



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Organic Federation of Canada celebrates Organic Week and invites new farmers and consumers to join the organic community

Montreal, Quebec – October 14, 2011: To celebrate Organic Week, the Organic Federation of Canada congratulates all of the Canadian farmers who are growing their crops the organic way and invites new farmers and consumers to join the organic community.

The Canadian organic sector is rapidly developing. Organic farming in Canada is now governed by standards that are referenced by the [Organic Products Regulations](#). Farmers and consumers can read and become familiar with the [Canadian Organic Standards](#) and [Permitted Substances Lists](#), posted on the website of the Canadian General Standards Board and free to access. With this free access on the Internet, consumers can now read about how animal welfare is protected and how crops are grown without synthetic fertilizers and pesticides when under Canadian organic management. Accredited certifying bodies and third-party inspectors certify organic farms and processing facilities to make sure that Canadian consumers are buying authentic organic food.

Applying the organic standards is now easier than ever; a [Standards Interpretation Committee](#) has been put in place to answer questions from operators when the wording of a paragraph of the standard is not clear. Transitioning to organic production is supported by extension services, such as the [Canadian Organic Extension Personnel Directory](#), and learning tools that are being developed to help farmers make the move to organic production. Almost 80% of the organic food consumed in Canada is imported; there is a great opportunity for Canadian farmers to capture this market.

Organic research is progressing under the [Organic Science Cluster](#) project, managed by the Organic Agriculture Center of Canada, and including 30 research activities involving over 50 Canadian researchers. Development of no-till production, organic greenhouse production, and high value fruit production are amongst the various research subjects that are part of the OSC. In addition, some of the organic practices being developed can also be applied by conventional farmers who are conscious of the environmental impact of their farming methods.

The introduction of sound standards framed by fair regulations has provided the opportunity for Canada to sign organic equivalency and trade arrangements with the [United States](#) and the [European Union](#). This means that Canadian organic producers can now sell their products as organic in these countries simply by complying with the Canadian Organic Standards. These agreements also mean that importing organic products from these same countries has been simplified; organic products certified to the US or EU organic standards are deemed equivalent and can be sold as organic in Canada.

Local, provincial and national associations are helping to represent organic producers and develop their organic practices. The [Organic Federation of Canada](#), which is composed of twelve Canadian organic associations, is proud of the Canadian system that has been put in place to support the organic sector. Growing organic food assures the health of the environment for present and future generations.

The OFC encourages Canadian consumers and farmers to participate to the Organic Week activities in their area and to buy organic food to promote sustainable agriculture and a healthy Canadian environment. Organic Week is a national celebration of organic farmers, organic food and all of the consumers who choose organic. Please visit the website [Organicweek.ca](#), as well as the Organic Week page on Facebook for details about the week and events happening across Canada.

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