

# Questions and Answers Regarding National Standards for Organic Agriculture

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The Canadian Food Inspection Agency, in partnership with the Organic Federation of Canada, has developed the Organic Standards Interpretation Committee (SIC). The objective of the Committee is to provide, to the Canada Organic Office, interpretive guidance on issues related to the National Standards for Organic Agriculture (CAN/CGSB 32.310 and CAN/CGSB32.311).



## Comment period – REPORT

September 20 to October 27 2017

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<http://organicfederation.ca/canadian-organic-standards>

### General principles and management standards

#### Livestock production

Justification to keep poultry confined indoors

##### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

**Is there a temperature difference between the inside of a poultry barn and the outside environment (for example, a 2 degree C differential) that will allow operators to keep poultry confined indoors? (368)**

No. A slight temperature difference in and of itself is not sufficient justification to keep poultry confined indoors, because other factors, such as relative humidity, rainfall, wind velocity, presence of predators, etc., must also be considered (6.1.3, 6.7.2, and 6.13.1).

#### Maple products

Waxed cardboard as fuel

##### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

**Can waxed cardboard pellets be used as fuel in maple syrup evaporators? (373)**

Yes. As long as the operator can demonstrate that this type of fuel does not affect the integrity of the maple syrup.

#### Mushroom production

Feather meal as mushroom substrate

##### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

**Can feather meal, compliant with table 4.2, be used as a mushroom substrate without being composted? (344)**

Feather meal made from organic poultry could be used as a mushroom substrate without being composted. 32.310 7.3.2.3 requires that other sources of feather meal be composted.

#### Wild crops

Weed control for wild crops

##### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

**Can salt be used for weed control on ground here organic wild harvested crops are stored? (367)**

No. First, the wild harvest area is to be "relatively undisturbed" (7.6.3) so using salt as a 'herbicide' in the area, even on a rock outcrop is prohibited as it would change the ecosystem. Second, salt is not authorized as an herbicide in Table 4.3.

## Permitted substances lists

### Table 4.2 Soil amendments and crop nutrition

#### Lactic acid produced by fermentation and extraction

##### **COMMENTED – NOT REVISED- TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

##### **Is lactic acid produced by fermentation and extraction allowed under the Canadian Organic Standards? Is that lactic acid considered to be synthetic? (331)**

Lactic acid produced by fermentation and extraction is permitted. Extraction processes must use permitted extractants (See Extractants, Table 4.2 and 4.3 and Extraction solvents, carriers and precipitation aids, Table 6.3). Lactic acid produced by fermentation and extraction is considered to be non-synthetic under the Canadian Organic Standards. Requirements with regard to substrates/growth media must be met. Chemical processes used to purify and/or extract substances are permitted as long as they do not create new molecules or involve processes specifically prohibited by the standard. (See synthetic substance, 3.65 (32.310)).

#### Gibberellic acid produced by fermentation and extraction

##### **COMMENTED – NOT REVISED- TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

##### **Is gibberellic acid produced by fermentation and extraction allowed under the Canadian Organic Standards? Is that gibberellic acid considered to be synthetic? (332)**

Gibberellic acid produced by fermentation and extraction is permitted. Extraction processes must use permitted extractants (See Extractants, Table 4.2 and 4.3). Gibberellic acid produced by fermentation and extraction is considered to be non-synthetic under the Canadian Organic Standards. Requirements with regard to substrates/growth media must be met. Chemical processes used to purify and/or extract substances are permitted as long as they do not create new molecules or involve processes specifically prohibited by the standard. (See synthetic substance, 3.65 (32.310))

### Table 4.3 — Crop production aids and materials

#### Acceptable substances in biodegradable mulches

##### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

##### **Can biodegradable mulches contain substances listed in PSL 4.2 or 4.3? (371a)**

Yes.

##### **If yes, do the annotations for those PSL 4.2 and 4.3 substances used have to be addressed? (371b)**

Annotation restrictions apply even if substances are used as components of a biodegradable mulching material. For example if embedding micronutrients into the material, the annotation for micronutrients must be addressed.

## Table 6.4 — Ingredients not classified as food additives

### Ingredients used for micro-organism preparation

#### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

**A) Are the requirements of 6.2.1 of the PSL applicable to “ingredients used for micro-organism preparation” (see 'Micro-organisms' listing in Table 6.4) if the micro-organisms preparation does not include the substrate? B) Can the micro-organisms product include synthetic preservatives? (375)**

a) Yes, no matter if the micro-organism preparation includes the substrate or not, the requirements of 6.2.1 apply to each ingredient produced using substrates or growing media that is a component of a micro-organism preparation (see 9.1.2).

b) Micro-organism preparations cannot contain synthetic preservatives (see 1.4 j).

## Permitted substances lists for cleaners, disinfectants and sanitizers

### Botanical compounds as cleaners

#### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

**Can botanical compounds, such as essential oils, be used to clean organic products or organic product contact surfaces? (366)**

Botanical compounds such as essential oils cannot be used to clean organic products because they are not listed in 32.311 Table 7.3. Botanical compounds such as essential oils may be used to clean organic product contact surfaces in accordance with 32.310 8.2.3, or if used as wetting agents (see 32.311 Table 7.4 Wetting agents).

### Substances for egg cleaning

#### **TRANSFERRED TO FINAL Q&As**

**Can substances listed in Table 7.4, with a removal event, be used to clean eggs? Is potable water required to wash eggs? (351)**

Only substances listed in Table 7.3 as permitted for direct contact with organic product may be used to clean eggs. Water used for egg washing must be potable. See CFIA 'Shell Egg Manual' requirements. Take note however that organic vegetable oils, or other appropriate non-organic processing aids in PSL Tables 6.5 such as, e.g. silicon dioxide, could be used as defoaming agents during egg washing.

## COMMENTED – BACK TO NEXT PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

### Percentage of organic ingredients for feed

**May livestock be fed organic food waste containing 95% or more organic ingredients? What about food waste stemming from products only containing 70-95% organic ingredients? (372)**