



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Beginning of a New (Certified) Organic Era in BC BC Ministry of Agriculture Introduces Mandatory Organic Regulations to the House

Victoria, BC (February 15, 2016) – 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 today, the provincial government took action as Agriculture Minister Norm Letnick introduced Bill 11, the Food and Agricultural Products Classification Act in the House. For BC’s organic farmers, processors, and consumers, this is an important step forward.

COABC would like to thank the BC Ministry of Agriculture for appreciating the value of this new regulation. We are 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.

With the new regulations, BC consumers can be confident knowing that certified organic is a choice that’s healthy for people and the planet. “It’s been really hard on consumers not knowing what’s going on in the marketplace – what organic means, and what’s certified organic. This will definitely reduce the murkiness in the waters around the word organic in British Columbia,” Wakeling says. 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.

“I’m so grateful that the government has taken this step,” says Carmen Wakeling, owner of Eatmore Sprouts and COABC Co-President. “As a producer that sells and distributes throughout Western Canada, I see a lot of value in identifying ourselves as British Columbian and certified organic, and I think there’s a place for all producers, if they’re interested in sustainability, to take up the cause.”

COABC invites all producers to explore certification, and the wealth of support available to them in the certified organic community. COABC offers [online toolkits](#) to guide producers through the certification process. For more information and updates, please visit [COABC](#) and the [BC Ministry of Agriculture](#).

About COABC: The Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia (COABC) is an umbrella association representing organic certifying agencies in BC. The organization aims to provide consumer confidence in the organic product certification, assist producers to increase market share, and support regional development of organic food production, processing and marketing. COABC strives to ensure high quality organic products are produced in sufficient quantity and in a manner that nurtures healthy soil, biological diversity and ecological harmony.

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