

# E-News



November 2012

## WHAT'S NEW

### ORGANIC CERTIFICATION: EXPLORING ISSUES, CHALLENGES & OPTIONS

As many of you already know, or have read in the latest issue of the BC Organic Grower, COABC has embarked on a Research Project to determine the issues and barriers to certification for non-certified organic producers in BC, and to investigate options.

COABC has hired an experienced team of consultants to undertake the project, led by Andrea Lawseth. The team, which includes Rochelle Eisen, Gunta Vitins and Dr. Brenda Frick, is tasked with discovering the barriers to certification, finding innovative ways to minimize barriers, and exploring solutions to suit the needs of all organic producers, including alternative certification models.

The research team will consult a broad range of producers from July 2012 to March 2013, through a series of facilitated workshops at conferences and agricultural events, as well as through surveys and one-on-one interviews.

In order to capture the viewpoints of organic producers across BC, including those who are not certified or who may be considering certification, we encourage you to complete the on-line survey found at this link:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/ael-consulting/small-scale-certification-research-project-survey/>

This survey and the project summary are also posted on the COABC website at <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/>.

For more information on the research project or to get involved beyond the online survey, please contact the research team:

Andrea Lawseth at 250-205-0279 or [info@aelagroconsulting.com](mailto:info@aelagroconsulting.com)

Rochelle Eisen at 250-502-0323 or [rare@telus.net](mailto:rare@telus.net)

Gunta Vitins at 778-772-5996 or [gunta.vitins@gmail.com](mailto:gunta.vitins@gmail.com)

Brenda Frick at 306-260-0663 or [organic@usask.ca](mailto:organic@usask.ca)

Funding for this project has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program. In British Columbia, this program is delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE CANADIAN ORGANIC STANDARDS

The Organic Standards Interpretation Committee (SIC) provides interpretive guidance to the Canada Organic Office on issues related to the National Standards for Organic Agriculture (CAN/CGSB 32.310 and CAN/CGSB 32.311).

**Questions:** How should the minimum buffer zone be measured in an orchard? Can green char be used in organic agriculture? Can livestock feed harvested from the buffer zones around organic cropland be fed to livestock in transition to organic?

[Click here](#) to consult the proposed answers to the various questions (also attached), raised by organic stakeholders, regarding the National Standards for Organic Agriculture.

**The proposed responses are subject to a 60 day comment period starting October 4<sup>th</sup> and closing December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012.**

All comments regarding these answers should be sent to [OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca)

### THE GMO APPLE PETITION

The Okanagan Greens Society still are circulating a Stop the GM Apple petition that close to 1000 BC residents have signed. Please help by following this [link to the petition](#) printing copies, circulating it around your networks and mailing it back to the Okanagan Greens Society before January 12, 2013! The petition will be presented to the Provincial Government in 2013.



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## ONGOING

### NEWSLETTERS FROM SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Every month the COABC receives newsletters from organizations with related interests or with whom we are members. So as not to repeat everything written, take a moment to read their newsletters.

- **BC Agriculture Council** COABC is a member under the Community Agriculture seat.
- <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=f79d2a33b823f8c549069c39b&id=2c2d1e30d6&e=3525e11d04>
- **BCSPCA** [http://support.spca.bc.ca/site/MessageViewer?em\\_id=6521.0&dvl\\_id=19941](http://support.spca.bc.ca/site/MessageViewer?em_id=6521.0&dvl_id=19941)
- **OFC** <http://www.organicfederation.ca/newsletter>
- **Shared Harvest** <http://www.sharedharvestbc.blogspot.ca/>

### BC CERTIFIED ORGANIC CHECKMARK LOGO

**ISO operators are fortunate to be able to use the Canada Organic label AND the BC Checkmark side by side.**

The logo of the BC Certified Organic program is a key tool to identify certified organic products in BC. It is important that the symbol is used correctly; here is a quick reminder, especially for websites and the exclusion zone (white space.)

The Program Symbol is enclosed by a black border. The border ensures that the appropriate white space or exclusion zone is provided around the composite mark. The Program Symbol must be enclosed by the border if the Symbol is applied against colored or complex backgrounds. However, if the background is white or off-white, it may be desirable to omit the border while ensuring the appropriate exclusion zone.

### COMPLAINTS SUBMISSION FORM

Canada Organic Office complaint submission form can be found at <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php>.

For complaints against an interprovincial traded product see the COO complaint form at <http://certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php>.

Complaints on this form are to be directed to the Canada Organic Office directly [OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca) .

### HUSKY REBATE PROGRAM

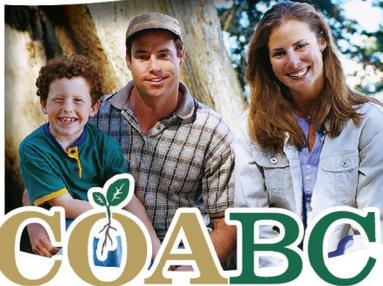
The Husky rebate program contributes 2% of purchase to COABC. You can at no additional cost to yourself help COABC by using your Husky loyalty card. Need a new Card? Email [office@certifiedorganic.bc.ca](mailto:office@certifiedorganic.bc.ca) .

### “WHAT IS ORGANIC FARMING?” BOOKLET NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Are you familiar with the green “What is Organic Farming” booklet? The booklet is now available on our website as a downloadable resource. On the Education page under the Marketing Toolkit tab there are a number of tools and resources available to help members.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

COABC is on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Certified-Organic-Associations-of-BC/208548192519986> and on Twitter, username coabccanada. Join our online community.



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## INTERESTING

### A BC HACCP PLAN WORKSHOPS

"A BC HACCP Plan" workshops are scheduled for the fall/winter of 2012-13. These food safety planning workshops may be of interest to farms and other businesses considering, or already involved in, food processing. The workshops are a valuable education tool for owners and employees. What's more, they offer an opportunity to network, and to access information that will help enhance your bottom line in these changing economic times. Information about the workshops and on-line registration is available at [www.ssfpa.net/foodsafety](http://www.ssfpa.net/foodsafety).

## EVENTS

### COMMUNITY FORUMS ON GM FOOD

Dates: November 7-15, 2012

Locations: Kelowna Nov.7, Langley Nov. 8, Vancouver Nov 11, Nanaimo Nov 13, Campbell River Nov. 14, Victoria Nov 15.

CBAN, the Society for GE Free BC and local partners present a tour of community events on GMOs in British Columbia! Featured speaker is Lucy Sharratt, Coordinator, Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, Ottawa. For event posters and flyers, and for further details and event updates please see <http://www.cban.ca/events>

### AN ORGANIC FARMING INSTITUTE OF BC OFFERING – SPONSORED BY FORTISBC.

Date: Friday Nov 9, 2012, 8:30am – 4:30pm

Location: Cawston Hall - 2119 Main Street Cawston

Cost: \$45.00 – payable at the door. Includes a light lunch.

Want to make the finest compost possible so you get the best bang for your buck? Join the Organic Farming Institute of BC for a one day intensive workshop with guest speaker Mario Lanthier the Okanagan's very own go-to compost guy.

Morning session will cover the do's and don'ts of composting and preparation of composts that are suppressive of plant diseases. The afternoon will focus on "recipes" for use of compost in field production and visiting a commercial compost facility. For further information and to register, contact us at [info@ofibc.org](mailto:info@ofibc.org)

### PERMACULTURE CUBA 2013

Date: May and June, 2013

Location: Cuba

An Immersion Experience in Sustainable Urban Agriculture in the Heart of Cuba. For seven weeks, ten Canadians will have the opportunity to live, work and learn within the thriving urban agriculture and permaculture movements in Cuba. Grounded in a model of partnership, experiential education, and collaborative learning. To view the

Permaculture Cuba 2013 brochure on-line, please go to: <http://theurbanfarmer.ca/cuba-programs/permaculture-cuba-internship/>.



## REMEMBER...

Got an Organic Question? Try Cyber-help <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/index.html>

*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.*