

What's New



- ✓ A new face for COABC!! You will begin to see the logo above on COABC materials. This was made possible by funding support from the Organic Federation of Canada.
- ✓ **February 20, 21 & 22, 2009** COABC Conference & AGM in Abbotsford. More information to be announced. **All members:** we are planning the COABC Annual Conference and AGM so begin to think of items you would like to donate to the traditional **Silent Auction** which will run at the Saturday night feast. Small and big items make the auction fun for everyone. Your donations make the event possible! **Contact our Conference Coordinator with your items: Donna Scheven donna@dsevents.ca 604-607-0644**
- ✓ The 2009 COABC Annual Conference registration is on-line at the COABC website.
- ✓ **Deadline for entries is 4 pm Jan 23, 2009.** The **"Fresh Voices" contest** is to solicit new ideas to help COABC meet its mandate of "a strong and sustainable community, serving the evolving needs of the sector and the public for generations to come." Prizes are awarded and you will be able to share your idea during a COABC Conference session.
- ✓ Feel free to send questions regarding the New National Standards to the Organic Extension Agent, Rochelle Eisen at extension@certifiedorganic.bc.ca
- ✓ **Ministry of Environment** has a useful pesticide application record form available online at http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/ipmp/forms/pdf/pesticide_use_record.pdf. This form may be used to record pesticide uses or it may be used as a model to develop your own paper or computerized record form. Information on pest control record-keeping requirements can be found at http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/ipmp/forms/pdf/pesticide_use_explan_info.pdf.
- ✓ **Small Scale Organic Seed Production Manual**, a new 2008 handbook produced by FarmFolk/CityFolk for farmers in British Columbia and beyond, gives practical advice on why and how to incorporate vegetable seed production into existing farming systems. Written by organic seed grower Patrick Steiner, this publication is not so much a "how-to" of seed growing as it is a "what to expect" when embarking on a journey of seed growing. http://ffcf.bc.ca/NewSiteFiles/programs/farm/seed_manual.html
- ✓ There is still funding available through **COABC's Regional Seminar Series** to help put on production seminars. Talk to Rochelle 250.547.6573 extension@certifiedorganic.bc.ca
- ✓ **Deadline is January 19, 2009** Attached is a **request for proposals for the Processing Vegetable Industry Development Fund**. The. Please pass this information along to colleagues I may have missed. For more information, please contact Henry Wiens (wienshl@telus.net).
- ✓ **BC Hydro Two-Step Conversion Rates:** see attached BCAC Memo

✓ **Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC)** Visit their site to view the Organic **Friends E-Zine**. It will bring you up-to-date with recent organic research results, technical bulletins, newspaper articles, job opportunities and organic farming events across the country December's edition is at <http://www.organicagcentre.ca/FriendsE-zines/december2008.asp>

✓ **OPR Organic Products Regulation & national Canada Organic Standard (COS)**

1. The new implementation date for the **national Organic Products Regulations is 30 June 2009**. <http://canadagazette.gc.ca/partII/2008/20080917/html/sor279-e.html>
2. The BC Certified Organic Program has adopted the CGSB Organic Production Systems General Principles and Management Standard (CAN/CGSB 32.310 – 2006) and the Permitted Materials Lists (CAN/CGSB 32.311 -2006) as its reference documents (see Book 1 Version 8, 3.1.6, 3.1.7). This comes into force **January 1, 2009 – as of that date all certification decisions must reference the CGSB standard not the COABC standard Version 7**. We are still waiting for the word “go” before we print the revised standards for COABC licensees. *Anne Macey, Director, COABC Accreditation Board*
3. The most recent copy and any further amendments of the National Standard can/will be found at www.pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb/on_the_net/organic/032_0310_2006-e.pdf

✓ **GYPSY MOTH TREATMENT PLANNED NEAR HARRISON LAKE**

The Ministry of Forests and Range has applied for a pesticide use permit to aerial spray 329 hectares of primarily agricultural land on the road to Harrison Lake with a spray approved for use on organic farms, to eradicate a growing population of gypsy moths and minimize the risk they pose to the region's forests, farms, orchards, and trees.

Trapping and monitoring results indicate a growing gypsy moth population south of the Village of Harrison Hot Springs with about 100 egg masses, the highest amount ever found in the province. The proposed treatment area includes both sides of Hot Springs Road, from just north of McPherson Road to 800 metres north of McCallum Road, and from just west of Hardy Road to the mountain ridge in the east, with the northern most tip of the treatment area about 2.5 kilometres away from Harrison Lake. The permit application and map are available at the village hall and online at www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/gypsymoth.

The ministry has proposed up to four aerial applications of Foray 48B between April 15 and June 30, 2009 to control the moth. Foray 48B has been approved for use on organic farms by the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and contains *Bacillus thuringiensis var kurstaki* (Btk). Btk does not harm humans, mammals, birds, fish, plants, reptiles, amphibians, bees or other insects and only affects caterpillars after they have ingested it. Btk is naturally present in urban, forest and agricultural soil around the province. It has been approved for the control of gypsy moth larvae in Canada since 1961.

The ministry successfully treated areas on Saltspring Island and in the Cowichan Valley with Foray 48B in the spring of 2008 and neither of those locations require treatment in 2009. The gypsy moth is an introduced pest species, with caterpillars that feed on tree leaves and that can damage forests, farms and orchards. Large gypsy moth populations defoliated sections of forests and residential areas in Ontario and the eastern U.S. in recent years. The moths are unintentionally brought to B.C. on vehicles, recreational equipment and outdoor household articles like lawn furniture from affected areas in eastern North America. Infested locations are often subject to product and transportation quarantines and area treatment, including individual vehicle checks, and annual aerial spraying. Residents can contact the ministry toll free at 1-866-917-5999 to discuss the program. For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.

- ✓ **Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI)** product listing updates can be found at the COABC website: <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/news.htm>
- ✓ **CFIA specifies compliance requirements for imported cheese**
The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) published a notice to advise industry of the implementation approach it will use to assess the compliance of cheese, as per the amendments to the Food and Drug Regulations (FDR) and the Dairy Products Regulations (DPR). For further details go to <http://www.affiliated.ca/NewsDetails.aspx?lang=en-CA&id=4936>
- ✓ **CSA producers check out Small Farm Central's newest service** -- the **Member Assembler**, which is an online platform that helps solve the member sign-up and management problems of CSAs. <http://smallfarmcentral.com/blog/jan/2009/member-assembler-announcement>



In the Works

- The **Minor Use Program needs you** - Looking for more organic growers to provide input into the Minor Use Program asap. This is a cross country effort that helps identify pest priorities, assists in identifying potential control solutions, and facilitates pest control product registration. Our deadline for this is mid-January. If you are interested in helping us by identifying the pest issues for your particular crops – contact Rochelle Eisen 250.547.6573 extension@certifiedorganic.bc.ca
- **Putting Healthy BC Food Back into Our Schools, UBC Food Services** contact Delisa Lewis about supplying UBC with organic produce. See attached article & www.food.ubc.ca/about/sustainability.html
- **OFC Organic Federation of Canada updates** <http://www.organicfederation.ca/html-en/info-bio.html>
Notes from the Canadian Organic Office Liaison Committee Meeting - December 22nd, 2008
At the meeting with the COO Liaison Committee, Michel Saumur has reported that the OPR will be republished in early 2009 and that two changes will appear:
 - The suppression of the export provision, that means that organic products for export only do not need to meet the requirements of the Organic Regulations.
 - The logo is modified; the new logo that will appear is the one that has been chosen by the industry at the last OVCRT survey managed by OTA

The COO Communication Plan and the document called Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement are ready to be published with the OPR prepublication.

Michel has added that the export of products will have to abide to equivalency agreements negotiated with the countries Canada is trading organics with. Julie Belzile expressed concern that the suppression of the export provision could impact on the competitiveness of domestic producers. Michel indicated that she is welcome to express her concerns in writing during the 75 day comment period which follows the pre-publication of the Regulations.

The COO has met with Agriculture and Agrifood Canada and it was decided that the COO will be responsible for the management of the COS maintenance; this includes the ballot management, but the COO repeats that this will not allow them to interfere with the principles of organics. Their role is strictly limited to the management, not to the standards content.

The COO is still waiting for the EU-Canada gap comparison that the OFC is managing; the document prepared by OFC technical agent is actually being submitted to the Technical Committee (TC) for their approval. Once this last period comment is over (Tuesday December 23rd is the deadline), the comparison will be sent to the COO if the TC comments are not too numerous.

The COO has submitted to OFC last December 12 the variance list between US and Canada standards. As the COO would like this gap analysis to be ready by January 14, Dag and Nicole will put on a plan for

coordinating the work that needs to be done. To be followed....

Next COO Liaison Committee meeting: January 12, 2009 866-646-2080, mot de passe 2217165



Events

Check the **COABC Events page** for more details: <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/events/events.php>

- **Jan 22-25 in Guelph The 28th Annual Guelph Organic Conference**
<http://www.guelphorganicconf.ca/>

- **Friday, January 23, 2009 The OACC** would like to extend to you a special invitation to attend two live upcoming webinars. The OACC in partnership with the CFMBC is facilitating live web broadcasting of select presentations from the Guelph Organic Conference, featuring current natural sciences and social sciences research in organic agriculture from across Canada. To participate, please complete the registration form available on our website at <http://www.oacc.info/Symposia/guelph.asp> and return it to me by email or fax by Tuesday, January, 20, 2009. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me. Kristen Lowitt, MES Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada Work office ph: 902-896-3481, Email: klowitt@nsac.ca

Webinar One: Friday January 23, 2009, 8:30 am- Noon EST: 6th Annual Conference for Social Research in Organic Agriculture. This event will highlight social sciences research in the area of organic agriculture and sustainable food systems.

Webinar Two: Friday January 23, 2009, 1:30-4:30 pm EST: Natural Sciences Research Symposium in Organic Agriculture. This event will highlight organic crop, soil & livestock research from across Canada.

- **Feb 19-21 in Abbotsford The 11th Annual Pacific Agriculture Show**
<http://www.agricultureshow.net/>
- **Feb 22-23 in Banff Cereals Research Symposium in Organic Agriculture**
<http://www.organicagcentre.ca/Symposia/cereals.asp>



Keep In Mind

- If you change your address or contact information send it to your CB office as soon as possible so that you don't miss out on receiving a BCOG and other materials.
- **Cyber-help** is a great source for on-line information
<http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/index.html>
- **FarmFolk/CityFolk 2009 Wall Calendar** - The photographs in the inaugural FFCF Calendar express the exuberant and lush productive beauty of five small sustainable organic farms. The cover image shows the satisfaction and delight on the face of a young woman as she plows through rows of organic kale, all the while stuffing her mouth full of her bountiful harvest. To view & order: www.ffcf.bc.ca