



Chapter 2 - Canada Organic Regime

Introduction

This chapter of the CAEQ Accreditation Guide covers requirements that a certification body must comply to be recognized under the Canada Organic Regime. It means to be accredited by the CFIA and to be under the oversight of the CAEQ as a Conformity Verification Body. This chapter must be combined with the chapter I of this guide which is based on the ISO/IEC 17065 (Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services)

Scope

Legal basis

Considering the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR)* – Part 13, paragraph 360:



Any person who wishes to be accredited as a certification body must apply for the accreditation, in writing, to a conformity verification body and must undergo an assessment, in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011, to verify

- *(a) their compliance with ISO/IEC 17065;*
- *(b) their knowledge with respect to organic certification and that of their employees and of any persons acting on their behalf; and*
- *(c) the validity of their certification methodology and the validity of the results of that methodology.*

Stakeholders

There are 3 main players:

- I. Certification bodies (CBs) accredited by the CFIA which are responsible to certify organic products.

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- II. Conformity Verification bodies (CVBs) which are responsible to assess and monitor the CBs and to recommend their accreditation to the CFIA.
- III. The Canada Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) – the competent authority as defined in the Canada Organic Regime which supervises all the system. The CFIA designates the CVBs and accredits the CBs.

Who can apply to be accredited under the Canada Organic Regime?

- I. All CBs which have operators in Canada.
- II. All CBs which have operators outside Canada which intend to export organics products in Canada and are not cover by an equivalency arrangement.



Access on page of organic equivalency arrangements with other countries:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/general-food-requirements-and-guidance/organic-products/equivalence-arrangements/eng/1311987562418/1311987760268>

Accreditation requirements

All CBs which apply to be accredited by the CFIA must comply with the following requirements:

- Demonstrate to the CVB that it complies with ISO/IEC 17065 requirements - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services [See chapter 1]
- Demonstrate to the CVB that it complies with *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations* (Part 13 – Organic products)
- Demonstrate to the CVB that products are certified according to:
 - *Organic Production Systems - General Principles and Management Standards (CAN/CGSB-32.310)*
 - *Organic Production Systems - Permitted Substances Lists (CAN/CGSB-32.311)*

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- *Organic Production Systems - Aquaculture - General principles, Management Standards and Permitted Substances Lists (CAN/CGSB-32.312)*

For more information, please visit <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/general-food-requirements-and-guidance/organic-products/aquaculture-products/eng/1526564977758/1526565100440>

- Demonstrate to the CVB that it complies with *Canada Organic Regime Operating Manual* requirements
- Demonstrate to the CVB that it complies with *CFIA directives and notes*

Safe Food for Canadians Regulations

Safe Food for Canadians Regulations has entered into force on January 15, 2019 replacing the Organic Products Regulations (2009).

Under Part 13 of the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations*, products must be certified as organic according to the Canadian Organic Standards. The SFCR also outlines the organic certification system known as the Canada Organic Regime.

It contains requirements for the different players under the Canada Organic Regime.

Access on internet:

<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2018-108/index.html>



Attention! CB cannot be accredited to certify products outside the scope of the SFCR. Example: Commodities such as tobacco or cannabis plants and their cultivation, textiles, cosmetics, pet food, and natural health products are outside the scope of the Canada Organic Regime overseen by the CFIA. Products that are excluded from the scope cannot be certified under the Canada Organic Regime and cannot bear the Canada Organic Logo.

Organic Production Systems Standards

Organic agriculture production is based on principles that support healthy practices. These principles aim to increase the quality and the durability of the environment through specific management and production methods.

Access on internet to the standard 32.310:

<http://www.publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.854643/publication.html>

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Without limited to this list, inputs are used in the organic production as fertilizers, feed additives, soil amendments, health care products, processing aids, pest control substances, cleaners, disinfectants and sanitizers.

Access on internet to the standard 32.311:

<http://www.publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.854645/publication.html>

Organic aquaculture products referenced in the standard 32.312 are derived from a production system that seeks to nurture ecosystems through its management practices in order to achieve sustainable productivity and provides weed, pest and disease control through enhancement of biodiversity, recycling of plant and animal residues, crop selection and rotation, water management, and fallowing.

Access on internet to the standard 32.312:



<http://www.publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.851011/publication.html>

Canada Organic Regime Operating Manual

The purpose of the Canada Organic Regime is to regulate all parties involved in the certification of organic products (including operators, Certification Bodies and Conformity Verification Bodies) and to verify all applicable regulatory requirements, standards and guidance documents are being met. The *Canada Organic Regime Operating Manual* contains policies and procedures for activities applicable to the COR. The manual provides overview of the procedure to be followed when CFIA and CVB enter into an Agreement, the accreditation and the certification procedures. The certification body must implement a quality system and a certification process which comply with those requirements. In addition, the manual covers the use of the Canada organic logo, consumer and trade complaints, grower group certification and interpretation of organic standards (SIC).

▸ *If there is a difference between the COR Operating Manual and the SFCR, the latter prevails.*


Access on internet: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/organic-products/certification-and-verification/operating-manual/eng/1389199079075/1544800597955?chap=0>

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CFIA Directives and notes

In order to precise some requirements or to mandate procedures, the CFIA issues directives and notes that the certification body must follow.

Access on internet: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/general-food-requirements-and-guidance/organic-products/guidance-documents/eng/1327864600810/1327864681246>

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