



Canadian Food  
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne  
d'inspection des aliments



## **Standards Interpretation Committee: 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/CGSB 32.311).

Below are proposed answers to questions, raised by organic stakeholders, regarding the National Standards for Organic Agriculture. The proposed responses will be subject to a 60 day comment period. All comments regarding these answers should be sent to [OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca)

### **Q21: Does the prohibition of sulphates produced with sulphuric acid apply to cobalt sulphate used as a mineral supplement and for medical use?**

A.21: No. Table 5.2 of the PSL allows for Trace elements from any source for feed. Table 5.3 allows them from any source for medical use.

### **Q22: Is the use of fish products as feed supplements prohibited?**

A 22: Table 5.2 of the PSL allows for protein feeds from organic sources. Fish products would thus not be permitted as feed supplements unless organic.

### **Q23: Is the use of fish oil as medical treatment (to treat bloat) prohibited? Are fish based animal health tonics prohibited?**

A23: Fish oil and fish based health products are allowed as veterinary medicinal substances under 6.7.6 c.

### **Q24: Can slaughter animals (intended for meat) receive two treatments per year of prohibited treatments and maintain certification?**

A24: 6.7.9 indicates that there shall be only one treatment for slaughter animals under a year and a maximum of two treatments for total lifetime of slaughter animals.

### **Q25: What is the definition of “dairy animal” under the standard?**

A25: A dairy animal is any animal in a herd that produces milk for human consumption.

**Q26: Does the use of a “peat moss/compost etc. mix” satisfy the requirements of 7.5.1 for “a container system with soil”**

A26: Section 7.5.1 allows for container grown production with soil and prohibits hydroponics and aeroponics. In hydroponic production the soil is replaced by an inert substance. A compost and peat moss mixture does not constitute an inert substrate thus satisfies the requirements of “a container system with soil”.

**Q27: Is it acceptable to inject meat animals with vitamin B for the purpose of improving meat color?**

A27: No. Table 5.3 lists vitamins for “enrichment or fortification.” Injection to improve the colour of meat is for cosmetic purposed, not enrichment of fortification.

**Q28: Under the Canadian Standards for Organic products it is listed that water is permissible. Can you please tell me if Seawater would be included in this definition?**

A28: Table 4.3 of the PSL allows for water (and wetting agents) to be used as crop production aids. Sea water, in all its various forms of concentration, is acceptable.

**Q29: Is clove oil allowed as an organic sprout inhibitor for potatoes?**

A29: Table 4.3 of the PSL lists “plant extracts, oils and preparations” as acceptable crop production aids. Clove oil would be acceptable for use on seed potatoes.

**Q30: Is de-horning paste allowed?**

A30: Yes, dehorning paste is acceptable under section 6.7.6 d.

**Q31: Is the end product from an anaerobic digester or biogas digester acceptable for use as a soil amendment?**

A 31: The products of anaerobic digestion cannot be considered compost under the standard since the definition specifies aerobic decomposition. The product may be used as compost feedstock ( see table 4.2, 32.311 “composting feedstocks”). If only manure is used in the digester, the end product could be applied to fields under the conditions applying to raw manure. If other materials such as abattoir waste were used as raw material, the final product of the digester would still not be acceptable for use on organic soil unless composted.

**Q32: Do the restrictions in 5.5.2.5 apply also to the livestock grazing in orchards?**

A32: The requirements of 5.5.2 are intended to prevent contact and possible bacterial contamination between the manure and the crop. This section does not necessarily apply to the harvest of orchard crops exclusively from the trees (no ground picking) and the presence of grazing animals and their droppings in the orchard does not violate the standard.

**Q33: Is tractor exhaust, injected into the soil, acceptable under the standard?**

A33: Tractor exhaust may be injected into the soil only if all the components of the tractor exhaust comply with the standard and PSL.