• The voice of organics in Ontario

• Over 150 Organic Businesses representing the full value chain, from farm to fork

• Thriving Ontario Organic Sector

• Advocacy, market development, consumer education… including, protection of “organic”.
Reminder: What Does ‘Organic’ mean?

• No chemical pesticides;
• No chemical fertilizers;
• No treated seeds (must be organic unless there are no organic seeds available);
• No GMOs;
• No antibiotics;
• No growth regulators or hormones;
• No hydroponic growth in greenhouses (US?);
• Access to the outdoors, organic feed and limited density in buildings for livestock;
• 3 year transition period before crops may be called “organic”
WHAT DOES ORGANIC MEAN?

ORGANIC FRUITS, NUTS, VEGETABLES, & GRAINS
- no synthetic pesticides
- not irradiated
- no synthetic fertilizers
- not genetically engineered
- no sewage sludge

ORGANIC MEAT & POULTRY
- access to outdoors
- not irradiated
- no growth hormones, antibiotics, other drugs
- raised on 100% organic feed
- not fed animal byproducts

ORGANIC EGGS
- hens fed 100% organic feed
- no growth hormones, antibiotics, other drugs
- not necessarily cage-free or free-range

ORGANIC MILK
- cows have access to outdoors
- no growth hormones, antibiotics, other drugs
- all cows’ feed for past 12 months 100% organic
- at least 30% of cows’ diet from pasture during primary growing season

ORGANIC SEAFOOD
- no current official U.S. standards
- USDA working on a standard for farm-raised seafood

PACKAGED FOODS
- “100% ORGANIC” all ingredients are organic
- “ORGANIC” at least 95% of ingredients are organic
- “MADE WITH ORGANIC INGREDIENTS” at least 70% of ingredients are organic
Development of Canada Organic

• **1993**—BC establishes own voluntary provincial organic standards
• **1999**—Voluntary National Organic Standards approved by the Standards Council of Canada;
• **2002**—Quebec establishes provincial standard;
• **2006**—Quebec regulates “organic” standard provincial Act;
• **2006**—Canada Organic Regime introduced *Organic Product Regulations* but final implementation was delayed until 2009;
• **2009**—National Canadian Organic standards and Canada Organic logo established
What is Regulated?

• “Organic” must be certified to the national standards by an accredited certifying body if the product is crosses provincial or federal borders.

• The use of the term “organic” for production and sale of products within the province is not regulated or enforced by federal law. Adherence to the standards and certification process is voluntary without a provincial regulation.
Ontario 2012 Statistics

• 57% of farms making organic claims are certified organic
• 81% of businesses with annual sales over $1M are certified
• 82% of producers, 100% of handlers, 94% of processors and 88% of retailers are moving certified organic products they have sourced from elsewhere in the value chain
• Direct Marketers/CSAs—Only 28% of those making organic claims are certified organic in a sector valued at $2.9M annually;
• Farmers’ Markets - 33% making organic claims, 10% certified organic (612 vendors from 52 markets, 166 markets in Ontario) $180M;
• On Farm Markets - 4% certified; $210M based on 135 farm stalls, 28% of which make organic claims, 5% of which are certified
## Comparison of Regulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quebec</th>
<th>British Columbia</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
<th>New Brunswick</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In place prior to 2009 Fed Regs</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1993</td>
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<td>Introduced following the Fed Regs</td>
<td>Mandatory and Enforced by 2018</td>
<td>2007, enacted 2013,</td>
<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Act Respecting Reserved Designations and Value-Added Claims</td>
<td>Organic Products Certification Regulation</td>
<td>Organic Agricultural Products Act</td>
<td>The New Brunswick Organic Grade Regulation under the Natural Products Act</td>
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<td>Organic Logo</td>
<td>Bio Quebec 2011</td>
<td>Organic Checkmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>British Columbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal Ministerial Function</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated inspectors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collects fees to support administrative bodies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subsidies for certification fees</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x (suspended a couple of years ago?)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance-based. Three consultants on call and paid for by government to inspect.</td>
<td>COABC is appointed as Administrator in the act. Producer certifying agencies are voting members of COABC &amp; monitors the use of the Organic Checkmark. Fees collected.</td>
<td>The NB Farm Product Commission is responsible for implementing, administering and compliance of the NB Organic Grade Regulation. Enforcement by</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
And Ontario?
Why Not Ontario?

• Ontario has one of the largest organic markets in the country—over $1 billion in sales

• No piece of provincial legislation supporting organic means no programs or government infrastructure for organics

• National level of enforcement is very weak—CFIA downsized

• Some reports of fraud at retail and some farmers’ markets

• *Ontario Organic Products Act* might allow for other important organic legislation—e.g. exemption from commodity check off?

• Other provinces complaining about Ontario??

• But, there is a divide among Ontario stakeholders…. 
Small Scale Rationale

• Ontario has largest population of uncertified organic farmers and direct marketers

• Many are operating on tiny margins, businesses are precarious

• As long as they sell directly to customers, they don’t require the branding—relationship built on trust

• Often consider practices to be “beyond organic”—ie. mixed farming

• Need something to get those producers in the system and able to scale up

• Not likely to certify if there is an Ontario organic regulation?

• Difficult and time consuming to certify mixed and small-scale farms
Small Scale Regulations

1. Procert—Local Organic Certification
   - 10 acres or less, considered low risk and doesn’t require annual inspection for farms in good standing
   - $300 + $50 for inspector travel when inspections occur
   - 4 producers certified in 2015, expecting 5-10 in 2016
   - This is a pilot, Will review the program in 2017

2. Foodland Organic Self-Declaration Registry (proposed by Tony McQuail)
   - No size limit, only for Direct Marketers (no retail)
   - Must undertake training, understanding of standards and best practices for organic management
   - Self-Declare and pay small fee ($100?)
   - Listed on registry, access to Foodland Organic brand
Questions? Thoughts?
Resources on the Organic Regulations

1. Procert—Local Organic Certification:


2. Organic Federation of Canada—2015 Updated Standards:

www.organicfederation.ca (webinars with explanation of changes)
• The voice of organics in Ontario
• Value Chain Representation
• www.organiccouncil.ca
• Sign Up for Our E-News
• Become a member!
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