

Consultation Survey: National Organic Action Plan for Canada - Framework Proposal

Share your thoughts

We are calling for an Organic Action Plan that will stimulate the growth of Canada's organic sector and enable it to remain competitive with jurisdictions that have strong programs in place to support their organic sector.

Your input is essential to help us develop a comprehensive plan and set our priorities. The plan will be used in discussions with Canadian government officials to create a partnership that will support the long-term development and expansion of the organic sector.

The purpose of this survey is to gather feedback on the National Organic Action Plan (OAP) for Canada, launched on August 22, 2023.

Review the OAP webinar recording, slides and summary document by clicking [HERE](#).

Survey deadline: Friday, October 13th, 2023 9:00 pm EDT

Download a copy of all survey questions (PDF) here if you would like to review before you submit your answers online.

The survey has been organized in 2 parts:

Part 1 of the survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete and seeks general impressions of the Organic Action Plan.

Part 2 of the survey is optional and for those who wish to contribute more detailed comments about the 7 sections of the Organic Action Plan.* It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

***The proposed OAP is a comprehensive, long-term plan for the growth of the whole sector. As such, it covers a broad range of topics. We invite you to provide detailed input either on the whole framework, or simply on your own areas of expertise.**

Thank you for your feedback!

* 1. Did you view the August 22 webinar on the Organic Action Plan?

- Yes, attended live.
- Yes, watched the recording.
- No.

* 2. Are you responding on behalf of a company or organization/business?

- As myself
- On behalf of my organization/business

Please specify which organization/business.

* 3. Which of the following best describes you? (Select all that apply.)

- Farmer
- Aquaculture producer
- Manufacturer
- Retailer
- Wholesaler
- Export Company
- Import Company
- Broker
- Certifier
- Association
- Government
- Other (please specify)

* 4. Are you or your business/organization directly involved in organic?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

5. Where are your organic operations located? (Select all that apply)

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec
- New Brunswick
- Nova Scotia
- Prince Edward Island
- Newfoundland
- Yukon
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut
- All of Canada
- Other (e.g. international)
- Not applicable

6. What are the markets for your organic products? (Select all that apply.)

- Domestic - Within your province
- Domestic - National
- Export - International
- Other
- Not applicable

* 7. Do you think there is a need for an Organic Action Plan for Canada?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you answered "no", why do you feel an Organic Action Plan is not needed for Canada? What do you feel is needed to grow the sector?

* 8. In your opinion, why is an Organic Action Plan needed for Canada? (Select the top 3 reasons.)

- For better coordination of the sector
- To ensure success for the next generation of organic producers, suppliers and businesses
- To ensure industry efforts are coordinated and aligned with government initiatives
- To address sector stagnation
- To mitigate climate change
- To ensure environmental benefits of organic production are recognized as ecosystem services by government and society
- To increase supports to the sector for long-term success
- To remain competitive with other jurisdictions
- Other (please specify)

* 9. Do you feel that all aspects that are important in an Organic Action Plan have been covered?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If you answered "no", what should be added?

* 10. Which of the following proposed in the plan should be prioritized to protect and grow the organic sector in the next 5 years? (Select the top 3.)

- Production supports (conversion support, advisory services, risk mitigation)
- Organization and structure for growth (coordination of the sector to achieve its growth objectives)
- Market support measures (stimulating demand in national and international markets)
- Regulation and enforcement (protecting the organic brand, preventing fraud and ensuring traceability)
- Data supports (production and yield data, economic data)
- Research with impact (improving yield and transferring knowledge)
- Education (for producers, in communities, in schools)

Part 2: Comments by section

The next part of the survey has been broken down into the 7 sections of the draft Organic Action Plan:

- **Production supports**
- **Organization and structure for growth**
- **Market supports**
- **Regulation and enforcement**
- **Data supports**
- **Research with impact**
- **Education**

All sections are optional so can be skipped if you have no comments.

It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete all sections.

* 11. Are you interested in providing more detailed feedback on the Organic Action Plan?

Yes

No

A. Production supports

The initiatives being proposed related to Production supports are as follows:

A1. Growing domestic production capacity

- **Technical and knowledge transfer**
- **Financial and capital supports**

A2. Building human capital to support production

- **Education and capacity building**
- **Extension services and advisory support**

A3. Mitigating risk for organic farmers

- **Financial supports and risk insurance**
- **Climate and technology**
- **Expand or adapt policy options to better accommodate organic crops and production systems**
- **Supply chain protections**

A4. Growing the next generation of organic farmers

- **Support existing farmers to transition to organic by establishing a National Organic Transition Program**
- **Financial and market supports**

• **Support new and aspiring entrants**

12. Production supports: What is your overall opinion of what is being proposed?

- Like extremely
- Like moderately
- No opinion
- Dislike moderately
- Dislike extremely

* 13. Please select your top 3 priorities for Production supports.

- Technical and knowledge transfer (e.g. farmer networks, Best Practices Guide)
- Financial and capital supports (e.g. land access, processing and distribution infrastructure, certification cost-share, tax credits)
- Education and capacity building
- Extension services and advisory support
- Risk mitigation supports (e.g. crop insurance)
- Climate adaptation and technology support
- Expand or adapt policy options to better accommodate organic crops and production systems
- Supply chain protections
- National Organic Transition Program to support transition
- Market supports
- Support new and aspiring entrants (e.g. apprenticeship programs, business training)
- I wish to skip this question.

14. Comments on Production supports

B. Organization and structure for growth

The initiatives being proposed related to Organization and structure for growth are as follows:

B1. Setting ambitious targets for growth

- **Production targets to meet export demand and import substitution**
- **Organic market growth targets in primary channels (e.g., retail, food service, short sales)**
- **Federal funding targets for organic. Any provincial flowthrough funding should align with national targets**

B2. Enhancing collaboration across the sector

- **Activate national, provincial and local organic organizations to help implement national policies**
- **Facilitate whole supply chain discussions**
- **Permanent committee to follow up on Organic Action Plan**

B3. Developing human resource capacity in government

- **Dedicated unit at AAFC similar to USDA National Organic Program**
- **Sufficient provincial government staff support**
- **CFIA enforcement staff in line with organic growth**

B4. Integrating organic into other national policies and departments

- **Align with Agriculture & Agri-food Canada, Environment & Climate Change Canada, Innovation, Science & Industry, Health, Export Promotion & International Trade, Rural Economic Development, etc.**

15. Organization and structure for growth: What is your overall opinion of what is being proposed?

- Like extremely
- Like moderately
- No opinion
- Dislike moderately
- Dislike extremely

16. Please rank your priorities for Organization and structure for growth. (1=most important, 4=least important)

- Setting ambitious targets for growth
- Enhancing collaboration across the sector
- Developing human resource capacity in government
- Integrating organic into other national policies and departments

17. Comments on Organization and structure for growth

C. Market supports

The initiatives being proposed related to Market supports are as follows:

C1. Growing market for organic

- **Raise consumer awareness and promote the Canada Organic Brand, organic farming and products at home and abroad**
- **Develop a national communications strategy for organic**
- **Boost domestic demand by strengthening collaboration between retailers and suppliers**
- **Boost international market development and export opportunities**
- **Support and promote public procurement of organic products**

18. Market supports: What is your overall opinion of what is being proposed?

- Like extremely
- Like moderately
- No opinion
- Dislike moderately
- Dislike extremely

19. Please rank your priorities for Market supports. (1=most important, 5=least important)

- Raise consumer awareness and promote the Canada Organic Brand, organic farming and products at home and abroad
- Develop a national communications strategy for organic
- Boost domestic demand by strengthening collaboration between retailers and suppliers
- Boost international market development and export opportunities
- Support and promote public procurement of organic products

20. Comments on Market supports

D. Regulation and enforcement

The initiatives being proposed related to Regulation and enforcement are as follows:

D1. Modernizing regulatory framework

- **Work with provinces to ensure that all organic products sold intra-provincially, inter-provincially or internationally meet the federal regulations**

- **Improve safeguards for compliance in Canada to the Canadian Organic Regime (COR) and Canadian Organic Standards (COS), including a strong Canada Organic office inspection team**
- **Ensure ongoing public funding for the review and interpretation of the Canadian Organic Standards**
- **Revise regulations to expand product scope of organic**
- **Allow for a long-term funding model for the organic sector**

D2. Building regulatory enforcement capacity

- **Safeguard the integrity and consumer trust of the organic brand by enforcing robust regulations and addressing fraud in the sector**
- **Database to better track organic status claims and to increase traceability of the organic supply chain**
- **Enhanced digital technologies for organic traceability**
- **Increased personnel for enforcement**
- **Education and targeted workshops on food fraud prevention**

D3. Expanding organic equivalency arrangements

- **Increased capacity to oversee and modernize current and new equivalency arrangements/agreements.**

21. Regulation and enforcement: What is your overall opinion of what is being proposed?

- Like extremely
- Like moderately
- No opinion
- Dislike moderately
- Dislike extremely

* 22. Please select your top 3 priorities for Regulation and enforcement.

- Harmonize regulatory enforcement across all provinces and territories to uphold at minimum the Canada Organic federal standards.
- Improve safeguards for organic compliance in Canada.
- Ensure ongoing funding for the review and interpretation of the Canadian Organic Standards.
- Revise the current Canadian regulations to expand product scope of organic.
- Revise the regulations to allow for a long-term funding model for the organic sector.
- Safeguard the integrity and consumer trust of the organic brand by enforcing robust regulations and addressing fraud in the sector.
- Enhance digital technologies for organic traceability.
- Increase training and additional personnel for enforcement and market development of organic.
- Increase capacity to oversee and modernize current and new equivalency arrangements/agreements.
- I wish to skip this question.

23. Regulation and enforcement: Comments?

E. Data supports

The initiatives being proposed related to Data supports are as follows:

E1. Collecting production data

- **Support data needs related to development and transition to organic**

E2. Collecting market data

- **Support data needs related to consumer and market trends that translate to business opportunities and consumption**

24. Data supports: What is your overall opinion of what is being proposed?

- Like extremely
- Like moderately
- No opinion
- Dislike moderately
- Dislike extremely

* 25. Please select your top 3 priorities for production data supports.

- Cost of production data
- Farm financial data
- Organic pricing
- Insurance data and claims
- Business Risk Management (BRM) program access
- Environmental data
- Production and yield data
- Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) adoption indicators/adaptive capacity
- Land use, access to farmland, land conversion, land prices, land transition
- Labour and demographic data incl. new farm entrants and exits
- Economic data - impact on rural economies
- Competitive analysis of organic to domestic conventional agriculture/processors and imported goods
- I wish to skip this question.

* 26. Please select your top 3 priorities for market data supports.

- Measure consumers' perception of the Canada Organic Brand to monitor progress
- Consumption trends and behaviours
- Sales data (domestic, imports, exports)
- Consumer trends in relation to creating procurement programs for institutions
- Economic data - organic farmers, manufacturers' and retailers' contribution to Canada's Gross Domestic Product
- Competitive analysis of Canadian organic products to international trade competitors
- I wish to skip this question.

27. Comments on data supports

F. Research with impact

The initiatives being proposed related to Research with impact are as follows:

F1. Prioritizing organic research

- **Improve environmental performance of Canadian agriculture while capturing organic markets**
- **Increase productivity and farm-gate revenue of organic producers through innovation**
- **Enhance resiliency of agriculture by developing ecological solutions to climate change and socially driven issues**

F2. Investing in organic research and transfer of scientific outcomes

- **Mandate specific research allotments for organic research at the federal level**
- **Require research agencies to better coordinate on organic research and extension.**
- **Ensure that AAFC recognizes organic research priorities in its budget justification and studies the feasibility of certifying more research land as organic.**
- **Reduce or waive industry cash matching contributions needed to leverage federal and provincial programs.**

F3. Transferring scientific outcomes and promoting adoption

- **Increase investments in organic extension programs that can be easily transferred to farmers.**
- **Support training of organic extension specialists and consultants to apply new research.**

- **Provide incentive/support programs for hiring of organic consulting/extension professionals.**

28. Research with impact: What is your overall opinion of what is being proposed?

- Like extremely
- Like moderately
- No opinion
- Dislike moderately
- Dislike extremely

* 29. Please select your top 3 priorities for organic research areas.

- Developing ecological solutions to climate change
- Address low phosphorous issue in organic farming systems
- Mandate specific research allotments for organic research at the federal level
- Better coordinate organic research and extension.
- Certify more research land as organic.
- Increase investments in organic extension programs that can be easily transferred to farmers.
- Provide incentive/support programs for hiring of organic consulting/extension professionals.
- I wish to skip this question.

Other (please specify)

30. Comments on Research with impact

G. Education

The initiatives being proposed related to Education are as follows:

G1. Educating and increasing familiarity with organic agriculture

- **Curricula and training program development**
- **Collaboration**
- **Diversity, equity and inclusion**

31. Education: What is your overall opinion of what is being proposed?

- Like extremely
- Like moderately
- No opinion
- Dislike moderately
- Dislike extremely

32. Please rank your priorities for Education. (1=most important, 4=least important)

- Education for producers
- Education for stakeholders along the supply chain
- Education in schools
- Education in community

33. Education: Comments?

Contact and final comments

34. Are there any province-specific elements missing from the framework?

35. Contact details: If you would be willing to be contacted for additional clarification on your comments, please provide your contact details below (Name, email, phone number).

36. Additional Comments