



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Clarity Comes to Organic Labels in BC BC's Mandatory Organic Regulations Come into Effect**

**Vernon, BC (August 31, 2018)** — As of tomorrow, if you see the word 'organic' on a food product in BC, you'll know that it's certified, and that it's been grown or made according to BC's strict organic standards. Thanks to BC's Ministry of Agriculture, we are entering a new age of clarity for everyone purchasing and selling organic products.

On September 1, 2018, Bill 11, the Food and Agricultural Products Classification Act comes into effect. The new regulations mean that all products marketed as organic in BC must be certified organic. Until now, products sold in grocery stores or outside the province had to be certified to carry the organic label; the new regulations extend that to farmers' markets, farm gate sales, retail stores as of 2018.

This is an important step forward for BC's organic farmers, processors, and consumers. With the new regulations, BC consumers can be confident in their choice of organic as healthy for people and the planet.

"We have heard from many consumers over the years who have trouble figuring out what's going on in the marketplace. They're asking, 'Is that tomato at the farmers' market really organic, and how can I tell?' With this new regulation, consumers can choose products labeled organic, and know that they're getting certified organic. This will go a long way to clearing up what the word 'organic' means in British Columbia," says Jen Gamble, COABC Executive Director of Operations.

COABC would like to thank the BC Ministry of Agriculture for recognizing the importance of clearing up murkiness around organic labeling in BC. We are excited to continue working with the Ministry of Agriculture to build a strong organic sector that promotes consumer confidence and supports farmers and food producers.

COABC invites all producers to explore certification, and the wealth of support available to them in the certified organic community. COABC offers [online toolkits](#) to guide producers through the certification process. For more information and updates, please visit [COABC](#) and the [BC Ministry of Agriculture](#).

**About COABC:** The Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia (COABC) is an umbrella association representing organic certifying agencies in BC. The organization aims to provide consumer confidence in the organic product certification, assist producers to increase market share, and support regional development of organic food production, processing and marketing. COABC strives to ensure high quality organic products are produced in sufficient quantity and in a manner that nurtures healthy soil, biological diversity and ecological harmony.

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