

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### Assistant Director

We are pleased to announce the addition of M Sébastien Houle as Assistant Director to the Ecocert team in March. His primary responsibility will be Quality Control. Mr. Houle has fifteen years of expertise in this area and will be a great support for the continuous improvement of our processes.

## TOOLBOX

### Parallel Production

Scandals involving organic grains in Europe are leading certifiers to be extremely vigilant with parallel productions, a practice which is not permitted in the standards.

If all of your fields have not been converted to organic yet, take great care when buying your seeds. The crops harvested must be visually distinct (to the naked eye). Crops that look alike can not be certified.

Although the plants may be differentiated in the field, it is the organic grain that must be visually distinct from the conventionally grown grain. Quick test : Mix small amounts of the two grains (organic and conventional) and ask someone to sort them out. If visually distinct, sorting should be quite easy.

### Grain shortages

Clients have been telling us how difficult it is to find Canadian organic grains on the market and about their fear of using imported grains from China, India, Russia, etc.

To avoid any non-compliances make sure that the product you intend to buy has a valid organic certificate according to one of these regulations :

- Canadian Organic regulation (COR, COS)
- NOP plus terms of the Canada/USA equivalency agreement (USDA accredited CB)
- EC organic regulation if the product is harvested, processed or manipulated in one of the EU member countries.

The Certification Body issuing the certificate must appear on the following CFIA website : <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/organic-products/certification-and-verification/certification-bodies/international/eng/1327862136347/1327862268980>

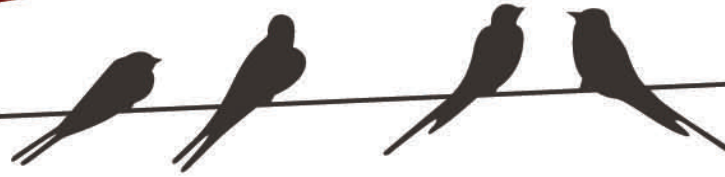
### Inputs :

We offer an inputs verification and approval program to manufacturers who wish to inform consumers that the use their products will not compromise their organic certification.

Our services include:

1. Verification that the input's list of ingredients and manufacturing procedures are permitted according to the Canadian Organic Standards. A verified input cannot be marketed using Ecocert's name or logo on labels or promotional materials. Only a Letter of Verification is issued to the manufacturer.
2. Input approval following an inspection of manufacturing facilities, ingredients, and manufacturing. Approved inputs can use the Ecocert logo on labels and marketing. An Approval Attestation is issued to the manufacturer.





Attention: Manufacturers must renew their verification or approval every year. A letter or attestation dated 2009 is not necessarily a guarantee of compliance for the 2012 season.

### REGULATIONS

#### Reminder: milk withdrawal

In the event that antibiotics are used, we would like to remind you that the Canadian Organic Standards require a milk withdrawal period of double the prescribed time or at least **30 days**.

#### COR Standards *for Quebec clients only* :

The Canadian Organic Standard has now been adopted in Quebec. Although good practices, the following points are no longer standard requirements:

- Temperature records are only necessary for composts containing animal manures;
- Poultry can be purchased at the age of 2 days (instead of 1 day);
- Imported manures must come from a farm where animals can turn 360° and are not continuously kept in the dark. However it is no longer necessary for the facility to own agricultural land;
- The transition time for perennials is now 12 months (instead of 24 months)

### IN THE FIELD

#### Changes to our documents

At the end of 2011 we adopted the new database "eCert" which will make the processing of files easier. To facilitate the transfer of information to our clients, we have modified certain aspects of the inspection report, the decision letter and the certificate. We are confident that you will like our new look.

#### ECert formula

To facilitate our clients' understanding of the inspector's conclusions, the inspection report will now only list the major points of the inspection. Non-compliances that have been identified during inspection can be closed or modified by Certification Officers here at the office. Although the inspector's comments will appear on the inspection report, please refer to the decision letter only for the official list of non-compliances.

#### Payment using *AccesD* with your *Desjardins* account

You can now pay for your certification using *AccessD* with your *Desjardins* account. Coming soon: access from accounts with other participating banks. [www.desjardins.com](http://www.desjardins.com)

