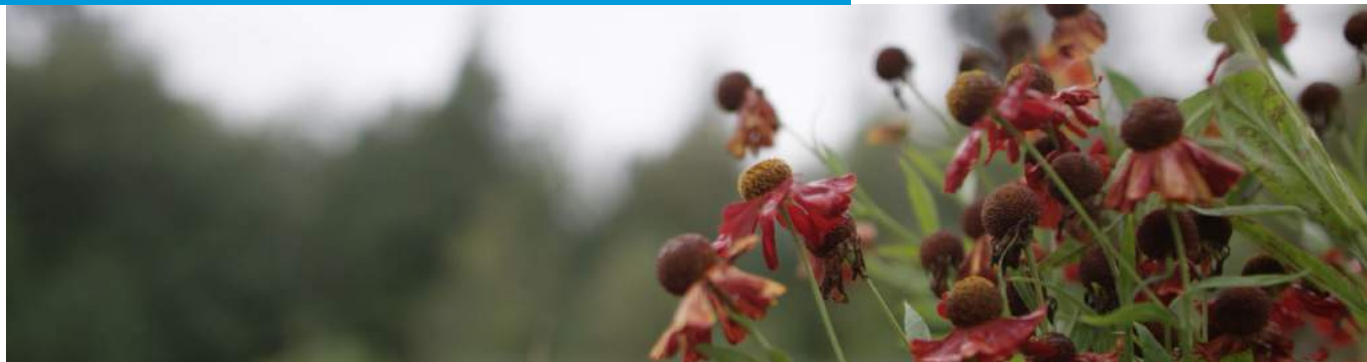




British  
Columbia  
Certified  
Organic



# ORGANIC ONLINE SYSTEM

## **Supporting Organic Operators and Certifiers in BC**

The Organic Online System is an innovative online tool for organic certification. Using the Organic Online System, operators will be able to apply for and renew certification online.

COABC created the Organic Online System in consultation with Certifying Bodies (CBs) to achieve the following goals:

- streamline application/certification process
- save operators, CBs, and Verification Officers (VOs) time and paperwork
- facilitate the anticipated increase in transition of new entrants due to the BC government's upcoming initiative to regulate the term "organic" to only certified organic operators
- gather accurate data about BC's organic sector in order to encourage smart growth and track the impact of organics in BC

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

### **Will I be able to use the Organic Online System for my 2018 application?**

COABC has created a tool that can be used by any CB that is a member of COABC. Each CB has identified a strategy for adopting out the Organic

Online System that will best suit the needs of the CB and its members. Factors may include deadline for applications, CB capacity, and more. Please inquire with your CB for more information about when and how you will be able to use the Organic Online System.

### **What will I need to use the Organic Online System?**

To use the Organic Online System, you will require an Internet connection. Answers can be saved at any point, and you can return to the application later.

### **What if I don't have access to Internet or a computer?**

While we hope that members will see the value in using the Organic Online System, we understand that for some members, it won't be possible. CBs will have a PDF alternative that will be provided to members who aren't able to use the Organic Online System.

### **Will the Organic Online System make the application process more complicated?**

The goal is to make the application and renewal process easier for operators. The first time you use the Organic Online System, you will complete an "initial application." It may seem more difficult or take more time than usual as you



adjust to the online application system. However, after you submit your initial application through the Organic Online System, you will find that renewals will be much simpler and reduce the amount of time you spend on renewals each year.

## What does the Organic Online System look like?

Here are some sample screenshots of the Organic Online System operator portal:

### Organic Online System portal Login page:

**Enterprise Profile page:** this is where you can edit your address, information about your operation, and where you can view your certificate information, including what products your certificate covers.

**Application page:** this is where you'll complete your organic plan. The application process is divided into sections, and you can navigate the sections using the sidebar on the left or the previous/next buttons. You can use the "Save" button on the bottom right to save your application and return to it another day.

### Will I have to fill out all the forms again every year I renew?

No. After you have completed an initial application through the Organic Online System, your application will be stored. When you apply for renewal the following year, your renewal will automatically populate with the answers and attachments you provided the previous year. You will need to review the information and make any necessary changes before submitting the application.

### How can I learn how to use the Organic Online System?

COABC is currently developing a user guide for operators that will include step by step instructions for all aspects of the Organic Online System operator portal, including how to set up an account, how to start an application, how to complete an application, how to use the "Tasks" function, and how to submit "Approval Requests". You will also have access to a library of short videos that will demonstrate how



# ENEWS SPECIAL EDITION --- ORGANIC ONLINE SYSTEM

to use different aspects of the Organic Online System operator portal.

## **What are "Approval Requests"?**

Approval Requests are a new feature of the Organic Online System that will simplify the process for getting something (ie Inputs) approved for use by your CB. You will be able to submit your Approval Requests through the Organic Online System operator portal and get notified when your CB admin has responded to your request.

## **Will anything change in the way my CB communicates with me?**

The Organic Online System will be able to send you notifications by email. CB admins also have the ability to assign you "Tasks". This means that if a CB admin requires additional information from you, they may choose to use the Organic Online System to assign you a task, rather than sending you an email requesting the information. This allows both you and the CB admin to keep track of communications.

## **How safe is my information?**

All information submitted to the Organic Online System is securely stored on servers located in Canada, and backed up regularly. The Organic Online System was designed with the security of your information as a priority.

## **What if I want to certify a new component of my operation?**

It is possible that operators may add a new component to their operation. For example, an operator may add a poultry component to a vegetable operation. When it is time to renew your Crop Plan, you will have the opportunity to select any additional Plans, such as Poultry in this example. Your Crop application will be a renewal, while additional applications will be new. Please contact your CB if you would like to certify a new component of your operation before your renewal is due, or if you want to add additional land and you are not sure of the status.

## **What if I no longer want to certify a component of my operation?**

It is possible that operators may no longer need to certify a component of their operation. For example, an operator producing vegetables and poultry may discontinue the poultry component. When it is time to renew, you will have the opportunity to remove any Plans that are no longer relevant, such as Poultry in this example. You will then still be able to proceed with renewing your Crop application.

## **Will I be able to download my application as a PDF?**

Yes, you will be able to download your application as a PDF once it has been submitted. You can then store the PDF on your computer and/or print for your records.

What if I have technical difficulties?

If you have trouble accessing the Organic Online System, please contact your CB admin <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/cb/>. They will be able to assist you.

## **What if I forget my password?**

If you forget your password, please contact your CB admin and they will reset your password for you. You will then be able to log in and change your password. We recommend making note of your Organic Online System password or using a Password Manager.

If you have a question that isn't answered in the FAQs, please email [info@certifiedorganic.bc.ca](mailto:info@certifiedorganic.bc.ca).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND UPDATES, PLEASE VISIT** [certifiedorganic.bc.ca/OrganicOnlineSystem.php](http://certifiedorganic.bc.ca/OrganicOnlineSystem.php)

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