

Fact Sheet for Producers: Use of British Columbia Certified Organic Official Marks

The Official Marks are:

The Phrase: *British Columbia Certified Organic*

The Program Symbol: composite mark which included the checkmark and the words: *British Columbia Certified Organic*.

The phrase and symbol belong to the Province of BC.

The symbol or phrase can only be used IF:

- Your enterprise has a current, valid certificate from a certification body accredited by COABC.
- You have signed the “Consent Conditions”. This is a legal document that details the contract between the organic operator and COABC/BCMAL and sets out the conditions attached to the use of the phrase, *British Columbia Certified Organic* and the Program

The symbol or phrase can only be used:

- On labels of certified organic products covered by your certificate
- In order to advertise or promote those certified organic products
- In order to sell or distribute certified organic products covered under a valid certificate from a certification body that is accredited by COABC.
- Organic operators who wish to have non-certified handlers, retailers, restaurateurs, or wholesalers promote their product through use of the Phrase or Program Symbol must apply directly to COABC for authorization.

The product has to be certified organic food product:

- The final product must be certified by a certification agency accredited by COABC.
- You can't use the program symbol or phrase on Transitional product.
- You can't use the program symbol or phrase on products produced or processed outside B.C.
- For processed or multi-ingredient products: only those products in the over 95% organic ingredients labeling category may use the Symbol or Phrase. Processing must be done at a certified organic processor, or by a processor who is certified for batch lots as described in COABC section 11.8.2
- **Your Certification Agency must review** and approve the label, advertising or promotional material if you use the Symbol or phrase.
- The product and its production must comply with all government regulations.

What else must be on the label?

The label must comply with CFIA labeling requirements

- The CFIA labeling Guide can be found on the Internet by searching Google for: CFIA label or at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/guide/ch1e.shtml>
- You can get your label checked by CFIA for free – it's a good idea – it is expensive to reprint labels. You will have to plan ahead – it can take weeks for the review to be completed. Phone and mail contact information can be found at the end of this document.

Certification identification must be on the label.

- After December 14, 2008 the name of the certification body must be on the label. This is a requirement of the CGSB (Canadian National) Standards-2006 and National Organic Products Regulations SOR/2006-338. If the product is being

processed or packed in a certified organic facility the certifier of the processing or of the responsible brand name holder must be on the label.

- If you label under a trade name or for someone else be sure to inform your certifier.
- The 5 digit COABC system certification number may also be put on the label, but if you are reprinting to put on the certifier's name you may wish to leave of the number for now, unless your certifier requires it.

Each organic ingredient must be identified as organic.

- On multi-ingredient products you must list identify each organic ingredient as organic. You can use an asterisk system if you like. You do not have to list the original certifier of each ingredient.

List of Documents you will need- available from your certifier

- Consent Conditions
- Symbol User's Guide
- Official, electronic version of checkmark symbol

Optional Form (check with your CB)

- Label review request form

Checkmark symbol use rules - Do Not Modify the Mark

- Use only the official versions of the checkmark symbol
- The checkmark symbol includes the words: "British Columbia Certified Organic" as shown in the Symbol User's Guide. You cannot leave the words out. Do not use the abbreviation B.C.
- You cannot change the "official mark" - not the words or the checkmark - it must be used as it is supplied in the electronic package.
- The logo must be either in black & white or in the colours specified in the "Symbol User's Guide". The electronic version has several shapes to choose from. If your label does not include black ink your certifier may allow you to print it in the darkest colour ink that appears on the label.
- Give your designer a copy of the "Symbol User's Guide", and a good electronic version of the logo so they can follow the rules. They need to be sure to leave the blank "exclusion zone" around the logo, and need to print the border of the symbol area if the label background is complex or busy.
- If you haven't already, you have to sign "Consent to Use Official Marks Declaration" to show that you have read all the rules that go with the use of the checkmark symbol or phrase. This must be signed and returned to your certifier before you use can use the logo.
- If you use the Phrase: *British Columbia Certified Organic* without the checkmark there are no particular rules about the typeface to be used, but you still need permission from your certifier.
- Do not translate *British Columbia Certified Organic* in the Symbol. This is not necessary even if the product is to be sold in Quebec.

Useful Contact Information:

Canadian Food Inspection Agency
400-4321 Still Creek Avenue
Burnaby, British Columbia
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Telephone: 604-666-6513
Facsimile: 604-666-1261

Canadian Food Inspection Agency
103-4475 Viewmont Avenue
Victoria, British Columbia
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