

Consistent Regulations Across Jurisdictions

The Ask:

- Ensure that **all provinces and territories adopt organic regulations that are equivalent to, or more robust than, the federal organic regulatory regime**. The adoption of a consistent regulatory framework across jurisdictions is critical.
- Federal incentives can support this provincially-focused ask.
- Lack of organic legislation is particularly problematic in **Ontario**, as it is home to the greatest number of organic producers and is the largest consumer organic market in Canada.

The Issue:

The Federal Government introduced national organic regulations in 2009, the Organic Products Regulations (OPRs). The OPRs apply to food, feed and seed products represented as 'organic' and which are destined for import, export or inter-provincial trade. Thus, products that are produced and sold within a province are not captured by the federal regulation and provincial regulations are needed to monitor products such as those sold at a local farmer's market, or roadside stand.

In July 2017, the Canada Organic Trade Association released its State of the Organics 2017 Report which revealed that Manitoba, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec have adopted the national standards. The remainder of the provinces and territories do not have any regulation at all. This leaves significant gaps as provinces and territories without regulations cannot enforce or regulate intra-provincial/territorial organic claims beyond general food mislabeling provisions.

Without a regulation, there is the potential for false or misleading claims, which compromises the integrity of the Canada organic brand. It also jeopardizes the livelihoods of certified organic farmers who cannot compete with those who falsely label their goods as organic without going through the expensive certification process.

The universal adoption of the Canada Organic Regime or a similarly robust system in each jurisdiction is critical to safeguarding against fraud and defending the integrity of the Canadian organic brand.