily distinguishable, in the same crop rotation cycle on both the organic and the non-organic portions of the farm is prohibited. Exceptions are allowed in the following cases:

- a) during the transition of perennial crops and grassland;
- b) areas intended for agricultural research

## 4.2. Genetic Engineering

- 1) Land that has previously grown genetically modified organisms is subject to the same transition period as any other land. The certification body may require extra monitoring for contamination by transgenic organisms.
- 2) The use of genetically engineered organisms or their products are prohibited in any form or at any stage in organic production, processing or handling.

## Section 4-Production Standards

- 3) As the risk of cross contamination by pollination, and the long term hazards of genetically modified organisms are not well understood, certified organic farms which also operate conventional fields cannot use genetically modified organisms on the conventional portion of the farm.

#### **4.3. Organic Crop Management**

See CAN/CGSB 32-310, Section 5

#### **4.4. Organic Greenhouse Management**

See CAN/CGSB 32-310 section 7.5

#### **4.5. Organic Sprout Production**

See CAN/CGSB 32-310 section 7.4

#### **4.6. Organic Mushroom Production**

See CAN/CGSB 32-310 section 7.3

#### **4.7. Organic Maple products**

See CAN/CGSB 32-310 –section 7.2

#### **4.8. Organic Wild Crops**

See CAN/CGSB 32.210, Section 7.6

#### **4.9. Organic Livestock Production**

See CAN/CGSB 32.210, Section 6 and 32.311, 5.2 & 5.3

##### **4.9.1. General**

- 1) Includes cattle, swine, sheep, goats, rabbits, game and exotic mammals, for slaughter and for milk production, as well as poultry for slaughter and egg production.
- 2) Livestock producers must implement management techniques, which will establish and maintain herd/flock health emphasising the preventative health practices of proper nutrition, stress reduction, genetic selection, and farm system design. Each producer should maintain a herd/flock health management plan. A Farm System Design Plan is also recommended, which incorporate measures to minimise or eliminate environmental degradation.
- 3) The production, processing, and marketing of livestock and livestock products must comply with provincial and federal statutes regulating each industry. Producers must observe all regulatory requirements with respect to milk production and handling.
- 4) Animals from non-certified sources may be incorporated into an organic system and sold into the “conventional” or non-certified market without jeopardising the farm/ranch “certified organic” status. For example breeding males; non-organic

## Section 4-Production Standards

animals on a farm with organic crop production; or non-organic animals grazing with an organic herd. The audit trail must provide indisputable evidence of appropriate identification or segregation. When the status of an animal is in question, it must be sold as non-certified. Animals in an organic production unit (including born into the unit) that are transferred to non-organic production unit cannot be transferred back into the organic production unit, except if this is completely beyond producers control such as a severe natural disaster; in which case producer may apply to certification committee for an exception.

### 4.9.2. Feed

- 1) The requirement for feed to be produced in accordance with the standard is a requirement for certified organic feed. Within British Columbia, operators in the COABC ISO compliant program may use certified organic forages obtained from operators in the COABC Regional program.
- 2) Crown lands held under grazing permits or other such tenures have their admissibility as a "certified organic" input determined on a license by license basis. Each applicant must file a Questionnaire on land use/history for Crown Lands for each area under consideration. This document will provide the Certification Committee with adequate information to evaluate the parcel's admissibility into an organic farm/ranch system.
- 3) Certified transitional feeds, or feeds of equivalent standing, or feeds guaranteed to be organic by a producer signed affidavit with prior approval may only be used in exceptional circumstances when organic feed is not available as outlined in CAN/CGSB 32-310, 6.4.

### 4.9.3. Record Keeping and Audit Trail

- 1) Every primary producer, feedlot operator and finishing unit operator must keep detailed records for the livestock enterprise. These records should be in an orderly and auditable form and include at least the following information pertaining to each animal or group of animals handled by the facility:
  - a) A complete audit trail from farm to final sale must be maintained.
  - b) Sources, purchases and sales of animals and feed.
  - c) Herd Health Management Plan (recommended – CBs may require this as part of the Organic Plan)
  - d) Farm/Ranch System Design Plan (recommended)
  - e) Feeding records
  - f) Health care records (include all treatments whether with veterinary drugs or allowed homeopathic and botanical products).
  - g) Year-end inventories of animals and supplies.

### 4.9.4. Milk Handling

Milk handling equipment and sanitising agents must meet Provincial industry standards as set out in the Milk Industry Standards Regulation under the British Columbia Milk Industry Act. A rinse with clean water must follow the sanitising rinse before milking unless the sanitizer is listed on table 7.3 of CAN/CGSB32-311. If prohibited materials must be used due to regulatory requirements, then all equipment must undergo two additional rinses or a predetermined volume of milk agreed to by the CB with the operator can be purged following the cleaning procedure and satisfy the requirements laid out in the standard. All processes and materials must be documented in detail.

## Section 4-Production Standards

**4.9.5. Slaughter and Processing**

- 1) Animals must be treated humanely during shipping, holding, and slaughter, see CAN/CGSB 32-31- 6.6
- 2) Animals in transit longer than 24 hours must be unloaded, fed, watered, and rested at least once every 24 hours from the time of loading.
- 3) It is not compulsory that a slaughter facility be certified in its own right for meat to be labelled certified organic, but producers and certifiers must be able to verify that the organic integrity of the product is not compromised during slaughter and cutting. An organic compliance affidavit may be used for custom slaughter facilities.
- 4) Slaughter, cutting, and meat packing facilities are considered to be processing facilities. The production plan, from receipt of the raw material to release of the product, must include a transparent audit trail of the following:
  - a) Inputs
  - b) Material processes
  - c) Decontamination processes and monitoring
  - d) Sanitation practices
  - e) Packaging
  - f) Storage
  - g) Product identification as defined and required by the appropriate certification and regulatory agencies
  - h) Meat or meat products from certified animals must be clearly identified to preclude confusion with non-certified meat
  - i) Pest control (in and outside the facility including fly control).

**4.10. Apiculture**

See CAN/CGSB 32-310 section 7.1

## 5. Processing/Handling

See CAN/CGSB 32.310, 8 and PSL CAN/CGSB 32.311, 6. & 7 for allowed non-organic ingredients, additives and processing aids.

### 5.1. Veracity of the Organic Food Channel

The integrity of organic food products must be maintained from the farm to the consumer. During this transfer, there are many points where proper care is needed to ensure that contamination does not occur. In order to certify that a food product is organic at the retail level, processors, packers, manufacturers, handlers and distributors must adhere to a program as detailed and verifiable as that required of farmers.

### 5.2. Use of Program Symbol and Labelling

Any processor, packer, manufacturer or handler who wishes to display the British Columbia Certified Organic label on product to which he/she holds legal title must be a licensee of a COABC accredited Certification Body.

#### 5.2.1. Classes of Labelling

- 1) British Columbia Certified Organic labelling guidelines recognise three different classifications of products and the claims that can be made on the labels of each classification. The classifications are:
  - a) Products made of at least 95% organic ingredients.
  - b) Products composed of 70-95% organic ingredients.
  - c) Products containing less than 70% organic ingredients.

The particular requirements for the claim, composition and labelling of each of these classifications are to be found in the chart in 5.4 of this document.
- 2) For a product to display a British Columbia Certified Organic claim on its label, excluding individual organic items cited in the ingredients list, the processing of the final product must be done by a licensee or by a co-processor with methods that conform to the standards. The actual facility and processes used must be inspected by a COABC member agency or must be certified by another certification body accredited under the Canada Organic Regime (except for slaughter as outlined in 4.9.5.3 of this document). A licensee's batch lots may be processed by a non-certified organic co-processing facility, as long as the requirements of CAN/CGSB 32-310, section 8 are met to the satisfaction of the certification body. The main points are:
  - d) An application is submitted to a certification body before the processing is done.
  - e) An audit trail is maintained.
  - f) A verification officer inspects the processing facility once a year at a time when products targeted for certification are being processed.
  - g) The certification body deems the processing has not compromised the integrity of the organic product.

If a non-certified facility is used to produce a BC Certified Organic product, excluding slaughter as outlined in 4.9.5.3 of this document, the licensee is responsible for submitting an application to the certification body and supplying information for certification, arranging for access to the facility for inspection and paying applicable fees. This arrangement only applies to the products of a particular licensee; it does

## Section 5-Processing/Handling

not confer certification on the co-processor. If more than one licensee uses a particular co-processor, the plant will need to deal with each licensee's certification separately; therefore, one plant may require several inspections in a season.

### 5.3. Ingredients and Composition of Products

Organic ingredients are agricultural commodities that must be organically produced to be included in a product labelled organic and/or to be identified as organic in the ingredient panel. They must be certified organic by a COABC member certification body, or by a CB approved under the Canada Organic Regime. If an ingredient certified by a CB in the BCCO regional program, is to be used in a product to be marketed under the Canada Organic Regime, the ISO compliant CB must complete a document review and determine the certification status for the ingredient.

The following requirements apply to products labelled in the 95% and above, and the 70-95% labelling categories.

- a) Any certified organic ingredient must have been prepared or imported by an operator subject to a regular inspection system by a certification body with standards equivalent to the Canadian Standard. Copies of organic certificates or transaction certificates for each organic ingredient must be kept on file by the processor.
- b) All processing aids must be organic or listed in the PSL (CAN/CGSB 32-310, 8.3.2)
- c) Any non-agricultural ingredient must be listed in the PSL (CAN/CGSB 32-310, 8.2.7)
- d) Any non-organic ingredient or processing aids used must not be a product of, or be derived from GE technology, or have been exposed to ionizing radiation, or be the product of cloned animals (CAN/CGSB 32-310, 1.4.1a, 1.4.1h, 1.4.1k)
- e) Operators must submit a product profile for each product for which they will make an organic claim. The product profile lists all ingredients including their percentages as well as the certification body for the organic ingredients and the sources of any non-organic ingredients. Copies of the corresponding organic certificates for each organic ingredient and product information sheets and GMO status documentation for the non-organic ingredients must be attached. This information must be submitted to the certification body before an organic claim is made.
- f) The product shall not contain both organic and non-organic versions of the same ingredient (CAN/CGSB 32.310, 8.2.6).
- g) Any intermediate product used in the final product must have been prepared or imported by an operator subject to a regular inspection system by a certification body with standards equivalent to these regulations.
- h) See CAN/CGSB 8.2.1 for the method of calculating the percentage of organic ingredients.
- i) The weight of water and salt (sodium chloride) are subtracted before calculating organic ingredient percentages.
- j) Percentage calculations may be done either by weight or volume, but the same measurement system must be used for all the ingredients. The unit of measure used must be characteristic for the product type.
- k) All ingredients of a food and components of ingredients including any additives are to be included in the final calculations of percentages of organic

## Section 5-Processing/Handling

ingredients. This includes any ingredient, mixture, or preparation that is exempt from component declaration under the Food and Drug Regulations section B.01.009.

- l) Multi-ingredient organic products used as ingredients in a subsequent product are calculated by using the percentage of organic ingredients actually contained in the intermediate product.
- m) Labelling requirements for animal feeds: Calcium added to animal feeds for known nutritional needs shall not be included as part of the total weight of the product when calculating percentages for organic compliance labelling.
- n) Products containing less than 70% organic ingredients do not have to be certified to make an organic claim in the ingredient list. However, if a processing facility is subject to inspection for products that are certified, the labels of products with under 70% organic ingredients should also be checked.

#### 5.4. Labelling Requirements

<b>Classifications:</b>	<b>Products made with 95% &amp; above organic ingredients</b>	<b>Product made with 70 and above organic ingredients, but less than 95%</b>	<b>Products made with less than 70% organic ingredients</b>
<b>Composition:</b>	<p><i>For a certified organic claim at least 95 % of all ingredients, except water and salt, and calcium in the case of livestock feeds must be certified organic (see CAN/CGSB 32.310 para 8.2.1)</i></p> <p><i>Para 8.2.3, 8.2.5, 8.2.6 &amp; 8.2.7 in CAN/CGSB 32.310 and 5.3 of this document further outline requirements for &gt;95% products.</i></p>	<p><i>To make an organic percentage claim, at least 70% of all ingredients must be certified organic (see CAN/CGSB 32.310 para 8.2.1 &amp; 8.2.4)</i></p> <p><i>There are restriction on the non-organic ingredients see CAN/CGSB 32-310, 8.2.6 and 5.3 of this document.</i></p>	<p><i>To claim an individual ingredient in the ingredient list is organic it (the ingredient) must be certified organic.</i></p>
<b>Claim allowed:</b>	<p><i>Products that are certified organic may use the words “organic”, “organically grown”, “organically raised”, or “organically produced”.</i></p>	<p><i>Products with 70-95% organic ingredients are restricted to a claim of the percentage of organically produced ingredients which must be show as "X% organic ingredients". The percentage must be rounded down to the nearest whole number.</i></p> <p><i>The organic claim can be no larger or more prominent (type, style,</i></p>	<p><i>An organic claim may appear only as descriptors for individual ingredients in the ingredient list/panel.</i></p>

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<b>Classifications:</b>	<b>Products made with 95% &amp; above organic ingredients</b>	<b>Product made with 70 and above organic ingredients, but less than 95%</b>	<b>Products made with less than 70% organic ingredients</b>
		<i>size and colour), than the preceding words, signs or symbols that indicate the applicable percentage. (OPR 24 (2b)).</i>	
<b>Agency identification requirements:</b>	<i>Must include the phrase "Certified by" and identify the name of the processing certifier or the certifier of the responsible brand name holder.</i>	<i>Must include the phrase "Certified by" and identify the name of the processing certifier or the certifier of the responsible brand name holder.</i>	-
<b>Use of trademarks:</b>	<i>May use the COABC trademark, the Certification Body's seal and the term British Columbia Certified Organic on any containers, wrapping materials, advertising and promotional materials.</i>	<i>Containers, wrapping, advertising or promotional materials for products in this classification must NOT display the COABC trademark or the term British Columbia Certified Organic. The Certification Body's seal may be used.</i>	<i>Containers, wrapping, advertising or promotional materials for products in this classification must NOT display the COABC trademark or Certification Body's seal or the term BC Certified Organic.</i>
<b>Approval Needed:</b>	<i>All materials that include organic claims must receive approval for the organic claim from the pertinent certification agency before its use.</i>	<i>All materials that included 70-95% organic claims must receive approval for the organic claim from the pertinent certification agency before its use.</i>	
<b>Ingredient panel requirement:</b>	<i>Each organic ingredient in a multi-ingredient product shall be clearly identified as "organic" on the ingredient list.</i>	<i>Each organic ingredient in a multi-ingredient product shall be clearly identified as "organic" on the ingredient list.</i>	<i>Each organic ingredient shall be clearly identified as "organic" on the ingredient list.</i>

## 5.5. Audit Trail

### 5.5.1. Objectives of the Audit Trail Process

Maintenance of a complete and transparent audit trail is a crucial element in ensuring the integrity of an organic product. A well-kept audit trail will allow a verification officer or auditor to consolidate all inputs contained in a product with the total output of that product.

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**5.5.2. Required**

- 2) Detailed records of any raw materials used as ingredients in a certified product, including names of suppliers or producers, names of respective certifying bodies and quantities purchased.
  - a) Detailed records of all additives and processing aids used including names of suppliers and status of the additive or processing aid (whether of certified organic origin).
  - b) Detailed records of finished products sold and on hand.
  - c) A system of lot numbers, batch numbers or product codes that will allow tracking of individual ingredients throughout the process to the final product.
  - d) The above mentioned records are to be kept at the processor's or packer's offices or place of business in British Columbia.
  - e) The processor or packer must grant permission to the certification body's verification officer and to the COABC appointed auditor to review its records.
  - f) Where ownership of the product remains with the original producer, it is incumbent on him/her to ensure that all processing standards are met.

**5.6. Wine & Beer**

The processing and handling standards (CAN/CGSB 32-310, 8) and permitted substances lists CAN/CGSB 32-311, 6 are applied for wine and beer making.

## **6. Permitted Substances**

See Can/CGSB 32.311 Organic Production Systems Permitted Substances Lists.

### **6.1. Definitions**

The term "synthetic" means a substance that is formulated or manufactured by a chemical process or by a process that chemically changes a substance extracted from naturally occurring plant, animal, or mineral sources, except that such term shall not apply to substances created by naturally occurring biological processes.

### **6.2. Classifications and Categories**

- 1) Substances are listed in tables according to the way they are used:
  - a) Crop production: Soil Amendments and Crop Nutrition; Crop Production Aids and Materials and Weed Management.
  - b) Livestock production: Feed, Feed Additives and Feed Supplements; Health Care Products and Production Aids.
  - c) Processing: Non Organic Ingredients (NOIs) Classified as Food Additives; NOIs Not Classified as Food Additives; Substances Permitted in Products whose Contents are more than 70% and less than 95% organic ingredients; Processing Aids; Pest Control Substances.
  - d) Cleaners, Disinfectants and Sanitizers: those allowed without a mandatory removal event; those removed from food contact surfaces prior to organic production.

### **6.3. Crop Production**

See CAN/CGSB 32-311, Tables 4.2, 4.3 & 4.4

- 1) Soil amendments (Table 4.2) are substances applied to the soil to improve fertility and tilth.
- 2) Crop Production Aids and Materials (Table 4.3) are substances which may or may not be directly applied to the crop or soil or substances used to control disease or pests.

### **6.4. Livestock**

See CAN/CGSB 32-311 tables 5.2 and 5.3

- 1) Feed for organic animals must meet the Canadian Organic Standard and be certified. Crops grown for organic feed and pasture managed for organic animals to graze must meet certified organic production standards. The components of organic feed must be organically produced and handled.
- 2) Feed additives are substances used to fulfill a specific nutritional need in a feed ration.
- 3) Feed supplements are substances used to improve the nutritive balance or performance of the total ration. These may be mixed or offered free choice separately from the rest of the ration.

## Section 6-Permitted Substances

- 4) Health care products include medications, remedies, parasiticides, and other substances used to maintain or restore the well being of an animal. Many of these substances are considered farm animal drugs under the Canadian Food and Drug Act. As such, they should be used with the degree of care that animal drugs require.
- 5) Production aids include all other materials used on animals and their living areas with the exception of cleaners and disinfectants which are listed in CAN/CGSB 32-311 tables 7.3 and 7.4

### **6.5. Processing**

See CAN/CGSB 32-311, tables 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6.

- 1) 1) Non-Organic Ingredients (NOI). Materials listed under these categories are for use in products labelled as "organic (>95%)" or "made with X% organic ingredients (70-95%)". They are in most cases considered non-agricultural, although some of the fundamental ingredients may have originated from agricultural based commodities.
- 2) Non-Organic ingredients may be used only when an acceptable alternative, non-synthetic ingredient is commercially unavailable.
- 3) NOIs are classified into two groups- those that are food additives according to the definition in the Canadian Food and Drug Regulations and those not classified as additives e.g. dairy cultures and flavours. In both cases they are present in the final food product.
- 4) Processing production aids are substances/ingredients, which are added to a food for a technological effect during processing and which are not present in the finished food product or are present at insignificant or non-functional levels.

### **6.6. Cleansers, Disinfectants, and Sanitizers (CDS)**

See CAN/CGSB 32-311, tables 7.3 & 7.4

Cleaners, Disinfectants and Sanitizers are used to remove dirt, filth, and foreign matter from food and food handling operations. These materials are also used to control micro-organisms that may contaminate food. Use of these products must comply with all applicable health and food safety laws.

## 7. Environmental Protection – Guidance

Organic operators should adhere to the strictest possible management program in order to protect and enhance soil and water quality in the environment. Organic farmers, and others in the trade, have a commitment to environmental protection. This is a basic principle of the organic movement and must be respected before all other considerations.

- 1) Certification Bodies should provide education about environmental issues to their members and encourage protection of the land and aquatic environment by licensees.
- 2) For on-site sewage system users:
  - a) Sewage systems should be pumped out regularly.
  - b) Neither solids nor toxic chemicals should be put down the drain.
  - c) Consider investigating alternate forms of nutrient cycling, such as bio-filters; request this information from the BC Ministry of Agriculture.
  - d) No organic crops destined for human consumption should be planted on a drainage field.
- 3) For livestock enterprises and other operations which handle manure:
  - e) Operators must follow Manure Management Standards
  - f) Compost facilities must follow the Compost Regulations.
- 4) Livestock operators should:
  - a) Control cattle access to streambanks and water bodies. Livestock grazing and loitering on streambanks for long periods can damage vegetation, deposit manure, and cause soil erosion along the banks. This can degrade water quality and destroy fish habitat. Nutrients in manure, which are carried by runoff into water bodies, can cause an increase in the growth of algae and aquatic plants. Bacteria or parasites in manure, carried by runoff to nearby surface waters, can spread diseases among herds. They can also pose a health threat to humans by making water unsafe for drinking or swimming. In some situations, greater setbacks from watercourses may be required.
  - b) When necessary, install barrier fencing to control livestock grazing on streambanks. If livestock must cross streams, operators should provide gravelled or hardened access points, in sensitive areas where damage from cattle could occur;
  - c) If necessary, provide alternate watering systems, such as troughs, dugouts or nose pumps for livestock;
  - d) Maintain or create buffer zones of vegetation along streambanks, rivers, or lakeshore and avoid planting crops right up to the edge of a water body.
  - e) Protect and preserve natural wetlands.
  - f) Use natural swales and hollows as sediment traps.
  - g) Not alter natural water bodies or shorelines or build ponds or dams without proper guidance and authorisation from the nearest regional office of BC Environment, Water Management.
  - h) Locate confined animal facilities away from water bodies. Divert incoming and outgoing runoff from these facilities.
- 5) Enterprises must protect watercourses from chemical pollution. Diesel, gasoline and other fuels accidentally spilled or improperly used or stored can seep down and pollute groundwater or be carried by runoff into streams, rivers and lakes.

## Section 7-Environmental Protection-Guidance

- 6) COABC encourages all organic producers to seriously consider:
- a) the use of renewable forms of energy to meet energy supply requirements of farms, processing units and other activities;
  - b) minimizing where practical, sources of greenhouse gas emissions;
  - c) selecting crops and animals for their suitability for dealing with and adapting to climate change; and
  - d) reducing, recycling or reusing resources used in producing and processing organic products to increase the efficiency of resource use.

## **8. Other Farm Practices - Guidance**

### **8.1. Irrigation Practices and Water Quality**

The organic standards cover many of the elements that are critical to a food safety strategy on the farm. However, some elements are covered by regulations and guidelines that are not directly monitored by certification agencies. In those cases operators and CBs are expected to show due diligence to ensure that organic product is safe for human consumption.

1. Operators should make themselves familiar with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) regulations regarding water quality for washing of fruit and vegetables.
2. Irrigation water should be monitored to ensure it is not contaminated with prohibited substances or unacceptable levels of micro-organisms that are a concern for food safety.

### **8.2. Worker safety**

In greenhouses a CO<sub>2</sub> concentration ranging between 350 –1,000 ppm produces enhanced plant growth. Humans cannot tolerate levels above 5,000 ppm. CO<sub>2</sub> levels must be carefully monitored to assure worker safety.

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