

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Group Insurance
- Organic Survey
- OFC President Steps Down
- Events

COABC Group Insurance QUOTE

COABC will be obtaining a quote from Investors group on the possibility of a Group Benefits policy for the Association.

In order to formulate a quote, Investors Group will need some basic information. Please be aware that a representative may be contacting you to gauge interest and gather this information.

The idea behind an association plan is to pool all the people within the association and “create” a large group which the insurance company looks upon as one large company.

The question you may ask yourself is how does this benefit me and my business?

1. Rates for anything to do with Group Benefits, for example Drugs, Dental, Vision will be substantially cheaper.

2. As a large group there is less chance rates will increase because the risk is spread amongst more people.

3. There will be options to tailor the plan to your needs.

4. Because Investors Group is running the plan members will have access to financial planning services including mortgages, investments, personal insurance, and banking.

5. There will be a team dedicated to the Association Plan and its members.

COABC Conference

The BC Organic conference held in Chilliwack this year was sold out. From February 27th to March 1st, 2015 members of the organic community gathered. There were lively discussions around the theme of Livestock and many other topics as well.

Thank you to everyone who contributed time, energy and product to make this conference one of our most successful.



Organic Sector Survey

At the end of January, the Ministry of Agriculture announced that they would be regulating the word organic.

“The proposed change will require all products marketed as “organic” in B.C. to be certified under either a provincial or national certification program. Operators producing and selling their organic products strictly within B.C. will require provincial certification. B.C. companies with customers in other provinces or countries will require certification by a federally accredited certification body, just as they do today.”

As part of the consultation process, the Ministry has issued a survey for the organic sector. The survey will close March 31, 2015.

If you have not already done so please complete and submit your survey, so your feedback will be heard by the Ministry.

You can find the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5PG2KPC>





The President's Remarks: A message from Ted Zettel (excerpt)

Thanks to our directors, the staff of provincial associations, our government ex-officios, and everyone who makes up OFC directly or indirectly for their involvement; it has been a great pleasure to get to know many people from across the country personally – to meet you at provincial meetings, to visit some of your farms and homes. Organic people are great! Hospitable, down to earth. It has been a privilege to be in this position – a privilege, a great learning experience and a rare pleasure. I am grateful and consider myself blessed.

Thanks to Nicole, who has been the foundation of OFC during my entire time as President over the last 6 years. I am acutely aware of how difficult it is for a single staff person to toil away day after day with a boss who is 500 miles away, working as a volunteer, often inaccessible, who leads a volunteer Board who are so busy with their own work that they often don't respond to any communication. It takes a very special person to persevere under these conditions and manage single-handedly a number of very complex projects, involving large sums of money, dozens of partners, a horde of volunteers and layer upon layer of government red tape. I would not take on Nicole's job at any salary. In my opinion she deserves all the credit for the sustaining of our organization – in the midst of severe criticism at times – over the past years.

EVENTS

Farmland Connections Conference

Date: March 20-22, 2015

Location: Plaza Hotel, 405 Victoria St, Kamloops, BC

Join us to find farmland in BC's interior, find farmers for your land, learn how to start and run a successful farm business and connect with agrarian opportunities. Information and registration at: kamloopsfarmlandconnections.com

Kamloops Seedy Saturday

Date: March 21, 2015, 10 am -2 pm

Location: TRU Hall, Kamloops, BC

Seedy Saturday is the day when the new gardening season begins in earnest. You can have an opportunity to learn more about gardening, hone and share your gardening skills, and buy or exchange vegetable and flower seeds and indoor and outdoor plants.

Environmental organizations and community groups will have information tables on topics of interest to gardeners, and there will be a whole range of workshops and activities for kids!

For more information visit www.kamloopsseedsaturday.squarespace.com/.

MarketSafe Course

Date: March 25, 2015

Location: Surrey City Centre Library, Surrey, BC

MarketSafe is a food safety training program for farmers, food processors and producers who make, bake or grow products to sell at local farmers' markets, farm gates or other types of temporary food markets. MarketSafe was developed by the BC FOODSAFE Secretariat in partnership with the BC Association of Farmers' Markets, and is supported by the Regional Health Authorities, the BC Centre for Disease Control, and the BC Ministry of Agriculture.

For more information visit www.bcfarmersmarket.org

Farm Business Plan Bootcamp

Date: March 29, 2015

Location: Best Western, Terrace, BC

Kick start your farm business with this intensive two-day business planning bootcamp designed specifically for the agriculture sector. This event is open to farm business operators in all stages of business development, from start-up to expansion.

For more information visit: eventbrite.com/e/farm-business-plan-bootcamp-terrace-tickets-14793835761?aff=es2



ThinkCanadaOrganic



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.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.

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.

