



Pacific Agricultural Certification Society

**Quality System for ISO 65 Compliant  
Organic Certification**

This document is the,

**PACS Quality Manual Version 2**

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## Foreword

The Pacific Agricultural Certification Society was formed in 2001 in order to provide organic certification to an ISO (International Standards Organisation) Guide 65 compliant standard that will be acceptable to all jurisdictions. The PACS has also the mandate to provide certification services (organic or otherwise) as and where as determined by the membership.

As an accredited member of the Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia, the PACS subscribes to and administers the BC Certified Organic Program provided by the COABC. The BC Certified Organic Program is a system of accreditation (of certification bodies) and certification (of enterprises) provided under law in British Columbia. The COABC is the Administrator of the Organic Regulations following the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act of BC. The COABC is the accreditor of a number of certification bodies (of which the PACS is one) which in turn, are certifiers of individual farms, processors and handlers (enterprises) of organic products.

Standards and regulations for BC Certified Organic certification are determined by the members (accredited certification bodies) of the COABC. Accredited CB's must abide by these regulations and agree to be audited by the COABC Accreditation Board. Actions of the PACS are subject to regular audit by the COABC Accreditation Board as well as extraordinary review by Inspectors appointed by the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries.

## Organic Certification

Organic certification exists to provide consumers with assurance that claims made by sellers of organic products have substance in fact. Certification is a system of application (by producers, processors, and handlers), on site evaluation by independent third party verification officers, and assessment by a certification committee.

Organic certification refers to production units (farms, or portions of farms, or processing or handling facilities) not products. The status of certified organic thus refers to the enterprise, not the product produced. Certified Organic verifies that products were produced under conditions required by organic standards, but does not provide verification of individual products.

ISO Guide 65 compliant certification requires safeguards to ensure there is no possibility of influence or conflict of interest in the certification process. This means the person (or committee) making the final decision on certification cannot be a participant (customer) of the certification body. Nor can the person doing the inspection (verification officer) be involved in the decision on certification or have any interest in the enterprise they are inspecting.

## Definitions

1. **Accreditation** – Initial and ongoing recognition of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society by the COABC Audit Committee.
2. **Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act** – Act of the British Columbia legislature to which the COABC and the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society subscribe.
3. **Applicant** - A person or enterprise that has applied for organic certification under the BC Certified Organic Program provided by the PACS.
4. **Appeal** - A procedure whereby a certified enterprise or a member of the public requests a review of a certification decision. The appeal may also be filed against the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society.
5. **Audit Committee** – Committee designated by the COABC Accreditation Board for providing evaluation of COABC members.
6. **Auditor** – The official appointed by the BCMAFF to the COABC Accreditation Board. The Auditor will provide “on site” evaluations of the certification programs operated by COABC member bodies.
7. **BC Certified Organic Program** – Refers to the accreditation/certification program administered by the COABC under the Organic Regulations following the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act.
8. **PACS** – Pacific Agricultural Certification Society.
9. **BCMAFF** – British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.
10. **Board** – The Board of Directors of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society.
11. **CB** - Certification Body. May also be referred to as Certifying Body, Certifying Agency, Certification Agency, or Certification Agent.
12. **Certificate** – The document (issued by the PACS) that describes the organic status of an enterprise. May also be called the ‘Certificate of Conformity’.
13. **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.
14. **Certification Body** – The body that conducts certification.
15. **Certification Committee** – A group of persons delegated by the membership of the PACS the responsibility of assessing applications for certification.
16. **COABC** – The Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia. The administrator of the Organic Regulations pursuant to the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act (BC). A competent body for accreditation to ISO Guide 61 compliant standards.
17. **Accreditation Board** – An independent body appointed by the COABC to carry out accreditation according to the BC Certified Organic Program.
18. **Declaration of Interest** – A declaration of personal and/or commercial interests in the organic industry made by those involved in the certification process to enable determination of a party’s objectivity.
19. **Documents** – Forms, manuals, books and other written materials produced for, and in use by, the PACS.
20. **Enterprise** – A production or processing or handling business or establishment. For the purposes of this document, an enterprise is also a member (or applicant for membership) of the PACS.
21. **Evaluation** – Systematic assessment based on all relevant information obtained in order to make a decision. With reference to a certification decision this includes, but is not limited to, the inspection.
22. **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.
23. **Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA)**-The body (recognised by the COABC) responsible for training and upgrading of verification officers under the BC Certified Organic Program. Information regarding the IOIA is available at [www.ioia.com](http://www.ioia.com).
  24. **Inspection** - On-site visit to premises for the verification of compliance with standards.
  25. **Inspector** – A person appointed by the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, according to the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act.
  26. **Internal Audit** – A systematic periodic review and assessment of the objectives and performance of the certification program that is undertaken by the PACS itself.
  27. **Licensee** – The person (or enterprise) that is in possession of a valid certificate.
  28. **ISO** - International Organisation for Standardisation - An independent body (with worldwide membership) based in Geneva, Switzerland.
  29. **ISO 61 Compliant Accreditation** – Refers to the BC Certified Organic ISO 61 Compliant Accreditation Program, administered by the COABC Accreditation Board. This accreditation enables certification bodies to operate ISO 65 compliant certification programs if they so choose.
  30. **ISO 65 Compliant Certification** - Refers to the organic certification program operated by the PACS. The PACS' Quality System is compliant (equivalent) to the ISO Guide 65 General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems.
  31. **Observation of Certified Operators** – May be called “surveillance.” The measures taken to provide ongoing monitoring of an operator’s compliance with standards and certification requirements.
  32. **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. For the purposes of this document, operator shall also mean a member of the PACS. In general, an operator describes a person; an enterprise describes an entity.
  33. **Production Unit**- A portion of an enterprise that produces an agricultural product under a specific management plan.
  34. **Quality System** – Documented procedures that are established, implemented, and periodically audited to assure that production, handling, management, certification, and other systems meet specified requirements and outcomes by following standardised protocols.
  35. **Records** – Forms, journals, reports and minutes which have been completed or created for specific purposes. Uncompleted forms are documents; completed forms are records.
  36. **Regulation** – Organic Regulations following the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act (BC).
  37. **Society** – The Pacific Agricultural Certification Society.
  38. **Standards** – Organic production, processing or handling standards. The standards in use by the PACS are the Organic Management Standards issued by the COABC.
  39. **Third Party** – A person or entity that is recognised as being independent of the parties involved as concerns the issue in question.
  40. **Verification Officer** - Inspector for evaluating certification criteria of individual operators.
  41. **VO** – Verification Officer.

## 1. Quality System

The Quality System for the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society consists of the **PACS Quality Manual** and the BC Certified Organic Management Standards, as well as related certification documents detailed in the Document List. The Quality System is the program by which the PACS will maintain an effective and credible internal structure. The PACS Quality Manual describes the Quality System of the association. This manual is for use by directors, management, and staff of the association and to provide information about the Society to interested members of the public.

In order to reduce costs for publication and reduce waste from duplication of information, the **PACS Quality Manual** contains all the information that would be found in an Administrative Procedure Manual and a Policy Manual. As the organisation grows, it may become necessary to develop 'stand-alone' Policy and Administrative Procedure Manuals.

### 1.1. Authority for the Quality System

The president of the PACS shall be the person responsible for ensuring the implementation and maintenance of this quality system. The president shall report to the Board on all matters of review and improvements in the Quality System.

### 1.2. Policy Objectives of the Quality System

The purpose of the PACS is to provide BC Certified Organic ISO 65 certification to its members and to provide certification services to organisations as requested by the membership. In order to provide a competent service to clients, the following principles must be maintained:

1. Confidentiality – where requested by clients, approved by operational directives and allowed by law
2. Transparency – disclosure of all conflicts and potential conflicts of interest – program must be available for assessment by the public
3. Third party – Certification evaluations are not subject to influence – decisions on certification are taken by persons different from those who carried out the evaluation (inspection)

All Board and committee members and personnel shall subscribe to these principles and all evaluations, internal audits, and management reviews shall use them as reference objectives.

## 2. General Provisions

The Pacific Agricultural Certification Society is an incorporated Society in the province of British Columbia, Canada. The Board of Directors of PACS; see appendix. The purposes of the Society are:

1. To represent the members of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society in matters relating to the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act of British Columbia as administered by the Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia.
2. To provide public information activities with respect to organic agriculture.
3. To provide certification services to organisations as requested by the membership of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society.

4. To be responsible for incidental matters related to the above-referenced activities.

## **2.1. No Restrictions to Program**

Services of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society are provided without bias toward race, colour religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. Services are available without regard to membership in any organisation, and are not contingent upon the number of certificates issued. Services of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society are available to all applicants whose activities fall within the scope of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society's mandate as described in the "purposes" above.

## **2.2. Statement on Genetic Engineering**

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. Products of genetic engineering (Genetically modified organisms – GMO's) are prohibited for use in the BC Certified Organic Program.

## **2.3. Scope of Certification**

### **2.3.1. Certification Standards**

The Pacific Agricultural Certification Society is accredited by the COABC to provide organic certification according to regulations under the BC Certified Organic Program. The rules and management standards governing the organic certification provided by the Society shall be those provided by the Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia under the Organic Regulations pursuant to the *Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act* (BC) and amended from time to time.

### **2.3.2. Geographic Scope**

The PACS organic certification program shall in general, confine its activities to the province of British Columbia but may provide certification to other regions of Canada if requested by the membership.

### **2.3.3. Products and Processes**

The PACS will provide certification for agricultural processes according to regulations provided by the BC certified Organic Program. The organic certification applies to specific plots of land, production units, or handling/processing facilities, not to the farm, farmer, processor, or handler. The BC Certified Organic certification refers to the process of production, not to the actual product.

## **2.4. References**

1. The Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act of British Columbia in force and amended from time to time – Queens Printer, BC.
2. Organic Agricultural Products Certification Regulations – BC Reg. 200/93 O.C. 804/93 – Queens Printer, BC.



3. British Columbia Certified Organic Production Operation Policies and Management Standards, Version 4 – Published by COABC #8 A 100 Kalamalka Lk. Rd. Vernon, BC V1T 9G1
4. ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) Guide 65 “General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems” – ISO/ISE Case postale 56 CH-1211 Geneva, Switzerland.

## **2.5. Changes to the Certification Program**

- 2.5.1. Changes to the BC Certified Organic Program are the responsibility of the COABC. The PACS has input into proposed changes through membership (via the COABC representative on the COABC Board) in the COABC.
- 2.5.2. The PACS may propose changes to the BC Certified Organic Program through its representative on the COABC Board. Members of the PACS may propose changes through the PACS Board.
- 2.5.3. Proposed changes to the BC Certified Organic Program will be circulated to the membership of the PACS for comment. It is the responsibility of the PACS Board to ensure proposed changes are circulated. It is the responsibility of PACS members to peruse proposed changes.
- 2.5.4. The PACS shall verify (during the next scheduled evaluation) that operators make the necessary adjustments to their own enterprises (with respect to BC Certified Organic Program changes). The Administrator and the Certification Committee Chair shall be responsible to ensure this verification is accomplished. The Certification Committee will allow a reasonable period for implementation of such changes.

## **3. Organisation**

### **3.1. Membership**

- 3.1.1. The membership of the Society is the persons or enterprises, which become members for the purposes of acquiring the services of the Society.
- 3.1.2. A person (or enterprise) may apply in writing to become a member of the Society, and upon acceptance by the Board, becomes a member.
- 3.1.3. Membership in the Society is open to all applicants whose activities fall within the declared field of operation of the PACS. There will be no undue financial or other conditions for membership. Membership shall not be conditional upon the size of the Society or membership of any association or group, nor shall certification be conditional upon the number of certificates already issued.
- 3.1.4. All members are in good standing except a member who has failed to pay his or her current annual membership fee, or any other subscription or debt due and owing by the member to the society, and the member is not in good standing as long as the debt remains unpaid.

- 3.1.5. A person ceases to be a member of the society:
- By delivering his or her resignation in writing to the secretary of the society or by mailing or delivering it to the address of the PACS.
  - On his or her death, or in the case of an organisation, on dissolution.
  - On being expelled, or;
  - On having been a member not in good standing for twelve consecutive months.
- 3.1.6. The fees for membership will be determined by the Board and provided to the membership with Initial or Renewal Applications for Certification.
- 3.1.7. The fees for certification will be based upon the cost of providing these services and will be determined by the membership (at the Annual General meeting) and provided to applicants with Initial and Renewal Applications for Certification.
- 3.1.8. Certification fees shall be publicly available (posted on website) and will include all costs for certification, including incidental costs such as preparing export certificates and other matters.
- 3.1.9. The PACS may charge late filing fees. Members must be informed of the (reasonable) due date for filing at the time they receive renewal packets in order for late filing fees to be assessed.

## 3.2. Directors

### 3.2.1. Election and Terms of Office

Directors are elected at the PACS Annual General Meeting (AGM). Directors are elected for two-year staggered terms. Eight Directors will be elected - the Board will form a Nomination Committee before every AGM and the Nomination Committee will endeavour to recruit candidates representing all regions of the Province.

### 3.2.2. Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The Board will always act in the best interest of the Association and in performing its duties will exercise the care and skill of a reasonably prudent person. Individual directors are expected to:

Attend regular board meetings and special board meeting when called:

1. **Actively participate in Board discussions;**
2. Read and understand all bulletins and messages transmitted by post, fax or electronic mail;
3. Stay informed on the affairs of the Association in order to exercise good judgement in making Board decisions;
4. Voice their opinions but support Board decisions once they are made;
5. Always act in the best interest of the Association as a whole rather than personal or factional interests;
6. Maintain the confidentiality of *in camera* Board discussions.

The Board has the responsibility for the delegation of authority to individuals (i.e. Administrator) and committees (i.e. Certification Committee) as required, to undertake defined activities on its behalf.

### 3.2.3. Duties of the Board of Directors

The Board is responsible for the direction of the association and for the fulfilling of the purposes outlined in the Constitution and By-laws. It carries out this responsibility in a variety of ways, including:

1. Budgeting and financial management of the certification program. The budget and fee schedule must be prepared annually for the General Meeting and ratified by the membership before the end of the fiscal year.
2. Hiring the administration staff of the certification program.
3. Overseeing the activities of the certification program's committees and ensuring timely decisions on all certification matters.
4. Interacting with the Certification Committee to assist with development of proposals for managing the PACS certification program and changes to the BC Certified Organic Standards.
5. Overseeing the production and distribution of certification packets and directories.

### 3.2.4. Board Design

1. There is a minimum of 8 directors on the Board of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society.
2. Directors are elected by the membership at the annual general meeting.
3. The directors will elect the executive and required committees at the first Board meeting following the AGM. The directors will elect a chair (president), vice-president, secretary, and treasurer from among their number. The president will chair all meetings of the directors.
4. The directors will elect COABC Representatives (COABC Directors) from among their number and according to the criteria provided by the COABC (one COAB rep. for every 50 PACS members - in increments of 50).
5. The directors will elect a COABC Standards Committee Representative from among their number. The directors may choose to appoint some other person to the post of COABC Standards Committee Representative.
6. Meetings of the directors will follow the PACS Rules of Order (provided in Appendix) and those established by the Constitution of the Society.
7. **The president** must preside at all meetings of the society and of the directors. The president is the chief executive officer of the society and shall supervise the other officers in the execution of their duties. The President shall:
  - Have ultimate responsibility for quality control within the PACS
  - Ensure internal audits take place at the prescribed intervals
  - Ensure results of internal audits are made known to all that may be affected by them
  - Ensure Management Reviews are instituted at intervals described in the Quality Manual
  - Ensure changes to PACS operations initiated by the Board are documented and enacted
  - Ensure that all other board members, committee members and personnel are aware of their personal responsibility with regards to quality control
  - Arrange the affairs of the Society so that applications, inspections and certifications are running continuously, rather than building up at certain times of the year
7. **The Vice-president** shall:
  - Carry out the duties of the President in the absence of the President.

- When requested, assist the President in the execution of his or her duties
  - The Vice-president is responsible to the President and the Board of directors
8. **The secretary** must do the following:
- conduct the correspondence of the society;
  - issue notices of meetings of the society and directors;
  - keep minutes of meetings of the society and directors;
  - have custody of all records and documents of the society except those required to be kept by the treasurer;
  - have custody of the common seal of the society
  - maintain the register of members;
  - Provide necessary member organic certification documents to the Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia for the purpose of audits required under the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act.
  - Work directly with the Administrator and the President to ensure that quality objectives regarding document and records control are instituted and maintained.
  - The Secretary shall report to the President and the Board
9. **The treasurer** is responsible for supervision of the financial affairs of the PACS and must:
- keep the financial records and books necessary to comply with the Society Act;
  - render financial statements to the directors, members and others when required;
  - prepare an annual budget
  - monitor the daily affairs of the organisation to ensure compliance with the budget
  - Work directly with the Administrator and the President to ensure that a competent bookkeeping and accounting system is enacted and maintained
  - Keep the Board informed of any events or issues which might affect the financial integrity of the Society
  - The Treasurer will report to the President and to the Board.
10. Duties of the **COABC Representative**
- This person is responsible to attend all meetings of the COABC Board and to represent the interests of the Society to the COABC Board. The COABC Representative will report to the executive and the President of the Society. The COABC Representative will also hold a position on the Board.

### 3.3. Committees

- 3.3.1. Meetings of the PACS committees shall follow the criteria provided by the bylaws and Rules of Order of the society.
- 3.3.2. The Board will appoint a Certification Committee and a Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee and may appoint other committees as it sees fit.

### 3.3.3. Terms of Office of Committees

1. Certification Committee members will be appointed for one-year terms - they may be re-appointed, as the Board Desires. Care will be taken to ensure continuity in the make-up of the committee, when replacing committee members.
2. The Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be appointed annually, at the first Board meeting following the AGM.
3. The PACS Technical Committee shall be appointed annually, at the first Board meeting following the AGM.

## 3.4. Certification Committee

- 3.4.1. The Board will appoint a Certification Committee. The Certification Committee will be made up of a minimum of 3 members. No member of the Board of Directors may also sit on the Certification Committee.
- 3.4.2. The Certification Committee will have sole authority for determining the organic status (according to criteria provided by the BC Certified Organic Program) of applications for certification. This authority may not be delegated.
- 3.4.3. The Certification Committee may use an administrator (employed by the Board) to assist them in the certification process.
- 3.4.4. Members of the Certification Committee must observe conflict of interest provisions regarding the affairs of enterprises that are applicants or are certified by the PACS.
- 3.4.5. Certification Committee members shall have qualifications for their position. Such qualifications may include, but are not limited to:
  - Experience in and knowledge of the BC Certified Organic Program.
  - Membership in a related agricultural organisation.
  - Experience in quality control systems.
  - Experience in or knowledge of organic agriculture.
  - Participation on the Board of a non-profit society.
- 3.4.6. Certification Committee members may receive payment for their services from the Society. They may not receive any payment, in kind, or otherwise from members of the society.
- 3.4.7. Members of the Certification Committee shall be required to sign a Statement of Confidentiality with respect to the files of members of the society.
- 3.4.8. Certification Committee Contracts

The President will ensure that Certification Committee members have signed contracts indicating the responsibilities and remuneration of their positions. Certification Committee Contracts will be renewed annually.

### 3.4.9. Certification Committee Performance Appraisals

The President will ensure that CC Members receive performance appraisals at least annually. This may coincide with the annual internal audit process.

#### 3.4.10. Quality Objectives of the Certification Committee.

The Certification Committee performs the vital task of assessing inspection reports and evaluating conformity with standards. This procedure is the crux of the PACS and must be accomplished with the utmost regards to quality control. The Chair of the Certification Committee shall:

1. Ensure that the Certification Committee performs its duties as described in the Quality Manual
2. Supervise the performance of Certification Committee members and offer assistance when required
3. Request expert assistance whenever it is required – difficulties with interpreting standards may be brought before the COABC Board of Directors or appropriate COABC committee – private consultants may be employed with prior approval of the President
4. Continually assess the integrity of the certification program and make recommendations for improvements directly to the President
5. Respect all matters that require confidentiality and require other committee members to do the same – request only the required information from operators. For example, a VO can verify accounts from a handling operation of amount received and amount sent without giving actual numbers to the Certification Committee. Assurance from a competent VO is adequate.
6. Review Inspection Evaluation Forms and assess competency of contracted VO's – make recommendations to the President
7. When using electronic files, ensure that appropriate security is in place – ensure staff and Certification Committee members are properly trained in the use of electronic files
8. Work with the Administrator to arrange inspection scheduling to allow for use of more than one VO

3.4.11. The Certification Committee Chair is responsible to the President and the Board, but the affairs of the Certification Committee shall at all times remain confidential to as few numbers of persons as possible. This shall include Certification Committee members, VO's whose resources are relevant to the task at hand, the president (when required) and the administrator.

3.4.12. Members of the Certification Committee are listed in the Appendix.

### **3.5. Dispute Resolution Committee**

3.5.1. The Board will appoint a Chair for the Dispute Resolution Committee from among its number or from the membership or from the public. The Dispute Resolution Committee shall have the responsibility to rule on appeals of certification decisions according to criteria described elsewhere in this document (see Complaints and Appeals). The Dispute Resolution Committee shall also rule on complaints from the public.

3.5.2. The Dispute Resolution Committee shall convene only when there is a need for its services. The Chair of the committee shall appoint two PACS members or members of the public to serve on the Dispute Resolution Committee. PACS members so appointed shall be obligated to serve on the committee.

- 3.5.3. Members of the Dispute Resolution Committee (including the Chair) shall be entirely disinterested from the affairs of parties involved in a complaint or appeal. Members of the committee must sign a statement of confidentiality and disclosure and must stand down if there is any concern regarding a conflict of interest.

### **3.6. PACS Technical Committee**

The PACS Technical Committee is responsible to provide rulings on areas of concern in the application of the PACS Organic Certification Program. The Technical Committee cannot rule on an operations certification status, but can provide interpretation of the program to the Certification Committee or individual operators. Operators and Certification committee members should refer technical questions to the Administrator, who will request clarification from the Technical Committee. Such clarifications will become precedents for further enquiries.

### **3.7. Policy**

- 3.7.1. The Board shall determine policy of the society arising from recommendations from the general membership, or in response to issues, which arise from time to time.
- 3.7.2. Policy decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of board meetings, which shall be made available to the general membership.
- 3.7.3. The president shall be responsible for ensuring implementation of policy changes and of ensuring that those policy decisions are reflected in this document.

## **4. Certification Process**

### **4.1. Certification Decision**

The Certification Committee has overall responsibility for all certification decisions. In the discharge of its duties, the committee may require the Administrator to provide assistance and to issue Certificates based upon documented criteria, but the Certification Committee and its chair must continually oversee the certification process.

### **4.2. Certification Standards**

- 4.2.1. The PACS shall adhere to the standards in force of the BC Certified Organic Program, and amended from time to time. These standards are available from the COABC, and current standards are posted on the COABC website at [www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca](http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca)
- 4.2.2. Members will receive a copy of the BC Certified Organic Management Standards upon joining the PACS and will receive amended versions as soon as practical.

### **4.3. Inspections**

- 4.3.1. Inspections will be provided by IOIA trained Verification Officers as required by the BC Certified Organic Program.
- 4.3.2. One inspection is required in each year. The Certification committee may require more inspections of specific enterprises as they see fit.

#### **4.4. Procedures for an enterprise to become certified:**

1. Applicant completes and submits an "Certification Registration" form along with required fees.
2. On the basis of the information received, the applicant is sent a detailed "Certification Packet"
3. The applicant completes and submits an "Initial Application for Certification (in duplicate)."
4. The PACS Administrator ensures the submitted forms have been accurately completed and files them in a secure manner.
5. If there are no abnormalities in the application, the administrator sends a copy of the completed application to the Certification Committee Chair.
6. If the submitted application has incomplete or inaccurate sections, the administrator will contact the applicant in order to ascertain the correct information for the application. If necessary, the administrator may consult with the President or the Chair of the Certification Committee to determine the best course of action:
  - requesting the enterprise hire a consultant to assist with the application
  - Charging the enterprise for extra time spent by the administrator to complete the application.
7. The administrator will then arrange to contract a Verification Officer for conducting the necessary organic inspection.
8. The administrator contacts the verification officer who best meets the criteria for the inspection:
  - familiarity with the type of enterprise
  - availability
  - proximity
9. The administrator arranges to have a copy of the application delivered to the verification officer.
10. The Verification Officer conducts the inspection and submits the inspection report in electronic and hard copy format to the PACS.
11. The administrator immediately copies the inspection report and forwards the copy to the enterprise in question. The enterprise then has 30 days from the receipt of the report to file objections or point out errors in the inspection report.
12. The administrator reviews the inspection report and the application to ensure all sections are completed. The administrator will consult with the chair of the certification committee regarding incomplete files and will act accordingly.
13. The administrator will send a copy of the entire inspection report to the Chair of the Certification Committee for review and decision.
14. The Certification Committee must review all inspection reports as required. This means when there are decisions to be made, the committee will meet weekly. Otherwise, at least once every month. (See sec. 3.1.3 Certification Committee Meetings). Upon receipt of the Inspection Report, the certification committee is expected to complete their review within one week.



15. The chair of the Certification Committee will inform the administrator of the results of Certification Committee meetings immediately. This will be in the form of a Certification Review Report.
16. The Certification Committee may decide:
  - a) The file is incomplete, and require the administrator to obtain the necessary information, either directly from the enterprise, or by authorising another inspection (such inspection need not be a physical inspection, but may be through telephone consultation).
  - b) To authorise certification with certain conditions. If such conditions require corrective measures on the part of the enterprise, a period for such measures must be stipulated and another inspection to verify measures taken must be made.
17. The administrator must notify the enterprise of the decision of the Certification Committee immediately. This notification shall be in the form of the Certification Review Report.
18. Once the Certification Committee has authorised, the Administrator may issue a certificate. This certificate may or may not have conditions attached to it.
19. This process must be repeated for Renewal Applications. However, if the Renewal Application is complete, the fees are paid, and there are no outstanding issues in the file from the previous certification, the Certificate may be issued before the inspection. In this instance, the Administrator must have authorisation from the Chair before issuing a certificate.
20. If the subsequent Renewal Inspection provides a basis for corrective measures on the part of the operator, or revocation of the Certificate, the Administrator will notify the Chair of the Certification Committee, who will act accordingly.

#### **4.5. Certification Committee Meetings**

- 4.5.1. The administrator will endeavour to supply the Certification Committee with electronic copies of documents whenever possible.
- 4.5.2. The Certification Committee will choose the most expedient method of meeting. This means the method requiring the least delay to the certification process, with the least cost to the organisation. In most cases this will mean telephone conferences, but can mean by way of electronic mail.
- 4.5.3. The chair of the Certification Committee will chair Certification Committee meetings, determine their times and frequency, and which will be the most expedient method of operation.
- 4.5.4. The Certification Committee may request experts to assist them in their task. Verification Officers may attend Certification Committee meetings, but may not take part in the decision-making process. Any person attending a Certification Committee meeting must be entirely disinterested from the affairs of the enterprises being reviewed.
- 4.5.5. The Certification Committee will review the summary of each application. Committee members may direct staff to resolve any questions or concerns before making the decision on each applicant's certification status. The Certification Committee decision may include conditions including a timeframe within which the applicant must make the needed corrections. The decision may require the applicant to notify PACS, in writing, of plans for corrective

measures and the period(s) within which these changes will be made. Such arrangements will generally require a second inspection to corroborate proposed changes. If the proposal is acceptable, the certification process continues. If not, discussion between PACS staff and the applicant continues until all issues are resolved.

- 4.5.6. In order to assist producers in achieving full compliance with PACS standards, the Certification Committee may direct staff to issue a Certificate when there are minor infractions of the standards. Infractions of the standards are considered "minor" only if they do not:
- Compromise health or safety of workers, or
  - Involve flagrant violation of BC Certified Organic Standards.
- 4.5.7. Typically, minor infractions result from shortcomings in record keeping. When sending the Certificate to an operation committing infractions such as these, the staff will include a letter explaining the infraction(s) and specifying the period (not to exceed one year) within which the matter must be resolved to avoid de-certification.

#### **4.6. Documents and Work Provided by Another Certification Body**

- 4.6.1. Operators who wish to transfer certification directly from another CB to the PACS must undertake to have all original documentation (the previous two years records) sent directly from the previous CB to the PACS office. The Administrator will review the material and make a summary document for the Certification Committee. The Certification Committee will determine the status of the enterprise in question according to equivalency criteria and the appropriateness of the previous certification. All fees must be paid; current year's inspections in place, and approval must be given from the chair of the Certification Committee before a Certificate may be issued.
- 4.6.2. For various reasons, the PACS may wish to contract certification services to another CB. In this case, the contracted CB must first be on the list of CB's that have been granted equivalency by the PACS. An agreement, which stipulates the terms and conditions for contracted services must be signed between the CB and the PACS, and the PACS must thereafter take full responsibility for the work performed by the contracted CB. When certification is performed in this manner, affected licensees must be informed of the process and must consent to it.

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

- 4.7.1. Certification begins on the date of approval by the Certification Committee. This date is indicated on the Certificate.
- 4.7.2. The Certificate is used by the enterprise for marketing purposes. It must be surrendered to the PACS if the enterprise no longer meets certification criteria for the BC Certified Organic Program.
- 4.7.3. The term of a Certificate is as indicated in Section 8 is twelve (12) months from the date of issue.

- 4.7.4. The certificate remains valid until a renewal certificate is issued. Provided a renewal application is received before the expiration of the certificate and all other policies and standards have been met, the Certificate will be renewed. If a renewal application is not received status ends on the expiration date (12 months from date of issue) and the operator must surrender their certificate.
- 4.7.5. Products that remain in inventory after the term of the certificate expires may be marketed under that certificate upon written permission from the PACS. Appropriate documentation and inspections consistent with the requirements for a Certificate are required, so long as the product remains in inventory.
- 4.7.6. The possession of a certificate, is not, by itself, a guarantee of certification. The PACS must issue a validation of the Certificate in each year.
- 4.7.7. When the PACS issues a notice of cancellation or revocation, the certificate is by that act, invalidated. The PACS will make this information publicly available.

#### 4.7.8. Extension of Certificate to Cover New Products

When a certified producer begins a new venture and wants to add items to the current year's certificate, the producer must contact the PACS office to request an "extension of certification". The Administrator first determines the extent of the changes to the production system needed to produce the new product (i.e. new fields, equipment, and agricultural inputs). If the changes to the system are minimal and are clearly within BC Certified Organic standards, an amended certificate is issued to the producer. If the changes are extensive or are not able to be easily described, an inspection of the new production system may be required before adding the product to the current certificate.

#### 4.7.9. Withdrawal of Certification Status

##### Voluntary Withdrawal

Operators must inform the PACS of the withdrawal from the certification program of any production unit or processing facility due to the use of a prohibited practice or material. If conditions exist for which the enterprise anticipates the use of prohibited practices or materials, the PACS strongly recommends consultation with the certification committee, close monitoring of the actions and the effects, and complete detailed documentation.

#### 4.7.10. Decertification

This designation is assigned to an enterprise that was certified but no longer meets the BC Certified Organic Program criteria and the certificate has been revoked. The decision to revoke a Certificate must be made by the Certification Committee and may be brought about by a number of circumstances:

- a) Complaint by the public and investigation by the Certification Committee.
- b) Information provided by government agencies.
- c) Issues arising from observation activities of the PACS.

In all cases, the decision to revoke a Certificate shall not be made without giving the enterprise in question a fair and expedient hearing and provision for appeal (See 3.2

Complaints and Appeals). Both the Certification and Dispute Resolution Committees will maintain strict confidentiality in the matter until a final decision is made. When the PACS issues a notice of Decertification, the society shall take whatever measures deemed practical to inform the public of such a change in the status of an enterprise.

#### **4.8. Violations of the Standards**

- 4.8.1. The PACS may receive complaints about suspected violations of its standards from consumers, verification officers, farmers, distributors, brokers, government officials, or any other interested party. Details about the suspected problem must be submitted in writing before the PACS will begin an investigation.
- 4.8.2. The president is responsible to pursue a preliminary investigation of such complaints. The president may have the administrator, or another director, act on his or her behalf. If the president finds adequate evidence that the violation has occurred, the administrator evaluates the extent of the violation of the Standards.
- 4.8.3. The Administrator, in consultation with the Certification Committee chairperson determines whether the violation is a minor or major violation of the Standards. At the Certification Committee chairperson's discretion, the Certification Committee may be called upon to help with this decision.
- 4.8.4. Minor Infractions. Typically, minor infractions result from shortcomings in record keeping. For substantiated minor infractions of the Standards, the Certification Committee chairperson sends a letter to the party to explain the infraction and to specify the time frame (not to exceed one year) within which corrective action must resolve the situation to avoid de-certification. Minor infractions must not:
  - Compromise health or safety of workers,
  - Involve flagrant violations of BC Certified Organic Standards.
- 4.8.5. Clear and serious violations of the BC Certified Organic Standards by a licensee will result in de-certification of part or all of the operation. Similarly, major violations of the standards by an enterprise requesting initial certification or re-certification will result in denial of certification of part or all of the operation. In such cases, the Certification Committee chairperson must present a detailed report to the Certification Committee to assist in their decision-making process.
- 4.8.6. Use of the term 'organic' by PACS Licensees

PACS licensees may only use the term "organic" to market products that are BC Certified Organic. Improper labelling or marketing will be considered a violation of the PACS certification program.

#### **4.9. Use of the term “British Columbia Certified Organic” and the Program Symbol**

- 4.9.1. Operators must be in possession of a Certificate in order to use the descriptive phrase, “British Columbia Certified Organic” and the Program Symbol. This means that the enterprise has complied with all regulations of the Pacific

Agricultural Certification Society and the BC Certified Organic Program. Regulations governing the use of the descriptive phrase the Program Symbol are included in Appendix.

#### **4.10. Certificate**

- 4.10.1. The Certificate shall be issued by the administrator, upon direction from the Chair of the Certification Committee. The certificate shall follow the format indicated by the BC Certified Organic Program in the BC Certified Organic Program Procedures Manual. The Certificate shall indicate the effective date and the date of expiration. The Certificate shall also indicate the products for which it is issued, such as:
1. For primary producers:  
Mixed vegetables - under one-hectare. For any specific crop grown in larger amounts than one hectare, the Certificate shall indicate the volume (in hectares) of production. Volumes may also be expressed in other means, such as kilograms of honey, for example, depending on practicality. Consideration must be given to the reason for providing production numbers – reconciling sales to production. For livestock, approximate numbers for that year. Increases in production during the year require an amended Certificate.
  2. Specific processed product - volumes need not be included but the description must be specific, including trade names, where appropriate.
  3. Handler operation - the products traded by the enterprise.

#### **4.11. Verification Officers**

- 4.11.1. The PACS will contract with approved Verification Officers in order to provide members with professional and disinterested inspection services and according to requirements of the BC Certified Organic Program. The PACS will take full responsibility for work provided by contracted VO's.
- 4.11.2. Verification Officers employed by the PACS must be members in good standing of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association. A list of approved VO's (inspectors) is available at the IOIA website [www.IOIA.com](http://www.IOIA.com)
- 4.11.3. Verification Officers shall follow the "Code of Conduct" and "Code of Ethics" provided by the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (see Document List).
- 4.11.4. The PACS shall provide an agreement for use when contracting for the services of Verification Officers. Such an agreement shall have a confidentiality clause.
- 4.11.5. The Administrator is responsible for contracting with VO's according to criteria provided by the Board. Fees for VO services will be determined by the Board, but may need to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis for special projects. The President will supervise this process.
- 4.11.6. Verification Officers will agree to operate within the protocol described in the IOIA Inspection Manual.

#### 4.11.7. VO Evaluation

The annual Internal Review (audit) shall include a VO evaluation process. In general, the VO evaluation process will require an employee or contractor to survey approximately 20% of PACS operators to determine the level of service provided by the VO. The survey will provide information such as answers to following:

- 1) Was the VO prompt and efficient?
- 2) Was the VO courteous?
- 3) Did the VO have the necessary information and proper forms?
- 4) Did the VO have a thorough understanding of the PACS Organic Certification Program?
- 5) Did the VO have a thorough understanding of your type of enterprise?
- 6) Did the VO offer advice on matters relating to compliance with the program?
- 7) Did the VO disclose any information from inspections of other enterprises?
- 8) Did the VO spend the appropriate amount of time?
- 9) Are you satisfied with the Inspection Report?
- 10) Are you satisfied with the VO costs, including travel?
- 11) Further comments on competency and conduct of the VO?

#### 4.11.8. Competent VO List

Using the VO Evaluation process and the other information, the Administrator will develop a list of competent VOs for PACS certification. As the Society will use the services of many VO's, this list may take some years to develop.

## 5. Complaints and Appeals

### 5.1. Records of Complaints and Appeals

The Administrator shall keep records of all complaints and appeals. Confidentiality shall be maintained, as far as allowed by law and under provisions of accreditation by the COABC.

### 5.2. Public Complaints

- 5.2.1. The Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall have the responsibility to manage all complaints directed to the PACS.
- 5.2.2. Complaints from the public shall be handled immediately. In all cases, the complainant shall be given a written report of the actions of the Dispute Resolution Committee. The chair of the Committee will have the responsibility to ensure this report is given to the complainant. The Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall investigate all public complaints against members of the PACS and report their findings and decision to the Board.
- 5.2.3. The Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee may request the Administrator to assist in these matters.
- 5.2.4. The Dispute Resolution Committee must maintain confidentiality in all matters of public complaints; they may allow a member (enterprise) to know that a complaint has been lodged, but under no circumstances must the name of the complainant be made known to anyone but the committee members.
- 5.2.5. In cases of complaints of the public towards a member of the PACS, decisions of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be fair and reasonable. The

committee must allow the operator adequate rebuttal to the complaint and give them the opportunity to make formal or informal amends to the complainant.

- 5.2.6. In the event, the Dispute Resolution Committee finds in favour of the complainant, the committee shall make recommendations to the Board. The Board will be obliged to carry out such recommendations.
- 5.2.7. In the case of fraudulent use of the phrase, "British Columbia Certified Organic," or the Program Symbol, the PACS shall have recourse to the Offence and Penalty provisions of the British Columbia Certified Organic Program.
- 5.2.8. In the case of misrepresentation, the PACS may require the operator to comply with directives, decertify the enterprise, or report the Offence to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

### **5.3. Dispute Resolution Process**

- 5.3.1. The PACS dispute resolution process is designed to provide any enterprise participating in the PACS certification with the opportunity to have a decision made by the PACS Certification Committee (or any other committee) reconsidered when the operator believes the decision was not made in accordance with the applicable standards and/or procedures. The dispute resolution process encourages detailed discussions of the case and endeavors to reach a decision at the conclusion of the process that is both equitable and clearly defensible. The dispute resolution process is considered to be a friendly alternative to the appeal process.
- 5.3.2. The Dispute Resolution Committee is to hear and decide on disputes concerning an operation's certification or any other matter of dispute between the PACS and organic operators.
- 5.3.3. Dispute Resolution proceedings may be initiated by a certification applicant's or a certified operator's dispute of a ruling related to her/his certification. Operators wishing to initiate the Dispute Resolution Process shall notify the PACS in writing, providing sufficient information to allow a thorough understanding of the dispute by members of the Dispute Resolution Committee.
- 5.3.4. Upon request of an organic operator, the PACS Administrator will prepare a package of relevant material for submission to the Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee. The Chair will then determine a date for the Dispute Resolution Process. The Dispute Resolution Process will take place within at least 90 days from receipt of the written request from the organic operator, though a more timely response is preferable.
- 5.3.5. The organic operator (initiator of the Dispute Resolution Process) will receive notification of the Dispute Resolution meeting and must attend - the Dispute Resolution Process may not place without the presence of the initiator.

- 5.3.6. The Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall decide the most expedient method of meeting; this may include a teleconference or electronic mail. The Administrator (or an appointed secretary from the committee members) shall record minutes and correspondence of the dispute resolution committee. The minutes of the meeting shall be confidential, but the final decision of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be in the public record.
- 5.3.7. The chair shall endeavour to direct the meeting to avoid confrontation and to allow for a friendly resolution of the dispute in question. The goal of the process is to reach a consensus decision that is amenable to all parties involved in the dispute. The committee members and the initiator are encouraged to work together to discover or create a solution to the dispute in order to avoid the confrontational (and resultant majority decision) process provided by the appeal provisions. The initiator should be reminded that the Dispute Resolution Process allows them to take part in decision-making, while the appeal process only allows them to present their case. The Dispute Resolution Committee may decide to request assistance from (or refer the matter to) the:
- Standards Review Committee of the COABC
  - PACS Technical Committee
  - PACS Board of Directors
  - PACS President
  - The COABC Board of Directors
- 5.3.8. Once a consensus decision is reached, the administrator (or secretary) shall provide the resulting decision in writing to the PACS Certification Committee, the initiator of the Dispute Resolution Process, and the PACS Board of Directors. The decision shall be recorded as precedence for further determinations of the Dispute Resolution Committee.
- 5.3.9. If a consensus decision cannot be reached, the process is terminated and the initiator has the right of the appeal provisions described in the PACS Quality Manual.

#### **5.4. Appeals by a Member to the PACS**

- 5.4.1. If an operator wishes to make an appeal of their certification status decision, the appeal must be made in writing (to the administrator) and must be received by the PACS within 30 days of receipt by the enterprise of the decision of the Certification Committee. The letter must state the reasons and rationale for the appeal, such as:
- Relevant background information on the case;
  - The Certification Committee's actions and ruling on the case;
  - Reason's to maintain or change the Certification Committee's position;
  - Evidence to support the appellants assertions; and
  - A suggestion to resolve the problem.
- 5.4.2. The Administrator will then provide both the Certification Committee and the Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee with the information received.



- 5.4.3. The Administrator will provide assistance to the parties in order to expedite the formation of the Dispute Resolution Committee. There should be no delay to this process.
- 5.4.4. The Administrator must then assemble the necessary documents, including applications and inspection reports of the enterprise in question. This material (along with the letter from the appellant) must be circulated to the Dispute Resolution Committee within 7 working days of the formation of the Committee.

## **5.5. Meetings of the Dispute Resolution Committee**

The chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall determine the most expedient method of meeting and shall call the meeting immediately. The chair may request the assistance (and presence) of the administrator, and the relevant verification officer, at the chair's discretion. The appellant must be notified of the time and place (by the Administrator) and has the right to attend their appeal hearing along with the chair of the Certification Committee. Decisions of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be directed, in writing, to the appellant immediately. Decisions of the Dispute Resolution Committee are in the public record, but proceedings of hearings are confidential, to protect the proprietary information discussed during the hearing.

## **5.6. Appeals to the Board of Directors**

- 5.6.1. Operators have the right to appeal decisions of the Dispute Resolution Committee to the Board of Directors of the PACS. Such actions must be initiated by notice, in writing, received in the office of the PACS within 90 days of receipt by the enterprise, of the decision of the Dispute Resolution Committee. Such a letter must contain all the elements listed in 5.3.1 (above).
- 5.6.2. The administrator will make all relevant documents available to the Board of Directors and the president will call a meeting of the Board for the hearing of the appeal immediately. In no case will such a meeting take place more than 30 days from receipt of the letter of appeal. The administrator shall ensure that both Board members and the appellant have adequate information of the time and place of the hearing.
- 5.6.3. The president shall chair the hearing and the appellant has the right to attend. Decisions of the Board shall be given to the appellant, in writing, as soon as practical. Decisions of Board are in the public record, but proceedings of hearings are confidential, to protect the proprietary information discussed during the hearing.

## **5.7. Appeals to the General Membership**

- 5.7.1. Operators have the further right of appeal to the general membership of the PACS. Such appeals can only be initiated after both appeals to the Dispute Resolution Committee and the Board has been exhausted.
- 5.7.2. Operators must initiate such appeals within 90 days from receipt of the decision of the Board hearing. Appeals to the general membership shall be in writing and shall contain all the information required in 5.3.1.
- 5.7.3. Upon receipt of such request, the president will arrange for a notice of an extraordinary general meeting to be delivered to the membership. The rules stipulated in the constitution of the PACS shall govern the procedure at such a hearing. The secretary shall take minutes, but proprietary information shall be kept confidential. The hearing will take place within a reasonable length of time but may be extended until the next Annual General Meeting.
- 5.7.4. The decision of the general membership shall be final and the member shall have no other right of appeal within the scope of operations of the PACS.

## **6. Liability of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society**

### **6.1. Immunity under the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act**

As an accredited member of the Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia, the PACS has the immunity protection provided by the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act.

### **6.2. COABC Liability Insurance**

The president of the PACS will arrange for liability insurance of the society's employees, directors, and contractors under the umbrella coverage provided through the COABC to its members. Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the president to ensure such coverage is kept in force.

## **7. Finances of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society**

### **7.1. Fees for Services**

The finances of the PACS shall be entirely supported by fees charged for the services of the society.

### **7.2. Budget**

The treasurer will prepare a budget prior to each Annual General Meeting or as requested by the Board. The general membership will revise and approve the budget at the AGM and set fees for the coming year. Such fees shall be such the PACS may operate professionally and without undue constraint of funds.

## **8. Recruitment, Training and Monitoring of Personnel**

The staff of the PACS, whether employees or contract workers, are the general voice of the organisation. The PACS' credibility is dependent on the integrity and loyalty of the people it employs. The management of the society will place primary importance upon recruitment, selection, training, and monitoring of personnel.

### **8.1. Recruitment**

- 8.1.1. The executive of the PACS is responsible for ensuring the society is able to attract competent staff. When a decision has been made to hire additional employees, the president will arrange for strategic advertising so that all potential applicants will have access to this information. Particular importance will be paid to media that are appropriate to the industry, i.e. industry magazines and email lists. The PACS will offer salaries that are in line with the industry norms. The executive will strive to attract at least ten applications for each position.
- 8.1.2. The executive will determine a short list (at least 3 applicants) and conduct interviews as soon as practical after the closing dates for applications. Interviews will be conducted with appropriate formality and with suitable respect for the applicants. The executive will make their decision that day, if possible, and notify the applicants the next day, or as soon as practical. The applications of unsuccessful applicants will be retained in a confidential file, so they may be notified of future postings.

### **8.2. Selection**

- 8.2.1. The criteria for selecting personnel will be those skills and demeanour that may be relevant to the position. Careful attention should be paid to the image the employees of the PACS will display to members and the public at large. A partial list of selection criteria:
- Previous experience in the industry
  - Proven competency in skills required by the position
  - Ability to work independently while being part of a team
  - Ability to work with the public in a pleasant manner
  - Previous experience working with or for non-profit societies
  - Previous experience in positions involving quality control

### **8.3. Qualifications**

- 8.3.1. Personnel employed (or volunteers) by the PACS shall have qualifications for their positions. Such qualifications shall be consistent with the duties of the position.
- 8.3.2. Information on the qualifications and subsequent training of all personnel shall be kept in personnel files. Such files shall also show:
1. Name and address
  2. Position held
  3. Educational qualification and professional status

4. Experience and training in each field of the PACS' activities
  5. Date of the most recent updating of records
  6. A performance appraisal
- 8.3.3. Personnel files shall be kept confidential and for review only by the management and internal and external audit control persons.

#### **8.4. Personnel Contracts**

- 8.4.1. Personnel shall be required to sign a contract or other document by which they commit themselves to confidentiality and independence from commercial and other interest.
- 8.4.2. Personnel contracts shall require personnel to declare any prior or present association with participants of the services of the PACS.

#### **8.5. Training**

- 8.5.1. It is the responsibility of the executive to ensure that PACS personnel are provided with the training required for their position. The Management Review process will identify personnel training options and make recommendations to the President. An allowance for personnel training will be allocated in yearly budgets.

#### **8.6. Monitoring**

- 8.6.1. Staff-management relations are not improved by surreptitious monitoring of personnel. PACS staff shall be allowed to work independently under the supervision of those who they report to.
- 8.6.2. Periodic staff evaluations shall be the responsibility of the management of the PACS. Staff shall be notified of impending evaluations and shall be required to participate in their own performance review. A subsequent Evaluation Report shall be made available to the staff concerned but shall remain confidential information.
- 8.6.3. Staff evaluations will take place through the Internal Audit process as described in the Operations Manual, or more frequently, as the Executive see fit.

#### **8.7. Management-Personnel Relations**

- 8.7.1. It is the policy of the PACS that the basis for a safe and comfortable working climate is the maintenance of a high level of respect between all persons involved in the organisation. This principle applies to customers, members, volunteers, employees, contractors, management and staff equally. No person, who is involved with the Society, shall be required to work in conditions which are dangerous, uncomfortable or threatening. Management will assist personnel to develop a workplace that meets everyone's needs. For one person, this may mean different lighting, for another, different furniture

arrangement. In all cases, the feelings of staff shall be respected and as far as possible, acted upon.

### **8.8. Administrator**

The PACS will hire an administrator to carry out the day-to-day duties of the society. The executive of the PACS will be responsible for selecting and hiring the administrator. The Administrator shall carry out duties as directed by the President.

## **9. Contracting Services**

The Board may contract services (such as inspections) as they see fit. Contractors must be competent for the services they are expected to provide. The Board should make every effort to provide an open competition for contractor services. Contractors must sign an agreement with the society detailing the expectations of each party to the contract. Such an agreement shall have a confidentiality clause and a declaration of any prior and present relationship between the contractor and participants of the services of the PACS.

## **10. Equivalency of Certification Programs**

### **10.1. Reciprocity**

- 10.1.1. Acceptance of a certification done by another certification program requires agreements for growers who ship product across provincial borders or to international markets, and for organic processors and handlers who work with product from many different sources. PACS will accept certifications from other third party certification organisations whose standards are deemed to be equivalent to those of the BC Certified Organic Program.
- 10.1.2. The Board will determine the equivalency of other third party certification programs when requested by operators who require the acceptance of such programs. The Board may contract for such services and invoice the operator for all costs involved. The operator must agree to this arrangement beforehand.
- 10.1.3. The administrator will keep a list of currently recognised certification programs. This information will be made publicly available.

## **11. Internal Audits and Management Review**

### **11.1. Responsibility for Internal Audits**

The president shall be responsible that an internal audit process is put in place and that audits are initiated periodically. Periodically shall mean at least annually, if not more frequent.

### **11.2. Internal Audit Process**

- 11.2.1. An Internal Audit shall be a review of the entire procedures of the PACS. This will include the performance and activities of all personnel, including

personnel on contract. The purpose of such a review shall be to ensure that the Quality System is performing effectively. Personnel affected by the audit shall be informed of the outcome of the audit.

11.2.2. Records of all Internal Audit processes shall be retained by the PACS for subsequent inspection by COABC Accreditation Board Auditors.

11.2.3. An Internal Audit shall, in general, be carried out in the following manner:

The president will inform all personnel and directors, and anyone else affected by the process, that an audit will take place.

1. The president may appoint a member of the board, or employ a private contractor to carry out the internal audit process. The president may also carry out the audit by himself/herself.
2. The president will ensure the VO Evaluation process (see Verification Officers) takes place concurrent with the Internal Audit.
3. The audit shall be undertaken systematically, beginning with the Application for Membership in the PACS and continuing through the entire process of certification of an entity.
4. All documents shall be examined; the auditor will complete all forms, as if the process of certification was taking place.
5. In the application of the Internal Audit, strict attention must be paid to quality, efficiency, and consumer acceptance of the PACS certification program. The auditor must continually examine the program for its accessibility, objectivity, impartiality, confidentiality, and quality assurance. The certification program must be as strict as possible, while still being accessible to the public.
6. Operations of the Board of Directors and all committees must be examined for efficiency, confidentiality, and quality. Attention must be paid to minutes of committee meetings. Decisions taken must be coupled with the person responsible for the action. The auditor will track decisions of committees to ensure actions decided upon have been undertaken by the person named responsible.
7. Performance of personnel shall be examined in the process. Both paid and volunteer personnel shall receive the same evaluation without prejudice.
8. The complaints and appeals process will also be subject to imitation process and scrutiny.
9. The auditor will make a record of all his or her actions in the process, complete with recommendations for improvement of the system.
10. The executive will review the auditor's record and recommendations and create a summary of the examination and proposed improvements. This summary shall be available to all members of the PACS and must be approved by the Board.
11. The president shall be responsible to carry out all corrective action approved by the Board and will report the results of such actions at the next Board meeting.

### **11.3. Management Review**

11.3.1. The Executive of the PACS shall be responsible to carry out a complete management review of the society concurrent with the periodic Internal Audit.

11.3.2. The object of the Management Review is to assess the Quality System of the PACS (with respect to the society's management team) to ensure its

continuing suitability and effectiveness to fulfil the purposes (as described in 1. General Provisions) of the society.

11.3.3. A Management Review shall consist of at least the following elements:

1. Assessment of the personnel management of the PACS.
2. Assessment of the finances and financial control of the society.
3. Assessment of the customer relations and marketing aspects of the PACS.
4. Assessment and review of the Complaints and Appeals provisions.
5. Assessment of the operations of the Board of Directors and its committees.

11.3.4. The executive shall assess the outcomes from the Management Review and require the President to institute agreed program improvements to management activities.

11.3.5. Records of all Management Reviews shall be kept for subsequent inspection and evaluation of COABC Auditors.

## **11.4. Customer Satisfaction Survey**

11.4.1. Yearly Survey

The president will be responsible to ensure that a comprehensive customer satisfaction survey is completed, at least once per year. This survey may be included as part of the annual internal audit process. The president, in consultation with the executive, will determine the best method of accomplishing this survey.

11.4.2. VO Performance Survey

The customer satisfaction survey will include questions relating to the performance of Verification Officers during inspections of PACS operations. This information will be used to assess the competency of contracted VOs.

## **12. Record and Document control**

### **12.1. Responsibility for a Record and Document Control Program**

The president shall be responsible to institute a record and document control program and to ensure its continued efficiency through the internal audit process.

### **12.2. Document Control**

12.2.1. The president may appoint a board member, or general member of the society, or a qualified member of the public, or employ a contractor, or direct the administrator to institute a document control program.

12.2.2. The document control program shall have as its objective, the continued functionality, relevance, security, and economical operation of all documents used in the PACS certification program.

12.2.3. The document control program shall have at a minimum a system in place to:

1. Track the progressive changes to documents – ensure only current documents are in use.
  2. Maintenance of security measures and back-up control so that documents can be replaced in case of fire or theft.
  3. Periodic review (may be through internal audit process) to ensure functionality and relevance of all documents available in the current system.
  4. Whenever possible, use electronic documents, and institute a process of replacing paper documents with electronic ones.
- 12.2.4. The President will instruct the Administrator to institute the Document Control Program. The Administrator will:
- Institute a competent filing system
  - Arrange to place on the footer of all documents the following information:
    1. The acronym, "PACS" and the name of the document;
    2. The created date, or in the case of revisions:
    3. The revision date plus, "This document replaces ..." (for subsequent revisions);
  - Arrange to have a master copy of all documents filed in a secure manner in the office of the PACS
  - Have an index listing the names of all current documents used by the PACS available for review by Board and personal of the PACS
  - Arrange to have electronic versions of all documents available whenever required for the operations of the PACS
  - Arrange to have electronic versions of all PACS documents stored in a remote location to ensure their recovery in the case of fire or theft.

### **12.3. Record Control**

- 12.3.1. The primary purpose of the Record Control Program shall be the continued security of the records of the PACS certification program.
- 12.3.2. The president will institute a record control program, or may appoint some other person as in 12.2.1.
- 12.3.3. The minimum requirements of a record control program shall be:
- Security measures to protect records from fire and theft.
  - Back-up control for replacement of essential records.
  - Confidentiality control to protect proprietary and sensitive information as much as possible within legal boundaries.
  - Retention of records specific to the PACS Certification Program for inspection by government appointed inspectors under the Regulations, or
  - COABC Auditors. Such records shall be kept for a period of seven years, or as further required by law.
- 12.3.4. The President will instruct the Administrator to institute a Record Control Program. The primary aims of the Record Control Program are to safeguard the physical integrity and confidentiality of the records of the PACS. The Administrator will:



- With consultation of the President, arrange a method of identifying confidential records so that they are differentiated from records that are not confidential. Confidential records are to be stamped with the words, "Confidential to Certification Committee Only" (or to Dispute Resolution Committee, or to Board of Directors, as the case may be) conspicuously on the cover page.
- Arrange to store confidential records in secure (locked) filing cabinets in the PACS office. Electronic records must have at least one 'hard copy' printed. Confidential electronic records must be password protected.
- All records must be made available to COABC Auditors or to inspectors from the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.
- Arrange to store all records in a secure fashion for a minimum of seven years
- Arrange to make electronic versions of all records of the PACS
- Arrange to have back-up copies of electronic versions of all PACS records stored in a remote location for recovery in the case of fire or theft. Such back-up copies should be made periodically, depending on the number of new records that accumulate.

## **13. Observation of Certified Operators**

### **13.1. Process**

Observation of certified operators is differentiated from initial inspection and evaluation in that observation requires the continued monitoring of certified enterprises. Once the PACS has certified an enterprise, that enterprise will be subject to an annual certification process. The annual certification process will follow procedures established by the BC Certified Organic Program and shall include at least the following elements:

1. Renewal Application for Certification. The certified operator must apply annually for re-certification. Changes in process, structure, and certified product must be noted in the Renewal Application and must be inspected and reported upon by the Verification Officer.
2. Inspection by Verification Officer
3. Evaluation by Certification Committee
4. Issuance of a new Certificate.

## **14. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest**

The President will be responsible to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the PACS certification program. Adequate arrangements must be put in place to protect the confidentiality of proprietary information. Such safeguards will be:

1. All files will be marked according to their confidentiality.
2. Personnel will be instructed to recognise and respect the confidential nature of the PACS certification program.
3. All personnel: contract workers, employees or volunteers, will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
4. Proprietary information will be supplied to the Certification Committee only when necessary for decision-making purposes. In most cases, it is appropriate for the Verification Officer to view proprietary information (i.e. sales and purchasing

invoices) and make a summary of his or her conclusions rather than provide copies of actual documents.

#### 14.1.1. Disclosure of Confidential Information

Participants in the PACS certification program shall be notified anytime there is a possibility that information gained in the course of certification activities shall be disclosed to a third party.

#### 14.1.2. COABC Accreditation Board Access

Following the Accreditation Agreement between the PACS and the COABC, all PACS files are accessible to the COABC Accreditation Board Auditors, and to inspectors appointed by the BCMAFF, from time to time. This information shall be provided to all applicants for certification.

#### 14.1.3. PACS Access to Files

Access to PACS confidential files is restricted to the:

- 1) Administrator
- 2) Certification Committee
- 3) Verification Officers
- 4) President or Chief Executive Officer
- 5) Employees or contractors hired for specific tasks such as internal review (must have a valid contract and confidentiality agreement on file)
- 6) Dispute Resolution Committee as required

#### 14.1.4. Confidential Information

All information about enterprise in the PACS certification program will be considered proprietary (confidential) unless specifically identified as public information. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to discoveries, ideas, designs, drawings, specifications, techniques, models, data, documentation of programs, processes, know-how, customer lists, marketing plans, and financial and technical information.

#### 14.1.5. Financial Information

The PACS will not release an operation's assessment amount or gross sales figure except to Verification Officers for confirming gross organic sales for administration fees. The PACS does not release other specific information about an operation's financial relationship with the PACS except in the case of bills past due that PACS has assigned to a collection agency.

## 14.2. Public Information

The PACS shall provide information to the public:

- A directory of all enterprises enrolled in the PACS certification program
- A copy of the Quality Manual (for a nominal fee) which provides:
  1. Information about the authority under which the PACS operates;
  2. A documented statement of the certification system;
  3. Information about the evaluation procedures of the PACS certification program
  4. A description of the finances of the PACS and the fees charged to applicants (provided with Application Forms)
  5. A description of the rights and duties of operators including requirements, restrictions, or limitations on the use of the BC Certified Organic Program Symbol and the ways of referring to the certification granted;

6. Information about the procedures for handling complaints appeals and disputes.

### **14.3. Conflicts of Interest of Individuals**

- 14.3.1. A declaration of interest updated annually by all persons involved in certification, inspection and appeals shall be on file at the PACS office. Such declarations shall take into account both direct and indirect interests and the Board shall decide what constitutes a conflict. Such disclosure statements may be included in the Confidentiality Agreement document.
- 14.3.2. All persons with a conflict of interest shall be excluded from work, discussion, and decisions in all stages of the certification process related to the potential conflict. The exclusion of such individuals shall be recorded in minutes of committee or Board meetings.
- 14.3.3. The PACS shall require Verification Officers to agree in writing (PACS-VO Agreement) to abstain from participating in work for operators with whom they have personal relations or to those with whom they have had business relationships (either business or advisory) in the past two years. VO's shall also be required to agree not to do contract work for operators in whose certification they are engaged, for a period of two years, without first declaring such arrangements to the PACS.

## **15. Document List**

### 15.1.1. COABC Consent Conditions

This document provides the rules regarding use of the phrase, "British Columbia Certified Organic," and the Program Symbol. The COABC Consent Conditions should be sent to licensees along with their initial certificate.

### 15.1.2. COABC Consent Declaration

This form provides for a contract between licensees and the COABC regarding use of the British Columbia Certified Organic Program Symbol. Two copies will be provided to licensees with their initial Certificate.

### 15.1.3. COABC Registration Form

May also be called the COABC Logo Use Registration Form. This form should accompany renewal applications. This form provides information for the COABC database. Enterprises must fill out this form once per year (preferably with Renewal Applications) and a copy should be sent to the COABC.

### 15.1.4. COABC Consent to Use Official Marks

This document describes the conditions under which a licensee may use the British Columbia Certified Organic Program Symbol. It will be provided to licensee along with the Consent Declaration.

### 15.1.5. COABC Program Symbol User Guide

This document describes the physical application of the Program Symbol. These books are expensive to reproduce and should be lent to licensees for later return to PACS.

#### 15.1.6. Independent Organic Inspector Association Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct

This document has been developed and provided by the IOIA. It describes the policy to which IOIA members must subscribe.

#### 15.1.7. PACS Administrative Procedures Manual

This manual provides PACS personnel with administrative policy and procedures.

#### 15.1.8. PACS Certificate

This is the official form of certificate used in the British Columbia Certified Organic Program

#### 15.1.9. PACS Certification Registration

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is for initial registrants for certification and includes an invoice for initial fees and basic enterprise information.

#### 15.1.10. PACS Certification Review Report

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is to be used by the certification committee to describe the certification decision. The certification committee chair should send this completed document to the administrator who will send a signed copy to the enterprise.

#### 15.1.11. PACS-Client Agreement

This agreement stipulates the terms under which the PACS provides certification to clients and the terms that clients must adhere to. It should be provided to enterprises with their Initial Application for Certification.

#### 15.1.12. PACS Confidentiality Agreement

This form must be completed and signed (two copies) by all Board members, volunteers and personnel who work in any capacity for the PACS. One copy will be kept on file and one copy remains with the signer.

#### 15.1.13. PACS Constitution

This document is the Constitution and Bylaws of the PACS. It should be provided to clients, members or interested members of the public on request and should be included in the Initial Application Packet.

#### 15.1.14. PACS Farm Crop Inspection Report

*Confidential when completed.*

This is a checklist type inspection report provided to VOs for reporting inspections. Some VOs may choose an inspection report of their own choosing.

#### 15.1.15. PACS File Transfer Form

This form allows PACS to request transfer of an enterprise file from another Certification Body. It should be provided to applicants that are transferring certification to the PACS.

#### 15.1.16. PACS Independent Storage Information Form

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is to be used by handlers (or processors) who are using foreign storage facilities e.g. fruit storage warehouses.

#### 15.1.17.PACS Initial and Renewal Certification Applications

*Confidential when completed.*

These are generic documents for organic farm operations. The COABC has developed them for use by COABC members. PACS farm applicants will use these forms to provide information to the Administrator, the VO, and the certification committee.

#### 15.1.18.PACS Organic Mushroom Initial Farm Plan

*Confidential when completed.*

This form to be used for initial applications for organic mushroom production.

#### 15.1.19.PACS Organic Operator Handbook

This document provides information for applicants for certification. It should be included in the Initial Certification Packet.

#### 15.1.20.PACS Orchard/vineyard Inspection Report

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is for use of VOs for reporting orchard/vineyard inspections. VOs may choose to use one of their own.

#### 15.1.21.PACS Out of Province Certificate

This certificate is for use of out of province clients not included in the BC Certified Organic Program.

#### 15.1.22.PACS Poultry Application

*Confidential when completed.*

This document is to be used by organic poultry producers. In most cases, the operator must also provide a farm application.

#### 15.1.23.PACS Quality Manual

This is the official documentation of the policies and procedures of the PACS.

#### 15.1.24.PACS Livestock Application

*Confidential when completed.*

This document is to be used by livestock (excluding poultry) producers. It is the initial application for livestock and must be accompanied by a Farm application.

#### 15.1.25.PACS Livestock Pasture History Form

*Confidential when completed.*

This document is for the use of livestock producers for grazing animals. It should accompany other livestock applications.

#### 15.1.26.PACS Livestock Renewal Application

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is for use of livestock renewals only. In some cases (such as a major farm expansion), the certification committee may recommend more information be provided.

#### 15.1.27.PACS Livestock Inspection Report

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is to be used by VOs for reporting on livestock inspections. VOs may choose to use a report form of their own.

#### 15.1.28.PACS Dairy Inspection Report

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is for the use of VOs for reporting on dairy inspections. VOs may choose to use a report form of their own.

#### 15.1.29.PACS Procedures for the Certification Committee

This document describes the policies and procedures in place for operation of the certification committee.

#### 15.1.30.PACS Processing Application

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is to be used by applicants for certification of processing (and for the time being, handling) operations.

#### 15.1.31.PACS Processor Renewal

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is to be used for Processing Renewal applications.

#### 15.1.32.PACS Rules of Order

This document describes the Rules of Order adopted for PACS general or board of directors meetings.

#### 15.1.33.PACS VO Agreement

*Confidential when completed.*

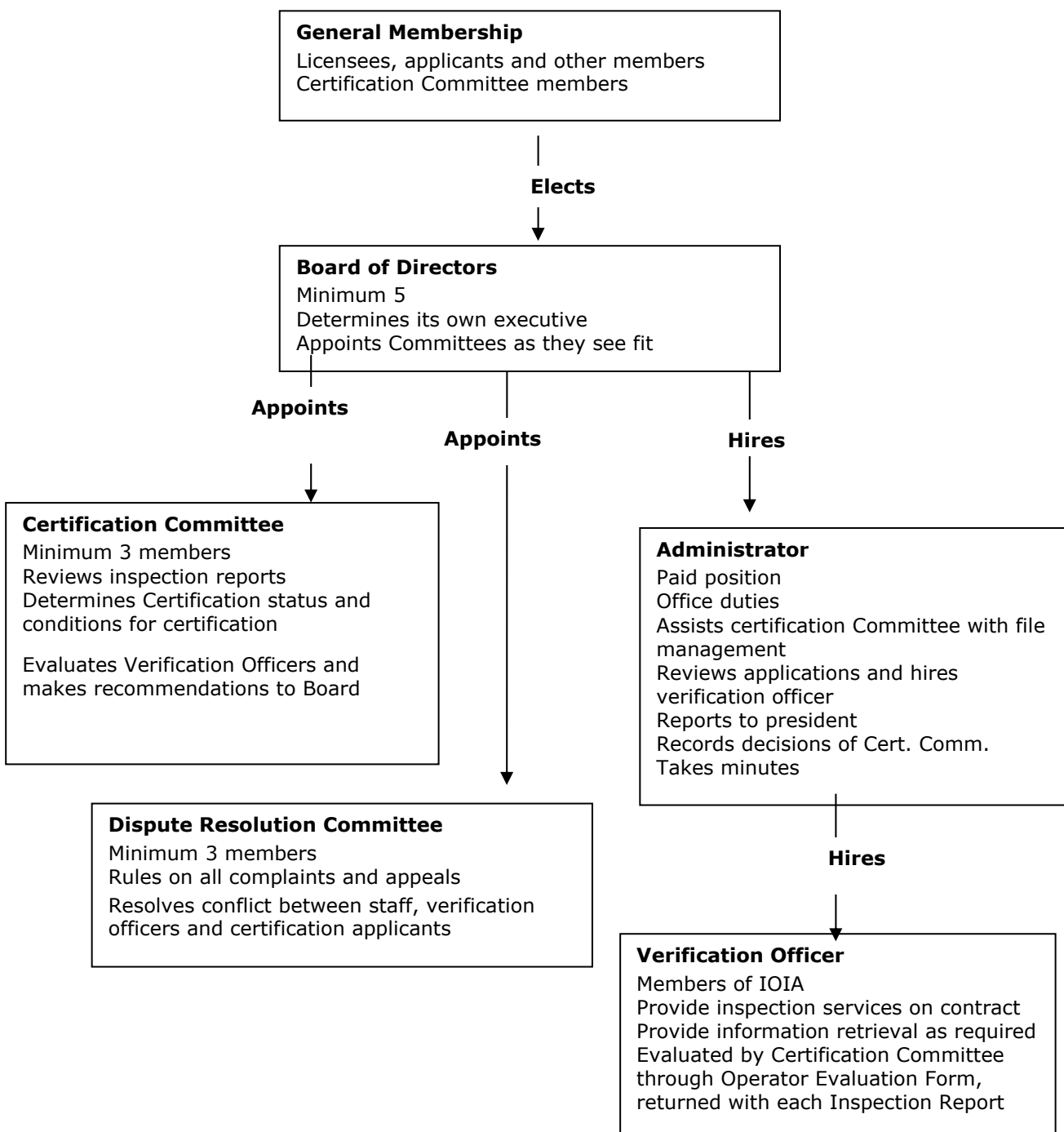
This form is to be used for providing a contract between a VO and the PACS.

#### 15.1.34.PACS VO Misconduct Complaint Form

*Confidential when completed.*

This form is to be used in the event an operator finds fault with the VO assigned to them. The Administrators will report directly to the President regarding VO misconduct issues.

### Appendix A: PACS Organisational Chart



## **Appendix B: Details on Use of the BC Certified Organic Program Symbol**

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:

- (1) The Certification Body must have a valid "Official Mark Licence Conditions for Accredited Certifying Agencies" form in its possession.
- (2) The enterprise must have a valid 'certificate' issued by the Certification Body.
- (3) The enterprise must be registered with the COABC (COABC Logo Use Registration Form).
- (4) The enterprise must sign and return a "Consent To Use Official Marks" form to the COABC.
- (5) The enterprise must be in good standing (COABC membership fees) with the COABC.

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.



## Appendix C: Certification Committee Members

### 1. **Sarah Davidson**, Vancouver, BC - member at large and label review specialist

- Holds a Diploma in Agricultural Technology (Horticulture) from the University of the Fraser Valley.
- Worked as the Certification Co-ordinator and the administrator for BCARA for a number of years.
- Worked on DATE Project (that was sponsored by BCARA and managed by Harvie Snow);
- Worked for the Agassiz Research Station on use of compost as weed suppression and medicinal herbs.
- Completed IOIA Basic Farm Inspector training through the Assiniboine College program.
- Worked on revisions to the COABC standards on contract.
- Currently a member of the BCARA Certification Committee.
- Worked for West Coast Seeds managing their grow-outs and Demonstration Garden for 4 years.

## 2. Dwight Brown - CC member at large with expertise in processing

### EDUCATION:

- 1968 - University of BC.....B.S.A. (Food.Sc.)
- 1970 - University of BC.....M. Sc. (Food.Sc.)
- 1975 - Open Learning Institute.....Boiler Operator Class B
- 1975 - 1992 Many Courses in Marketing, Management & Financing
- 1994 - HACCP Workshop.....BCIT
- 1999 - IOIA Organic Process Inspector Training

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

Presently: I am working under contract as Organic Fruit Co-ordinator for the Okanagan Similkameen Growers Association.

1996: Taught a business workshop on functional management at Okanagan University College, Oliver campus.

1974 - 1994: Founder and owner of Sun Dew Foods Ltd., which produced fruit juices, purees and jam stock from tree fruits and berries grown in BC. Specializing in naturally processed fruit, 8000 tons (including organic tree fruits) were packed and sold annually into the Western Canadian market. Although the plant was very modern and highly automated, the company ceased operations in 1993.

1972 - 1974: Casabello Wines Ltd., Penticton, BC. Winemaker, responsible for all production activities and staff of fifty.

1971 - 1972: Barkwill's Cannery, Summerland, BC. Plant Superintendent; supervising 80 workers canning and freezing 3000 tons of tender tree fruits, apples and pears annually.

## 3. Gavin Young -Kelowna member at large with experience in tree fruits and viniculture

### WORK EXPERIENCE IN RELATED FIELDS

- 2002 to Present: Horticultural Advisor in the Fieldservice at BC Fruit Packers Cooperative Ltd. (Westbank, B.C.). The Westbank packing and storage operation is a Certified Organic Packer (apples) and has offered fieldservice to certified (& Transitional) Organic Growers since 1997.
- 1996 to 2002: Horticultural Advisor in the Fieldservice at Westbank Packers Ltd. (Westbank, B.C.). The operation received Organic Certification in 1997. The company offered fieldservice to organic growers at that time in addition to providing the service to conventional growers as well.
- 1970 to 1996: Grower of apples using conventional methods and following the principles of IPM.
- 1996 – Present: Grower of Asian pears, sweet Chestnuts and Saskatoon berries using conventional methods and following the principles of IPM.

### WORK EXPERIENCE IN LESS RELATED FIELDS

- 1995 – 1996: Terrain Mapping and Slope Stability Studies for Murray Rhode, Geo-technical Engineering. B.C. Forest Renewal Projects.
- 1995 – 1996: Soil and Terrain Mapping for Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping Projects for B.C. Ministry of Environment and Keystone Wildlife Ltd. B.C. Forest Renewal Projects.
- 1969 – 1975: Soil and Terrain Mapping for B.C. Ministry of Environment. Canada Land Inventory Projects.

#### EDUCATION

- BSc. (Agric.): UBC, Faculty of Agriculture, Department Soil Science. 1969

#### COMMITTEES

- 1998 – 2003: Chair Grower and Industry Advisory Committee for the Sterile Insect Release Program
- 1996 - 2003: Member Okanagan Packing House Fieldman's Group and member of various industry committees including the BCFGH Hort Forum Committee.
- 1984 – 1986: Member on the Executive of the BC Fruit Grower's Association. Active on a number of industry committees including the BCFGH Hort Forum Committee.
- 1974 – 1977: Member on the Executive of the Association of B.C. Grape Growers
- 1978 -1979: President Association of B.C. Grape Growers.
- 1970 – 1974: Member on the Public Involvement Committees of the Salmonoid Enhancement Program and the Okanagan Water Basin Study.

## **Appendix E Board of Directors of PACS (2004)**

- 1) Linda Edwards - President - Organic orchardist RR#1 Riordan Ave. Cawston, BC  
V0X 1C0 250-499-5303
- 2) Tracey Strong - Vice president - Vegetable farmer - Ridge Rd. RR#1 S.13 C.20  
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0
- 3) Tony Cetinski - Treasurer - Vegetable farmer - 3563 Benvoulin Road Kelowna, BC  
V1W 3M6 (250) 869-0016
- 4) Sharyn Pollitt - Secretary - Organic orchardist- RR#1 River Rd. Keremeos, BC  
V0X 1N0 250-499-7887
- 5) Tim Ewert - Organic farmer - Box 220 Pouce Coupe, BCV0C 2C0 250-786-5830
- 6) Deb Foote - Food handling manager - Wild West Organic Harvest 2120 Van Dyke  
Place Richmond, BC V6V 1X6
- 7) Gottfried Sellmar - Organic orchardist
- 8) Carmen Wakeling - organic sprout producer - RR#2 S.225 C.23 Courtney, BC  
V9N 5M9

## **Appendix F PACS Rules of Order**

(Also known as "The Myers-Bourneot's Rules of Order".)

October 2000

Contents:

1. The Officers
2. The Agenda
3. Debatable Motions
4. Executive Motions
5. Non-debatable motions
6. Amendments
7. Interruptions
8. Voting
9. Discipline

### **1. The Officers**

An organization may have any number of executive officers, as long as each position has a clearly defined area of responsibility and authority. The essential officers are the Speaker, also known as the Chair or President (I'm going to use Speaker here), and the Secretary.

The responsibilities of the Speaker are to maintain order and discipline, to see that all who wish to speak are given opportunity to speak, and to cast the deciding vote in the case of a tie. How is this done? The Speaker has the right to designate who will speak by naming that person. Formally, the Speaker "recognises" the person who wishes to speak, and then the member ascends to her feet to speak. No member may speak unless the Speaker has named her. The Speaker may make a "speaker's list", in which is placed the names of every member who indicates by show of hand that she wishes to speak to a motion. It is the responsibility of all members to remain silent during the time that the member is on her feet, and it is the responsibility of the Speaker to discipline those who interrupt.

The responsibility of the Secretary is to record the minutes of the meeting. The minimal requirement for the record is the text of all motions; who moved and seconded them, and whether they passed or failed (and by what margin).

A third officer whose function is not often required is the "Sergeant-At-Arms," whose responsibility is to ensure that only the members of the organization enter the meeting place. During the meeting, this officer is also bound to carry out the orders of the Speaker (such as throw out a member who is disciplined by the Speaker).

### **2. The Agenda**

Every meeting must have an agenda, which is the list of the things to be discussed at the meeting. It is the responsibility of the Speaker, or other Officers of the organization, to announce the agenda before the meeting. Any member may add an item to the agenda by submitting it to the Speaker in advance of the meeting, and preferably in advance of the announcement of the agenda to the members. The Speaker does have the right to decline to add an item to the agenda, however the member can always bring it up at the actual meeting during the time for "New Business". Under Bourneot's rules, it is not necessary to

pass a motion to "accept" the minutes of the meeting; it is enough that the officers of the organization who planned the meeting accept them.

An agenda normally looks like this:

**a. The Call to Order**

The Chair begins the meeting with the words "I call this meeting of (organization name) to order." The Call to Order may also include a roll call, when the list of members is recited and those present verify their presence when their name is called. Alternately, all members present can simply announce their names in turn as the Secretary records the attendance. The roll call determines whether or not the meeting has achieved "Quorum", or the minimum number of members required by the organisation's own by-laws for business to proceed. (If Quorum is not achieved, the meeting can proceed, motions may be debated, and discussed however, no motions can be passed.)

**b. Recitation of the last meeting's minutes**

The minutes of the organisation's previous minutes, which the Secretary recorded, are recited, and this is sometimes followed by two items of business. The first is a formal motion to "accept" the minutes, which is an agreement by all assembled that the minutes represent an accurate summary of what happened at the last meeting. The second item, which is optional, is an invitation to discuss business arising from the minutes. This may include, for example, reports on what actions were undertaken by officers of the organization, or others, in accord with passed motions and/or directives from the previous meeting.

**c. Items for discussion**

This part of the meeting is designated for reports, presentations, information sessions, and the like. Although items for discussion are not "motions" in the strict sense, a "motion to accept the report" may follow them. The motion to accept the presentation is a debatable motion, and such debate usually consists in questions to the presenters, requests for additional detail, and may also include objections, especially if the presentation is of something like the organisation's financial performance. If the motion to accept the report passes, the report is treated as official policy of the organization.

If a motion to accept the report fails, the report is "sent back" to whatever committee or officer reported, and must come up again at the next meeting (presumably with revisions in accord with the expressed opinions of the members). A report that fails twice is "dead," and may not be revived.

**d. Items for action**

At this point, any directives or motions for action are debated and discussed. Each motion should be an independent item on the agenda. (See Motions, to follow).

**e. Question Period**

In Canadian Parliamentary Procedure, Question Period is the time when members of the House pose questions to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet about their decisions, policies, and actions. It is the responsibility of the Speaker to hear the questions posed by the members and to require of the Executive to whom they are addressed to answer them (although it is permissible for an Executive to defer her answer to another meeting, or to request of another Executive to answer the question). A member may ask only one question.

#### **f. New Business**

This stage of the meeting is when members may propose motions that were not on the agenda as released to the Members when the meeting was announced. It is preferable that motions proposed at this time be motions arising from the other business already discussed, although the Speaker may entertain any motion for which there is a mover and a seconder.

#### **g. Adjournment**

The meeting is finished when the Chair announces "This meeting is adjourned". Under Bourneot's Rules, it is not necessary to pass a motion to adjourn the meeting.

### **3. Debatable Motions**

A motion is essentially a kind of question. A motion, strictly defined, is a question which, when decided ("resolved") by the members, requires of the officers of the organization, or others named by the motion, to act.

The order of movement is as follows:

- First, the person who proposes the motion (the mover) articulates the motion: "I move that (whatever)";
- the Speaker calls for a "seconder," which is one other member who agrees with the question;
- the mover and the seconder speak to the motion;
- parliamentary debate follows, under the auspices of the speaker;
- The vote takes place last.

Some things to be aware of during parliamentary debate are:

- There can be no discussion nor debate unless there is a motion on the floor.
- After the mover and seconder have given their initial comments, the speaker announces that "the floor is open" for everyone to speak to the motion (including the original mover and seconder).
- A member may not speak twice to the same motion, unless all members have already spoken to the motion once. Note that the initial comments of the mover and seconder are not counted for this purpose, since proposing the motion comes before the floor is opened for debate.
- The original mover may respond to questions put to her by members during debate (this is called a "point of personal privilege", described later)
- Unlike Robert's Rules of Order, the Speaker is empowered to speak to any motion, just as any member can. The Speaker must place herself on the "speaker's list," and descend from the Speaker's podium to stand among the members, at the time that she speaks.
- Once the floor is open, if the original mover speaks, debate closes when she is finished and the question is put to a vote immediately.
- Debate closes if the Speaker, or anyone else recognised by the speaker in her due turn, "calls the question."

### **4. Executive Motions**

An Executive motion is different from a normal motion in that it is assumed that all the officers of the organization are in agreement with the question, and therefore there need be no seconder. Usually, the President of the organization is considered the Mover.

## 5. Non-debatable motions

The following proposals during parliamentary debate are themselves not subject to debate:

- "Calling the question," which immediately ends debate on any motion and requires the members to vote on it.
- "Proposal to table the motion", which requires the members to vote on whether or not to suspend debate on the motion until the next meeting. If the proposal to table the motion fails, then debate continues. If it passes, debate on the motion ceases and the next motion is put to the floor.
- "Calling Quorum", which requires the Secretary to call the roll again. This motion is proposed when a member has reason to believe that the roll call at the beginning of the meeting was mistaken, or if quorum is no longer achieved due to people leaving the meeting before adjournment.
- "Submit to Sergeant-At-Arms", when a member feels that another member is not observing the rules of order (see Discipline, to follow).
- Request from a member to vote on a secret ballot.
- Proposal to "amend the motion".

## 6. Amendments

A member may propose to change the text of a motion that is currently on the floor for debate. If the original mover and seconder decide that the amendment is "friendly," or agreeable to them, then debate proceeds with the amendment in place. If the amendment is "not friendly," or disagreeable to either the mover or the seconder, then the members vote immediately to accept or reject the amendment.

## 7. Interruptions

Parliamentary debate may be interrupted for several reasons. It is the responsibility of the Speaker to allow or to deny interruptions. The acceptable interruptions are:

- "Point of order", from a member who believes that the rules are not being followed. An interrupter may, on a point of order, ask a question of an administrative nature. A point of order may be accompanied by a request for action from the Speaker. A point of order may also be used to remind the members of decisions or resolutions already passed by the members at previous meetings.
- "Point of Personal Privilege", an interruption which only the mover has the right to make, in order to clarify something to do with the motion (such as why she proposed it), or to articulate a (short) rebuttal.
- "Point of information", in which the interrupter may request further clarification from the member. A point of information may ask a question of a factual nature. Point of Information may be used to inform the members of a relevant fact, when the interrupter believes a member to be mistaken or misinformed. (Of course, issues like "the burden of proof," as well as the lawful means to acquire information, may arise here.)

The member who had the floor at the time of the interruption may resume speaking when the point is resolved.



## 8. Voting

The Speaker initiates the vote by calling "All those in favour/against/abstention." Votes may be conducted in one of several ways:

- Show of hands counted by the Speaker.
- Standing vote, in which the members stand when the Speaker calls for "All those in favour/against."
- Roll call vote, in which each member speaks their vote as the Secretary calls their name from the membership roll,
- Loudest Shout (remember ancient Athens?), in which the members say "Aye" or "Nay" when the Speaker calls for "Aye" or "Nay" votes. The speaker judges which side wins.
- Secret Ballot, in which members write their vote on a paper which is then collected and counted by the Secretary. The speaker may request a show-of-hands vote from the members on whether to vote on a motion this way.

## 9. Discipline

The Speaker must maintain discipline at the meeting. She can call on members to remain silent while another member has the floor to speak. She can demand that a member who is speaking keep her comments relevant to the motion on the floor. She can demand that a member refrain from certain kinds of logical errors: improper appeal to authority, "ad hominem" (also known as "insulting someone"), improper appeal to pity, and so on. The Speaker may also set a limit on how much time a member may take to speak on an issue, and require a member to step down when that time limit is exceeded.

A member who engages in "unparliamentary conduct", by interrupting too often, insulting members, disrespecting the rules of order, or even disrespecting the organization itself, may require the Speaker to "submit to the sergeant-at-arms". The offending member is given a short opportunity to explain himself, and then must withdraw from the meeting place. The Speaker puts the question of what to do to the members. Some of the options are to deny speaking rights to the member, or withdraw the member's "good standing" status temporarily or permanently, or require the member to make some form of apology or restitution.