

- COABC Conference
- Mandatory Organic Regulations
- OFC Short Films
- Events



## Conference 2016

Only one more week to go until the 2016 Conference.

Generous donations for the Silent Auction have been made, including food items, informational books and outdoor gear. Items for the Silent Auction can be dropped off at the conference as well.

For more information: [www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/conference2016/](http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/conference2016/)

### **Organic Policy Update, BC Ministry of Agriculture**

Susan Smith from the Ministry of Agriculture will be providing an update on the Mandatory Regulations on Saturday afternoon, providing a background on the decision to make a regulatory change.

### **Connecting Young Farmers to Opportunity**

Chantal Keely will be presenting on what Farm Credit Canada has to offer young farmers.

### **Healthy Honeybee Colonies**

Doug Gordon is a beekeeper in the North Okanagan and will be presenting with James and Max Macdonald. On Saturday morning they will be presenting on keeping honeybee colonies healthy.

### **Seed Saving**

Jen Cody will be presenting on advanced seed saving practices on Sunday. Jen is a founding member of the BCDSN and BC Eco Seeds Coop. She is also an active coordinator and founder of Growing Opportunities Community Farm.

### **Climate Change Adaption**

Presented by Emily MacNair on Saturday afternoon. A high level summary of the collaborative planning and projects of the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI) will be provided.

### **Small Scale Organic Hops Production**

This presentation examines the feasibility of commercial hops farming at smaller scales using organic methods.

## **The Beginning of a New (Certified) Organic Era in BC**

### **BC Ministry of Agriculture Introduces Mandatory Organic Regulations to the House**

Soon, if you see the word “organic” on a food product in BC, you won’t have to wonder if it’s certified, or how it’s been grown. That’s because last year, BC’s Ministry of Agriculture committed to bringing clarity to organic foods sold across the province and on Monday, Feb.15, 2016, the provincial government took action and introduced their Mandatory Organic regulation to the House.

For BC’s organic farmers, processors, and consumers, this is an important step forward. Currently, products sold in grocery stores or outside the province must be certified to carry the organic label; the new regulations extend that to farmers’ markets, farm gate sales, retail stores as of 2018. The COABC is excited to continue working with the Ministry of Agriculture to build a strong organic sector that promotes consumer confidence and supports farmers and food producers.





## Organic producers engaging in research and innovation

A series of OFC short films presenting organic producers active in research and innovation is now complete!

Watch and learn about how producers and researchers are experimenting with organic apples, cranberries, tomatoes, strawberries, cucumbers, hops and nutraceuticals to protect these crops from weeds and get good yields.

All of these research activities are part of the Organic Science Cluster II project (2013-2018), and each film lasts from 4 to 9 minutes. The Organic Federation of Canada and the Organic Agriculture Center of Canada invite you to watch the films on YouTube.

- Organic apples under exclusion nets at Verger des frères
- Optimal irrigation for organic cranberries
- Geothermal and organic vegetables
- Organic Nutraceuticals
- Organic flowers good for the environment
- Silicon, a valuable fungicide
- Searching for the best fertilization and lighting for the production of greenhouse vegetables



## EVENTS

### COABC Conference

COABC's Conference provides educational and networking opportunities for new and established farmers, as well as those keen to learn more about the world of organic farming.

WHEN: February 26, 27, and 28, 2016

LOCATION: The Prestige Hotel, Vernon

For more information: [www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca](http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca)

### Do-It Yourself Science on the Farm

by Beyond the Market in 3 locations

Research and experimentation has always been an integral part of a resilient farming operation. With a lack of formal agriculture research in the region and increasing seasonal variability due to climate change, farm operators need to learn the tools to be able to conduct their own research and find innovative solutions on their farms. The workshop is a hands-on workshop facilitated by Serena Black of Northern Grown Consulting.

#### Vanderhoof

WHEN: Thursday, February 25, 2016 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM (PST)

WHERE: Community Futures Stuart Nechako - 2750 Burrard Ave Vanderhoof, BC

#### Prince George

WHEN: Friday, February 26, 2016 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM (PST)

WHERE: Community Futures Fraser Fort George - 1566 7 Ave Prince George, BC

#### Dunster

WHEN: Saturday, February 27, 2016 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM (PST)

WHERE: Dunster Community Hall - Dunster, BC

### Farmer 2 Farmer

A one-day conference, networking, learning and sharing event for farmers on Vancouver Island. Practical workshops and ample networking opportunities.

WHEN: March 1, 2016, 5:00-9:00PM

WHERE: Saanich Fairgrounds, 1528 Stellys Crossroad, Saanichton

For more information: [farmer2farmer.ca](http://farmer2farmer.ca)

### BCAFM Conference

Join us if you are a farmers' market organizer, grower, small scale food processor, artisan, or agricultural and community leader. We will deliver networking opportunities, new skills and inspiration.

WHERE: Delta Grand Okanagan Resort & Conference Centre, Kelowna

WHEN: March 4 - 6, 2016

For more information: [www.bcfarmersmarket.org](http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org)



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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](http://www.organicfederation.ca/newsletter)

BCSPCA:

<http://www.spc.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](http://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](http://certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php)" [www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php](http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php)

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

### Social Media

COABC is on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/pages/Certified-Organic-Associations-of-BC/208548192519986](http://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](http://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.

