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ALR Consultation Period Closes August 22

The BC Ministry of Agriculture is conducting consultations regarding the changes to the ALC act until August 22. Everyone is encouraged to participate.

The Ministry states that “the consultations with B.C. farmers will inform the drafting of regulations related to Bill 24.”

Minister of Agriculture Norm Letnick met with representatives from the B.C. Agriculture Council (BCAC), the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and the Agricultural Land

Commission (ALC) to discuss the consultation process in early July. The questions identified as key for the consultations, are listed on the consultation website, <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/landreserve>. Input can be submitted through the above website or through the dedicated email address, ALCA_Feedback@gov.bc.ca

Online submissions will be the only way for the general public to give input to the formation of the regulatory changes.

OrganicInputs.ca Becomes the Main National List of Approved Inputs

In the spring of 2014, the Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network (ACORN) and the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society (PACS) agreed to support OrganicInputs.ca as the main national inputs directory, in replacement of their own inputs lists. An ACORN staff member said, “Supporting this national tool makes sense. Having a unified directory of approved inputs for organic production saves valuable time and ensures that the information stays current and relevant to the needs of the site users.” And from the PACS Certification Committee; “We get lots of enquiries from manufacturers interested in listing their products and we have referred all of them to OrganicInputs.ca for a long time now.

We really like the website and find it easy to use.” All of the products in the OrganicInputs.ca directory are either approved for use or have been found compliant according to the Canadian organic standard by an Organic Certification Body or the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI).

The directory is more than just a list of products, it is an educational tool. By typing in a problem into the search bar, organic producers and gardeners can find solutions to a large range of production challenges. With over 700 products in the directory, including soil amendments, pest management products as well as cleaners and sanitizers, site visitors have a great selection of products to choose from.

Organic Week: Sept 20-28, 2014

This year marks the 5th anniversary of Canada’s National Organic Week.

From September 20th to 28th the largest annual celebration of organic food, farming and products will be held across the country.

You are encouraged to organize your own Organic Week events! Last year, more than 150 events showcased the benefits of organics and their positive impact on the environment and communities.

There are many ways to celebrate Organic Week and you’ll find lots of inspiring ideas at www.organicweek.ca to help you start planning your event.

Register your event by September 15th and your event will be promoted on the organicweek.ca interactive events map.

Don’t miss this opportunity to get involved!

Watch for more information about COABC Organic Week events on Twitter and Facebook.





Draft of National Standards for Organic Production: Now Available for Public Review

Since the fall of 2013, the Working Groups (WG) and the Technical Committee on Organic Agriculture (TC) have been working on the review of the Canadian Organic Standards. Proposals for revision were received from many members of the organic sector. Each proposal has been carefully reviewed according to the requirements set out in Section 10 of CAN/CGSB-32.310 General Principles and Management Standards and in accordance with the procedures established by the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB).

The draft amendments are now available for a period of 60 days for public review from July 22, 2014 to September 22, 2014.

To enable participation, the following documents are available on the front page of the OFC website, <http://www.organicfederation.ca/>;

- 1) CAN/CGSB-32.310 General Principles and Management Standards (draft standard),
- 2) CAN/CGSB-32.311 Permitted Substances Lists (draft standard) and
- 3) Minutes from two of the Technical Committee meetings.



EVENTS

Feast of Fields

Date: Sept. 14, 2014

Location: Kildara Farms, Sidney

Feast of Fields, a 4 hour wandering harvest festival, is an annual fundraising event for Farm Folk City Folk. With a wine glass and linen napkin in hand, you can taste the very best of BC from chefs, farmers, fishers, ranchers, food artisans, vintners, brewers, distillers and other beverage producers from across the province. Feast of Fields highlights the connections between farmer and chef, field and table, and farm folks and city folks. Feast of Fields is a gastronomic journey towards a sustainable, local food system.

For more information visit, www.farmfolkcityfolk.ca

National Organic Week

Date: Sept. 20-28, 2014

This is the largest annual celebration of organic food, farming and products across the country. Organic advocates across Canada are encouraged to celebrate with us. In Canada, there's a lot to celebrate. We're supporting a growing organic sector, transparent food source and a source of food that is sustainable in the future.

Check www.organicweek.ca for events.

Organic Processing Inspector Course

Date: Nov 10-14, 2014

Location: Mississauga, Ontario

Cost: \$1750

The course includes comprehensive training on the Canadian Organic Standards and four days of instruction including a field trip to a certified organic operation, plus one-half day for testing. Core instruction includes: how to conduct processing facility inspections, applicable organic certification processing/handling standards, regulatory requirements, audit control, HACCP/Organic Control Points, structural pest management, sanitation, ingredients, labeling, inspection report writing, communication skills, and inspector protocols. For more information visit, www.cog.ca.

Gathering the Seeds of Knowledge: 2nd biennial BCSeed Gathering

Date: Nov 14-16, 2014

Location: Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Richmond, BC

Theme: Sharing the knowledge of seed growing and saving, with an emphasis on learning from our seed saving knowledge keepers.



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NEWSLETTER LINKS

BC Agriculture Council COABC is a member under the Community Agriculture seat:

<http://www.bcac.bc.ca/>

OFC info-bio:

www.organicfederation.ca/newsletter

BCSPCA:

<http://www.spca.bc.ca/>

REMINDERS

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 www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php.

For complaints against an interprovincial traded product see the COO complaint form at certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php "www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php"

Complaints on this form are to be directed to the Canada Organic Office directly <mailto:OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca>

Social Media

COABC is on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Certified-Organic-Associations-of-BC/208548192519986 and on Twitter, username [coabccanada](https://twitter.com/coabccanada). Join our online community.

Remember...

Got an Organic Question? Try Cyber-help www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/index.

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.

