



Introduction to Organic Swine Production

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78%

of U.S. families are **buying organic food**, up from 73% in 2009.

Four in Ten

families say they are **buying more organic products** than they were a year ago.

HEALTHIER FOR ME AND MY CHILDREN

NUMBER ONE MOTIVATOR CITED BY PARENTS FOR CHOOSING ORGANIC FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE

YEAR.

Seventy Two

PERCENT of parents are

familiar with the USDA Organic seal, up from 65% in 2009.



Organic Industry

- In the US the organic industry grew to \$28.6 billion in 2010
 - Organic fruits and vegetables represent 39.7% of total organic food value
 - Organic produce represents nearly 12% of all U.S. fruit and vegetable sales, and hit almost \$10.6 billion in 2010 (~12% higher than 2009)
 - Organic dairy was the second-largest category in 2010 (9% growth over 2009) achieving \$3.9 billion



Organic Production

- Organic food is still a niche category in Canada
 - Represents approximately 2% of the total Canadian food dollar spent on food products.
 - In 2008, the value of organic food products sold in Canada through all retail channels was estimated at \$2 billion
 - 66% growth over 2006



Organic Production

- The market and demand for organic pork in Canada are growing
 - Providing opportunities for the pork industry.
 - In 2006, certified organic meat sales were less than 1% of total organic food sales
 - In 2008, meat became one of the fastest-growing categories in organic products
 - ~\$2 million in sales

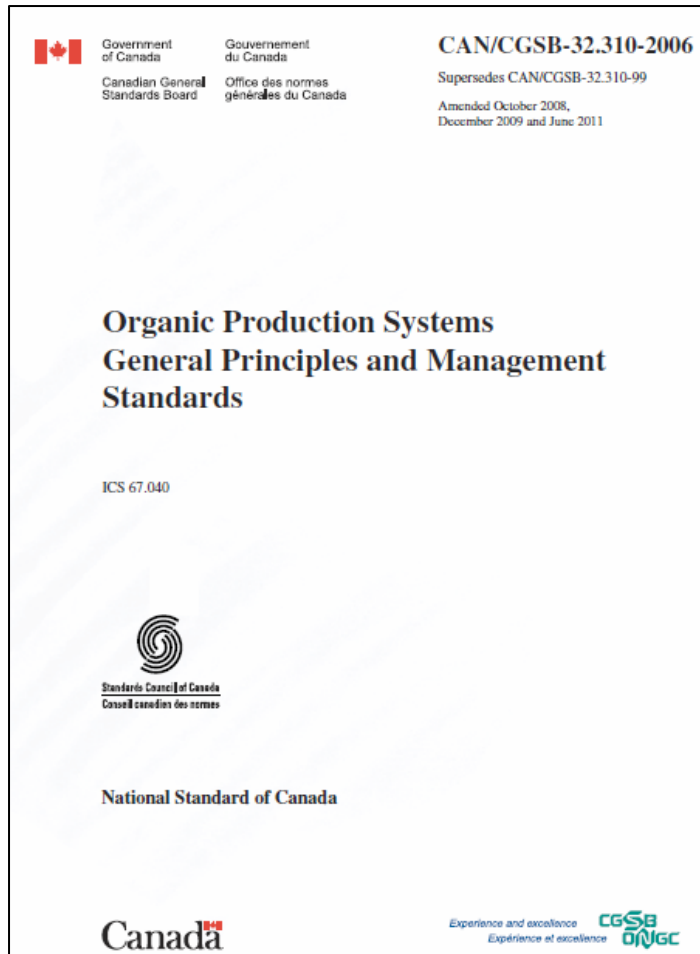


Organic Production

- The principle goal
 - Develop enterprises that are sustainable and harmonious with the environment
- Is a holistic system
 - Designed to optimize the productivity and fitness of diverse communities within the agro-ecosystem, including soil organism, plants, livestock and people



Standards



- Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) has developed Canadian standards for organic agriculture.
 - Aligned with the U.S. and Europe organic standards
 - Equivalency agreement
 - Includes guidelines for organic pork producers
 - Provides the basis for certification.

Enforcement and Promotion



- In June 2011, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) began enforcing the standards.
 - A Canadian Organic Office has been established
 - the CFIA will provide oversight to the process of certifying organic farms and products in Canada
- Certified products may carry the official Canada Organic logo on their labels.

Certification

- To be able to label and market pork as organic producers must be certified by a certifying body
 - Not all provide certification services to pork producers
 - All accredited certifying bodies must use the Canadian organic standard as the minimum requirement
 - A listing of some certification bodies can be found in the OMAFRA Infosheet *Organic Food and Farming Certification*



Transition Time

- Time required to switch from conventional to organic pork production
 - 12 months to 3 years
 - Depending on whether will be growing organic feed
 - Is a major hurdle
 - Hogs can't be marketed as organic during this period
 - They must be raised according to the organic production standards



Certification

- Certification process
 - Inspection of farm a year prior to achieving certification status
 - Annual or semi-annual inspections in following years
 - Requires producers to document all production activities
 - Keep records to prove they are following specific standards and rules



Organic Production

- There are about 45 certified organic pork producers in Ontario
 - Total annual production of about 24,000 market hogs
 - 0.5% of all hogs marketed in Ontario
- The majority of the certified organic hogs produced in Ontario are marketed to a single processor in Quebec
- Certified organic pork operations range in size from 5 to 300+ sows farrow to finish



Organic Production

- Key differences
 - Facilities
 - Bedding
 - Stocking density
 - Outdoor access
 - Sow housing
 - Pig sources
 - Health
 - Feed



Facilities

- All facilities used to raise pigs must meet their normal socialization, feeding and living requirements
 - Provide sufficient space
 - Regular access to outdoors, sunlight and fresh air
 - As permitted by weather conditions







Stocking Density

Organic pig stocking rates		
	Indoor Space	Outdoor Runs and Pens
Sows and piglets (up to 40 days old)	7.5 m ² for each sow and litter	Not required
Growing pigs		
a. Up to 30 kg	0.6 m ² /head	0.4 m ² /head
b. 30-50 kg	0.8 m ² /head	0.6 m ² /head
c. 50-85 kg	1.1 m ² /head	0.8 m ² /head
d. >85 kg	1.3 m ² /head	1.0 m ² /head
Sows in group pens	3 m ² /head	3 m ² /head
Boars in individual pens	9 m ² /head	9 m ² /head

Source: Organic Production Systems General Principles and Management Standards

Bedding

- Cannot house pigs on 100% slatted floors, in dry sow stalls or in farrowing crates
 - Solid floors preferred
- Must provide dry bedding materials
 - Straw, wood shavings, etc
 - From organic sources if available
- Indoor and outdoor areas must permit rooting







Outdoor Access

- Must have access to:
 - outdoor exercise areas,
 - shade,
 - shelter,
 - rotational pasture,
 - exercise areas,
 - fresh air and
 - natural daylight suitable to the species, its stage of production, the climate and the environment





Outdoor Access

- Access to pasture is recommended
 - Pasture must be managed to avoid
 - soil degradation,
 - long-term damage to the vegetation or
 - water contamination
- Outdoor areas can also include woodlands or other natural environments
 - Same management guidelines apply









Outdoor Access

- The operator of an organic livestock operation may provide temporary confinement for livestock owing to one of the following:
 - inclement weather
 - conditions where the health, safety or well-being of the animal could be jeopardized, given its stage of production
 - risks relating to soil, water or plant quality



Parasite Control

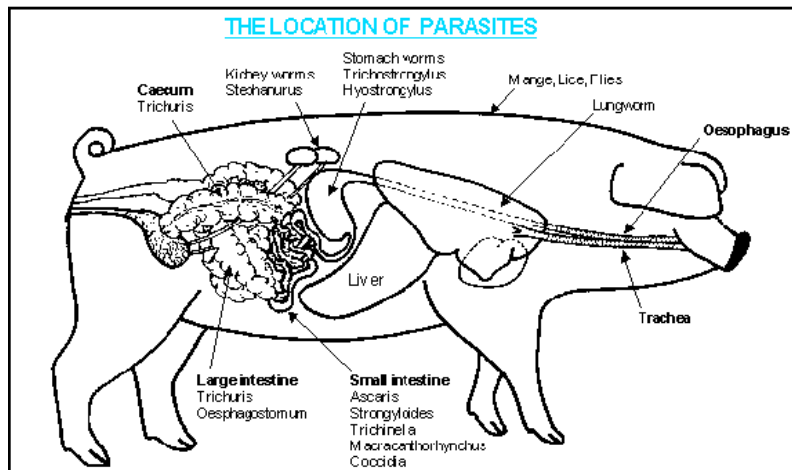
- Organic livestock operations need to have a comprehensive plan for management of parasites
 - Preventative measures
 - Pasture management
 - Fecal monitoring
 - Emergency measures in case of outbreak



Source: NYDailyNews.com

Parasite Control

- Use of parasiticides are permitted when:
 - Fecal samples confirm parasite outbreak
 - Written instructions from a veterinarian indicating product and method of control
 - Withdrawal twice the label requirement or 14 days
 - whichever is longer
 - Slaughter animals are allowed to be wormed once



The sites where the different parasites are found (Fig.11-2)

Source: The Pig Site

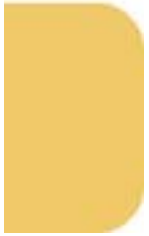
Sow Housing

- Requirement for group housing of sows
 - exception for the last stages of pregnancy
 - during lactation









Sow Housing

- Management systems designed to avoid restraining sows
 - Restraint is allowed for a maximum of 5 days for piglet protection
 - Individual pens are allowed for the protection of females during estrus for a period of up to 5 days or for other health reasons
- Minimum of 4 week weaning
 - Earlier weaning is allowed if the welfare of the sow and piglets is compromised









Pig Sources

- To meet organic standards, pigs must be:
 - born from certified organic production units, or
 - have been born from parents raised under the organic production standards, and
 - raised in an organic production system throughout their lives



Pig Sources



- An exception is livestock used for meat:
 - they must be under continuous organic management from the beginning of the last third of the gestation period (38 days)
- Breeding stock must come from organic operations
 - If unavailable, then conventional non-gestating gilts and breeding boars may be integrated into the organic system

Health



- High health is critical
- Disease prevention is the first line of defence
- Good animal husbandry practices help to maintain high level of health:
 - appropriate choice of breeds,
 - housing conditions,
 - space allowance,
 - sanitation practises and
 - prompt treatment

Health

- Vaccinations are only allowed when the targeted diseases are
 - communicable and
 - cannot be controlled by other means.
 - Non-GMO
- Treatment of pigs with specific medicines is allowed and recommended
 - These medicines are subject to the standards and approval of the certifying body
 - The use of synthetic antibiotics is prohibited



Source: pneumoniavaccine.net

Health

- The standards permit castration and other surgical treatments (ie tagging)
 - done at the youngest age possible
- The standards prohibit tail-docking and cutting of teeth
 - unless required for herd safety and health



Health



Source: TabTote.com

- When preventive practices and veterinary biologics are inadequate to prevent or treat sickness, the well-being of the animal must be protected.
- All appropriate medications, including the use of drugs that are not acceptable to organic production, must be used
- Those treated animals cannot be marketed as organic and must be identified (i.e. tagged)

Feed

- Organic feed shall consist of substances that are necessary and essential for maintaining the pigs' health, well-being and vitality and meet the physiological and behavioural needs of the pigs
 - This includes the need for roughage and fresh/dried fodder or silage in the daily ration
- All feed ingredients used must be certified as being produced, handled and processed in accordance with the standard



Feed

- Pig diets must not
 - include feed medications,
 - growth promoters,
 - lactation promoters,
 - synthetic appetite enhancers,
 - animal by-products,
 - preservation agents,
 - colouring agents and
 - genetically engineered or modified organisms (GMOs) or their products.



Summary

- Organic production is not for all pork producers.
- Consumer demand for organic pork is rising
- Some pork producers may wish to capture part of this niche market
- For detailed information, see *Canada's Organic Production Systems — General Principles and Management Standards* or contact a certifying body



Summary

- Organic pork production takes time, hard work, and facility management changes to meet all the requirements
- Thoroughly research the requirements for organic pork production to determine whether this type of production system is appropriate for your operation



Thank You!



- Dr. Paul Luimes
- Mike Edwards
- Larry Bowman
- Germaine Camire
- COPPA Producers