



British  
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Certified  
Organic

## #COABC 2018

Thank you to all who braved snow storms to join us this past weekend in Abbotsford to learn, network, and celebrate 25 years of COABC!

Dawn Morrison opened the weekend by reminding us of the interrelatedness of all things and the importance of including all living beings in food systems.

On Saturday, Kent Mullinix went straight to the heart of the issues facing our food system, preparing us well for a day of workshops that help us along the path to a more just, ecologically based food system.

The weather kept a few presenters from making it to the conference, and it is a testament to the knowledge and engagement in the COABC community that volunteers came forward to fill those slots.

A big congrats to Rebecca Kneen, this year's Brad Reid award recipient!

Stay tuned for a full conference recap in the BC Organic Grower's Spring issue! A number of presentations from the weekend will be posted on the COABC website: [certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/conference2018/presentations.php](http://certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/conference2018/presentations.php)

## BUDGET 2018

Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC initiatives are the focus of Budget 2018 for the B.C. Agriculture sector. The new budget sees funding for the B.C. Agrifood Sector increasing by \$29 million over three years.

Aimed at encouraging consumption of B.C. products and building resiliency in the sector, the increased agriculture budget will go towards initiatives such as assisting beginning farmers, supporting the tree fruit and nut industry, revitalizing the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR), and enhancing a Buy BC strategy.

For more on Budget 2018: [certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/newsmedia/PressRelease\\_Budget\\_2018.pdf](http://certifiedorganic.bc.ca/infonews/newsmedia/PressRelease_Budget_2018.pdf)

## STRATEGIC PLAN

COABC released the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 at the conference. Contributions from across the sector helped create an ambitious, focused direction for the next five years. See it here: [certifiedorganic.bc.ca/docs/COABC\\_StrategicPlan\\_2018-2023.pdf](http://certifiedorganic.bc.ca/docs/COABC_StrategicPlan_2018-2023.pdf)

## ALR REVITALIZATION

An advisory committee is currently leading a review of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The public engagement process that is currently underway will be essential to the recommendations the advisory provides.

Make sure your voice is heard on important ALR issues - you can provide written feedback in several ways:

Read the Discussion Paper and complete the online survey: [engage.gov.bc.ca/agriculturallandreserve/](http://engage.gov.bc.ca/agriculturallandreserve/)

Email the Advisory Committee at [ALR\\_ALCRRevitalization@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALR_ALCRRevitalization@gov.bc.ca)

Send your submission by mail to:  
Minister's Advisory Committee  
Revitalization of ALR and ALC  
C/o Ministry of Agriculture  
PO Box 9120  
Stn. Prov. Govt.  
Victoria BC V8W 9B4

Comments must be in by April 30, 2018, but the sooner the better!



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# EVENTS



## STANDARDS REVIEW

Minister Lawrence MacAulay announced last January 26 that “the Government of Canada will provide the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) the necessary funds to cover costs associated with 2020 Canadian Organic Standards review”.

Some of the government support for the review will go directly to the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB), which is an agency of the federal government that currently owns 350 standards relating to various industrial activities, ranging from transportation of dangerous goods to textiles, and including Government of Canada forms, protective clothing, transportation fuels, and organic agriculture.

The CGSB manages the review process of their standards by creating technical committees composed of members from industry that have the expertise to assess and modernize the standards that regulate their own activities with which they shall comply.

The content of each standard is determined by the concerned industry that, in return, pays the CGSB for the management of its review; CGSB remains the owner of the standards that it maintains and revises.

Consequently, the Government of Canada will cover the CGSB fee for the review of the Canadian Organic Standards, but the review of any national standard also includes other significant costs.

To ensure transparency and consensus, any review is first based on industry-wide consultations held to hear the industry concerns and prepare the recommendations that the CGSB Committee will consider. We are currently in discussions with the Government of Canada regarding funding mechanisms to support these consultations.

More info: [www.organicfederation.ca/sites/documents/180209%20Infobio%20February%202018.pdf](http://www.organicfederation.ca/sites/documents/180209%20Infobio%20February%202018.pdf)

## BC FARMERS' MARKETS CONFERENCE

When: Mar 2-4, 2018

Where: Inn at Laurel Point, Victoria

The conference is designed for farmers' market organizers, board members, vendors, small scale food processors, and agricultural community leaders to learn new skills, network, and come away inspired to build BC's thriving farmers' market sector. More info: [bcfarmersmarket.org/markets/bcafm-conference-agm](http://bcfarmersmarket.org/markets/bcafm-conference-agm)

## RAINWATER HARVESTING WORKSHOP

When: Mar 7, 2018

Where: UVIC, Victoria

Utilizing the Permaculture Principle of 'Catch and Store Energy', we will study and apply design concepts for capturing and utilizing rainwater at the garden. More info: [www.facebook.com/events/373620743048791/](https://www.facebook.com/events/373620743048791/)

## YOUNG AGRARIANS LOWER MAINLAND LAND LINK

When: Mar 11, 2018

Where: Richmond Cultural Centre, Richmond

Want land? Got land? If you're a farmer seeking land to lease or a farmland owner with land available, join Young Agrarians for networking and info about land agreements.

More info: [youngagrarians.org/richmondlandlink2018](http://youngagrarians.org/richmondlandlink2018)

## WEBINAR: LEAN FARM MANAGEMENT

When: Mar 6 & 13, 2018

Where: Online

Join Young Agrarians and author Ben Hartman for 2 webinars focused on how lean principles of efficiency can be applied to your farm enterprise to decrease waste and increase profitability. More info: [youngagrarians.org/lean-farm-management-webinar/](http://youngagrarians.org/lean-farm-management-webinar/)

## FREE FARM BUSINESS PLANNING WORKSHOP

When: Mar 1, 8, & 22, 2018

Where: Various

Register now for this three part series on March 1st, 8th and 22nd. Chris is a great presenter and is sure to motivate you to get your business planning on track! More info: [www.kpu.ca/isfs/shortcourse-businessplanning](http://www.kpu.ca/isfs/shortcourse-businessplanning)





## 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](https://youtube.com/watch?v=DUCBF_L0Bg)



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## 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

Canada Organic Regime 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 COR complaint form at [certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php](http://certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/cor.php) or [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 Regime directly mail to: [OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca)

### 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.

### NEWSLETTER LINKS

BC Agriculture Council:  
COABC is a member under the  
Community Agriculture seat  
[www.bcac.bc.ca/](http://www.bcac.bc.ca/)

OFC info-bio:  
[www.organicfederation.ca/  
newsletter](http://www.organicfederation.ca/newsletter)

BCSPCA:  
[www.spca.bc.ca/](http://www.spca.bc.ca/)

### CYBER HELP

Cyberhelp for Farmers is currently being redeveloped.

