



British
Columbia
Certified
Organic

SAVE THE DATE!

#COABC2019 is just around the corner! Mark your calendars for February 22-24, 2019, at the Prestige Hotel in Vernon, BC. This year's theme is Celebrating Organics - we'll be adding workshop info to the COABC website in coming weeks, so stay tuned! certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/conference2019/

GROUNDWATER LICENCE DEADLINE APPROACHING!

In 2016, the provincial government made changes to the Water Sustainability Act, the rules that govern the use of surface water and groundwater in BC. The Water Sustainability Act is designed to protect our water supply, ensure it can be managed and protected as one interconnected resource now and into the future, and clarify the rights of groundwater users.

The new rules came into effect on February 29, 2016, and require anyone using groundwater for anything other than domestic use to apply for a water licence or use approval and pay fees and rentals. It is a legal requirement that anyone using groundwater for agriculture must apply for a groundwater licence by the deadline of March 1, 2019.

If you submit by the deadline government will consider when you first used the water to establish your first-in-time,

first-in-right (FITFIR) priority date. It is essential that organic farmers who are using groundwater apply for groundwater licences to ensure the security of the organic sector in times of drought.

"I feel that it is important to get your wells registered before March 1 2019. The process takes a bit of time but the people at the Front Counter are very helpful so make sure you ask for support. We did it earlier and we now have the security of knowing we will have priority access to the water we need to run our farming business. Although we have only paid for one year to date the cost was very reasonable," says COABC President and co-owner of Eatmore Sprouts Carmen Wakeling.

Existing groundwater users who apply for a water licence on or before March 1, 2019 will have the one time water licence application fee (minimum \$250) waived. Annual rentals accrue starting March 1, 2016, regardless of when an application is submitted during the three-year transition period that ends March 1, 2019. Fees vary based on how much water you are using and for what purpose(s).

Groundwater Licence Application: portal.nrs.gov.bc.ca/web/client/-/existing-use-groundwater-licence-application

More information: gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/water-licensing-rights/water-licences-approvals/new-requirements-for-groundwater-users

Water Rent and Application Fee Estimator: env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/water_rights/water_rental_rates/calculator/index.html

ORGANIC PRICE LIST

The Organic Price List for fruits and vegetables is updated weekly on the COABC website. The Organic Price List is an important market pricing reference to help growers sell without overcharging and losing sales, or worse, undercharging and eroding the market price for other growers. certifiedorganic.bc.ca/services/organicpricelist.php

ORGANIC CERTIFICATION REGULATION FAQ

Changes to BC's Organic Certification Regulation came into force on September 1, 2018, as 'organic' was adopted as a protected label. Wondering what that means for organic producers, and for producers who aren't certified? Check out the Ministry of Agriculture's Frequently Asked Questions: ow.ly/UkcW30mN9WH



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EVENTS



2020 STANDARDS REVIEW:

PARALLEL PRODUCTION FOR CROP PRODUCTION IN CANADA

Parallel production is back to the review process! Are you in favor of parallel production? Parallel production is not allowed in Canada but it is allowed in the US, and the EU prohibits it with exceptions. The issue is under debate at the level of the CGSB Committee on Organic Agriculture.

To weigh in visit: ofcbbc.wordpress.com/2018/10/30/parallel-production-for-crop-production-in-canada-acceptable-or-not/

THE QUESTION OF LIGHT

Can organic food be grown without natural light? This challenging question is being discussed amongst the Greenhouse Working Group involved in the review of the Canadian Organic Standards. Right now, the Canadian Organic Standards permit “supplemental lighting” in greenhouses and other structures. This was interpreted to mean that natural daylight is required.

The petitioners proposed artificial light allowed as the sole source of light. They maintain that growing plants using natural light is not possible during the winter in much of Canada, particularly the North. The days are too short and the daylight too weak to provide adequate light. Also, artificial lighting can be used to grow food inside warehouses in urban areas.

More info: organicfederation.ca/sites/documents/COS%20Review%20The%20question%20of%20lighting%20Dec%202010.pdf

SEEDY SATURDAYS

When: Multiple dates, 2019
Where: Multiple locations

Seedy Saturdays across BC! bcseeds.org/events/

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC & SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

When: Jan 17-19, 2019
Where: UBC Robson Square, Vancouver

From pedagogies for sustainability to transformative social change: onsustainability.com/2019-conference

YOUNG AGRARIANS METRO VANCOUVER WINTER MIXER

When: Jan 19-20, 2019
Where: Multiple locations, Langley

A two day Mixer from YA, with an all day Ben Hartman of *The Lean Farm* workshop, plus farm tours, potlucks, and more: youngagrarians.org/metrovanmixer2019

PACIFIC AGRICULTURE SHOW

When: Jan 24-26, 2019
Where: Trade-Ex Centre, Abbotsford

The Pacific Agriculture Show will showcase the latest and

most innovative equipment and technology for the agriculture industry: agricultureshow.net

ISLANDS AGRICULTURE SHOW

When: Feb 1-2, 2019
Where: Saanich Fair Grounds

A venue for farmers, rural landowners, farm organizations, equipment dealers, service providers and the general public to learn, connect and engage: iashow.ca

YOUNG AGRARIANS CENTRAL BC WINTER MIXER

When: Feb 9-10, 2019
Where: Thompson Rivers University, Williams Lake Campus

The first ever YA Central BC Winter Mixer, with two days of workshops and networking: youngagrarians.org/williamslakemixer2019

#COABC2019 CONFERENCE

When: Feb 22-24, 2019
Where: Prestige Hotel, Vernon

COABC's annual gathering. This year's theme: Celebrating Organics!: youngagrarians.org/williamslakemixer2019





REMINDERS

BCCO LOGO

COR 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

BC Certified Organic Checkmark complaint information can be found at: certifiedorganic.bc.ca/standards/complaints.php.

For complaints against an interprovincial traded product see the COR complaint form at inspection.gc.ca/food/organic-products/file-a-complaint/eng/1518546270126/1518546271092

PLANNING A MOVE?

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 the BC Organic Grower and other materials.

ORGANIC PRICE LIST

View the Organic Price List, updated weekly, here: certifiedorganic.bc.ca/services/organicpricelist.php

COABC YOUTUBE VIDEOS

COABC has some awesome videos up on our YouTube channel. Watch, share, and spread a little organic inspiration! As we eagerly await spring, our current favourite is all about seeds: "Watching seeds sprout is pure magic," says Arzeena Hamir, one of the growers who shared their love of seeds with us for this video. Check out *Seeds of Knowledge* and other videos featuring BC Organic farmers here: youtube.com/watch?v=DUCBF_L0Bg



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NEWSLETTER LINKS

BC Agriculture Council:
COABC is a member under the
Community Agriculture seat
www.bcac.bc.ca

OFC info-bio:
www.organicfederation.ca/newsletter

BCSPCA:
www.sPCA.bc.ca

CYBER HELP

Cyberhelp for Farmers is currently being redeveloped.

