

List of questions - Survey about Small-scale farm certification

A - Not certified - I chose not to be certified for the following reasons:

B - Not certified 2 - Are there ways that organic certification could be designed that would serve your operation?

C - Would your business benefit from being certified organic?

D - Currently Certified Organic - I chose to be certified for the following reasons:

E - Concerns - As a certified organic grower, do you have any concerns about the current certification process?

F - Improvement - Do you have ideas of how to improve the current certification process or how to design a process that could better serve a farm like yours?

G - Other comments, suggestions or concerns you would like to share

A - Not Currently Certified Organic : I chose not to be certified for the following reasons:

Je ne voulais pas être certifié parce que ça coûte cher

Just testing out the form

Cost - bureaucracy-

to many restrictions and customers don't necessary want certified organic

-we sell direct to our customers and members -cost and time -we want to encourage folks to know where their food comes from and who grows it.

My market garden is about 1.5 acres. I raise 300 chickens as well. I choose to not have my farm certified because of the following reasons: - Certifying my garden operation would cost about \$700-\$1000. I only gross about \$30,000 at this point and barely make it through the winter financially so this annual cost is too much for me at this point. - I communicate the standards and what we practise to our customers and our prices are on par with certified organic farmers. Therefore, there is no financial gain to be had from our view at this point. - I would like to certify our whole operation but with the 300 chicken limit in Ontario makes certifying our chicken financially not-viable. We would need to charge about twice as much for our chicken and we live in a very low socio-economic community and we feel this is a lot to ask. Plus there is no local abattoir who does chickens and our on-farm portable abattoir is not inspected and won't work with certifying anyway. - We would however like to support the standards, and once we get to a size where it's financially viable we will apply to be certified.

We did certify the farm when we first started farming. However over time the organic label has come to mean less for our customers and ourselves. Once the "Big Players" got involved, organic didn't mean for us what it once did. Local, sustainable and knowing the farmer has become much more important for our customers.

the added paperwork, and there is no tissue samples. Who really knows if I am being honest in my paperwork?

What a scam. and it is a broad spectrum of no spray, certified sprays, biological control. there is a lot of confusion out there when the public here organic they think no spray.

Needless extra paperwork, \$, time to fulfill requirements for certification. I have always had a solid understanding with my customer base that my methods are spray free and soil building occurs in my soils. My methods are 'certified' by my customers.

We currently sell all of our products direct to local families that can ask us questions about how we grow our veggies and animals. So we would not see much of a marketing advantage to being certified. From a production standpoint, when we run out of homegrown grain for our pigs and chickens, we purchase local, non GMO, (but conventional grown) grains because it is difficult and extra expensive to get organically grown grains trucked into our area. The infrastructure is not yet in our area to handle certified organic feeds on a scale that is economical. To use certified organic grains we would have to significantly raise our prices to our customers, and the families we talk to about this are happy with our compromise for now. We make sure to tell them we are not certified organic, and why. If we were wholesaling our products, I would probably think differently and would most likely be certified.

I find it unnecessary and restrictive. I find that some farms seek certification in order to meet the bare minimum requirements of being "organic". I meet and exceed all of the standards, and I'm able to pass savings onto my customers.

It is my intention to start the certification process next year so I'm not against certification, but didn't see it as financially feasible in the first 2 years of operation. Also, I have found the application process confusing at times and have had little luck receiving assistance from the certifying bodies in getting my questions answered.

For us it is about the cost of inputs we have to bring into our farm. Due to being a mixed farm we feed our animals GMO free food, as we do not have the skill or time to grow our own feed for our livestock and certified organic food is expensive. Our current area sadly would not pay the prices for Certified organic meat. For our market garden all seed is organic but we have found that organic soil to bring in for starting seeds again to be expensive, also sourcing organic mulches straw seems to be very hard to find in the area. We have done surveys to our CSA Customers for the last five years and only one person has wanted us to be certified everyone else is happy that we have open books and like knowing us and seeing how we farm over a certification.

My markets are buying from me for flavour and consistency. There is no certification for this.

80% of our revenue comes from 50 families who purchase 6 month shares of our produce. These customers don't care if we are certified or not. They are regularly certified and no one has ever said they want us to pursue certification. the remainder of our sales is to 3 restaurants, it is the same story.

Expense and red tape

The Organic Farmer I work with decided it wasn't worth the ever increasing price...

1. New entrant still navigating the path to certification 2. Time and expense required to certify

Our farm markets all of our farm's production to our CSA members who live within 40 km of our farm and they all come to our farm to pick up their share. Because of this they all get to see us face to face and are free to question us about our practices. "Local organic" does not need the same certification as "global organic" We do not need an audit trail because we are the producer, wholesaler, distributor and retailer. As soon as a third party is involved I understand the need for certification.

Currently debating whether or not to start the process. Have a hard time with paper work and issues surrounding what is "organic" Beyond organic is how we are farming now.

Cost benefit analysis - for a small venture it costs too much (both time and money)

It's too difficult to source certified organic hay for my livestock (I cannot produce it myself). The cost involved in purchasing certified organic feed grains is also a major deterrent.

We are a very small market garden operation and we do all of our marketing directly through our 75-member CSA program, which sells out relatively easily. We maintain a close relationship with our members and dedicate considerable efforts to be transparent about our choice to be non-certified organic. From a business perspective, the organic certification (and the financial investment to obtain it) offers us no added value. However, we can foresee this changing if we were to expand our CSA program and were looking to recruit more members, if we were to start selling at farmer's markets, restaurants, retail, etc.

in transition to certification

The paperwork and cost are onerous -- I have a well-established reputation and don't need certification to justify a premium. Plus, the peer-review sessions used to be the best part and they aren't done any more. Not currently a useful process for me at all!

I direct market to a small customer base, and customers who know my practices and are able to visit my farm and learn more if they wish. I find that at the size I currently operate my farm business that I can manage without the need for 3rd party verification

Our pork is not currently certified partly due to the high cost of shipping organic feed in since there are no local organic producers of grain, but also because we want to keep the option of feeding vegetable and fruit wastes from mixed sources.

Lack of a local certified organic abattoir, or even a distant one for that matter.

The cost and record keeping requirements are also a concern.. we only sell freezer beef from 6 to 8 head in a year. our inputs are salt, mineral, CO straw and trefoil seed for frost seeding . Is there any value added in keeping field level records of permanent rotational pasture/ hay. Or soil test, feed test. We are grass farmers.

As direct marker, my customers have trust and don't expect external certification. I expect little benefits from certification.

Too much money to certify; not necessary as a marketing tool in my area

cost and hassle

- Market is direct and does not require it. - Up until now I have had issues with drift from neighbouring farm, but as of this year I will have sufficient buffers.

to much paperwork

I do not want to use copper to control fungus. We use phosphorous acid for potatoes as a foliar application. We are working on this to try to create healthier plants, but, we live on the end of the bay of fundy where it is so humid that Late Blight is a major problem.

As I understand the rules, we are unable to certify a section of one of our farms even though it is well buffered from the other areas better than some certified farm adjacent to their neighbours , they have no control over. We manage all our produce under one account for income tax .

in the process of being certified

1. The Organic Standard has drifted too far off the original concept of growing food ecologically with care concern about our water, soil and air and has become focused on allowing large corporations who grow food for the mainstream national food system to get away with too much. Composted conventional manure is not a great choice. 2. Certification does not guard strongly enough against GMO Contamination. 3. "Old Boys" Club attitude at certifying bodies is tiresome, get some new blood.

For me it is cost prohibitive.

Certification doesn't mean much when those who aren't certified can charge the same amount of money for their items as those who are certified. Also folks say they are organic just because they don't use antibiotics and this seems to be acceptable to most buyers. Why pay a large amount of money to have a piece of paper that isn't worth anything in the end?

Livestock on farm are not certified because the farm is owned by a restaurant that would like to recycle kitchen scraps by feeding to livestock, which is prohibited under the Cdn org standards if scraps are not also organic.

It's not required.

My only reason not to be certified is the cost at this stage in my operation.

perhaps not well enough informed to get the process started

time involved with all the paperwork

I'm an Urban Grower growing on many different plots of land throughout the city, nothing permanent either. Some years we have new yards we are using and then they may sell the next.

1. Currently grow small fruit. Fruit in general is seen as a healthy choice - not processed(or highly processed). 2. Our growing practices are organic in principle 3. Our relationship is direct with wholesalers & retailers. They have access to see a validate being grown in a sustainable environment

SPIN Farmer so multiple small sites

I can't be because I grow on multiple locations

Certain operations that I deem essential to sustainability, such as humanure, are not allowed under organic certification. Also, we were told we didn't have enough room for the number of chickens we had -- but we move them every week! Then, there's the cost. But finally, it's largely irrelevant on the island on which I live. Three out of four grocers accept our product as "island organic," meaning your work is good enough when you live in a place with one degree of separation.

Too much paper work and record keeping. I sell locally to people who know me, the organic label is not needed to convince them to pay a premium

I am a one man operation and the extra administration required is of little benefit to me at my size. All my sales are within my own province.

cost

The consumer at local level regional venues is savy and receptive to direct and relational means to assurance of Cost. I raise various types of livestock and poultry on both my own and leased land and some of the requirements (no treated fence posts, for example) are not practical for me to meet.

we gave up our certification because in our remote location 1. We paid the most money for it but 2. Had no sense of being part of an organic community/ purpose and 3. Certification doesn't seem to have a positive connotation/understanding here

Several years ago I used treated posts for my trellising in the vineyard. Also I use composted sea weed as an input and that is not organically certified. Therefore I do not think I am able to obtain certification.

I am starting a micro-farm (1/7 acre) on a piece of land that could be considered T3. The paperwork is no big deal. It's just the cost. It's just too much for such a small operation selling at a farmers' market.

We are starting our farm this season - so certification isn't on the radar yet.

1. perceived lack of flexibility for non-certified crops and certified crops on the same farm 2. reduces land rotation capacity 3. cost

certifying body placed farm under suspension due to non submission of application forms etc due to lack of human resources on farm. This is somewhat related to the inability to realize a premium for organic over non organic sales. No realized premium results in no funds to pay certification costs.

It is too costly for the return I would get

I am retiring from farming and continuing with certification would be inapplicable

Cost and added paperwork.

It is a significant investment for those like me who are contemplating growing for profit, but not yet doing so. It is bureaucratic and time consuming. Often the standards are somewhat lax in any case. There is a growing indications that consumers do not necessarily mind whether a product is officially certified or not, if information on production methods is provided.

Full certification seems like too much cost and effort just to be officially organic.

Cost and paperwork

cost lack of organic feedlots or grazier operations to buy my calves

Cost, too much red tape and paperwork, not sure benefits would outweigh costs, not sure the system is really working and isn't just a money-making venture for certifiers

Cost, paper work, unknown value to our farm, not needed

It is my first year growing, and certification is too expensive for my start-up budget. I'm also renting land which would need to be transitioned, but I don't plan on staying there for longer than 3 years.

-cost -paperwork -I'm 100% committed already, so don't feel I need a verification sticker -time

I was certified for a transitional and first year, but the second year fee was almost double the first year. I had only two customers who insisted on certification, and the gross revenue from them would just barely cover the certification fee. (Obviously I'm a pretty small operation!) So financially it didn't make sense with my current customer base (farmgate and market sales).

We are farming rented land and want to wait until we are on our own land. The business brings in very little revenue currently, once it is more financially significant we plan to certify.

Cost of program and extra administration/record keeping. we direct market 100% of product to consumers. So I would pay money and have more work to have the same label as the supermarket. That doesn't do me any good and would not likely reduce amount of time and questions we have to answer. Customers can come to us and ask directly. 1st person certified you could call it i guess. 2nd reason. Our research is telling us Local is more important than organic to our customers. If I need some straw for bedding, or I am short on my asparagus harvest I can call a neighbour and get my needs met. If I am organic I can't do that. Those items will be brought in from far away and doesn't help my neighbours or community. When we post the question organic or get it from neighbours 95% response is get it from neighbours and support your community.

We are a new, small, aquaponic farm. Although we always grow organically the question of is certification is on the table now and it is a big one. Our research has shown us a loss of faith with both the general public and other farmers as to the validity of the testing and reporting process. With people like us, just moving from hobby type production to commercial, we have to decide if the cost is worth it with the lowering of the public trust.

Money...cannot afford...

Ideologically, we mainly sell directly to consumers and do not see the need to certify. Also, certifying bodies vary greatly, no two bodies are alike, and we fear that the process is beyond repair, especially when you consider certified organic produce from other countries with lax regulations. The whole thing has become somewhat of a farce globally. Furthermore, we have looked at the permitted substance list for Canadian Organic standards and we feel that it does not go far enough in terms of sustainability and ecological farming. We have an open door policy and invite our customers to come visit the farm. Education is the most important piece of the puzzle. Certifying would simply add to a long term reduction of knowledge from a consumer perspective. People need to be involved and asking questions, and we fear that the certification process is a closed-door, no questions asked, i just started farming so i'm not ready yet but plan to be certified. i think certification is important. it sets a standard.

I was daunted by all the paperwork and forms that I heard I would have to fill out, also by the cost which I heard was based on gross farm sales and was incurred every year.

The cost, time commitment and paperwork. Mostly it's the cost.

Issues with sourcing local inputs (seeds, fertilizer, manure, compost). Additional work and paper trail. Added costs for certification.

B - Are there ways that organic certification could be designed that would serve your operation?

With little entries in each block

I'd like a peer review process and something that would involve and engage my customers

- Yes, there could be a price based on what your farm grosses or nets so it's relevant to what you produce! We have received quotes from several certifying bodies and it seems that the base price is on 50 acres.... so a price that is related to what a small farm produces in terms of income would make more sense. OR just have a price for "under \$40,000" or something as I know you can make a lot on just 1 acre - especially with a market garden.

Perhaps a different designation/system for small scale, artisan, organic producers.

audits in the winter different levels (no spray, biological control, or certified sprays)

Better designed to serve my operation?, No don't think so. I follow some certification specifications but many specs of mine are in-line with organic production anyway. I am not a critic of the process of organic certification however I see spending the extra money for the cert. process as poor appropriation of dollars. I would rather forward savings onto my customers or make a larger profit.

I can give this example: We manage some fields that have been organic for a long long time, and we have managed them for several years with no conventional inputs added. When we went to "clean up" those fields by growing some buckwheat, we initially figured that getting those fields certified organic would be worthwhile. However after some investigation, because of the 18 month waiting period, we could not get those fields certified in time to market the buckwheat crop we were growing, and so grew and sold the buckwheat as conventional, even though it was on an organic field. (We could not justify the organic certification expense on those fields, because the crop being grown the year following buckwheat was going to be fed to our own livestock, and thus we would not have gained anything from having the field certified in year 2, and would have incurred 2 or more years of certifying expense. (Just to be clear, not trying to overly complain, I understand part of the logic for this rule, but in our situation it prevented us from being able to pencil out certifying, even though what we were doing was organic in

Not really. I feel as though certification is simply buying into a "brand" that allows you to charge more for your vegetables.

Perhaps an intro to organic certification course, which would outline all the requirements and walk new farmers through the paperwork. I find this daunting and not well explained.

We comply with the organic standards for our market garden our biggest issue is the cost of inputs onto the farm for the livestock part of our operation.

More and more the certified organic lobby is confusing consumers and encouraging them to think that if a farm is not certified then it is not organic. it hurts us every time this implication is made. we don't have time to fight with anyone and would love to just have the same label as certified farms. while we don't think this survey topic should be a priority of the organic industry, we do have a suggestion to improve the process. Our suggestion is for small farms is "Open Book" certification - the farm completes no paperwork and pays no money but if they want to be certified they must let a certification body inspect their farm at any time. all input receipts must always be available. if the certifier needs any time from the farmer or plan on interfering with farming activities they must schedule that time and pay for it. otherwise they are free to be at the farm all month if they want to. this general idea is the best we can think of. the crux of our point is that we don't have time for this. if im not farming organically im spending time with my family or sleeping. and also that it will only cost us money - our customers don't want it so we can't

Yes. Initial soil testing, then random testing.

Make it a tax-payer-funded auditing system instead of private certification companies 'milking' the organic farmers.

More streamlined and less expensive

An affidavit signed by the farmer that he has read, understands and follows organic principles and practices.

Inspections to verify compliance would be initiated only by complaints.

Maybe but I am not sure exactly how. It seems like the program is fine maybe a simpler format.

Can it be scaled depending on the size of the farm?

This is a great question and although I don't have any specific suggestions at this point, I do think there must be a way to make the organic certification more accessible/affordable/appealing to small scale market gardeners like

Making sure that there is a clear distinction between the supposed organic garbage coming from California and Mexico and our small scale local organic producers.

Bring back more regional control for the small scale level and the peer review meetings! I am not interested in furthering the needs of large scale producers to ship to Europe or the US

Not at this time. I do consider certification should my business grow in the next couple of years, which I intend to do with it.

Allow certified organic meat (beef) cuts to be labelled and sold CO from beef cuts processed in a provincially inspected small abattoir. We identify our abattoir on our labels already. Clean, dried stainless steel will have zero effect on the beef cut. All that is really required is segregation of the product. It's already tracked by the CFIA tag, and I trust our butcher to return our own beef in the boxes.

Eventually group certification as practiced in developing countries.

Cost less

cheaper, less paperwork or applying only every 3 yrs

- No, I actually intend to certify in the near future but have not yet for the above reasons. Still, I believe in the certification and the certification process, so despite my market not requiring it I will certify because I think it is the right thing to do.

Wholesale markets and if we cooperatively work on value added higher end products.

give us the same opportunity as producers farming small acreages under different accounts but on the same farm. Eg. conventional dairy farm renting family members a section of that farm and being able to certify it only because it is rented and in another name.

the record keeping is crazy - businesses that use toxins should have to do this work and pay fees to pollute!

We specifically choose NOT to be certified because we feel we are selling our integrity. Once we "purchase" the Certified Organic status, to me it becomes cheated. I then have influence over what and how the certification process is implemented on my farm. I can shift, bend and manage the standard in ways that, for some farmer's meet the requirements of the fiscal bottom line and not the true intention of the Organic Standard. To truly convey the integrity, Organic Status should NOT be something that is bought.

I believe so.

Not having to pay to get re-certified every year. Maybe every 5 years. Those of us who are serious about farming organically pay enough for inputs and feed that this extra cost makes it almost prohibitive for small farms.

perhaps include a clause that, where abundantly available organic material exists that would help close a waste loop, certification can be upheld

make it required.

It would serve my operation, it opens doors to more retail grocers.

having someone visit the farm and explain all necessary steps would be very helpful

yes I would like to be certified but have been told it is very time consuming.

Mostly in practice. As long as organic practices are being used, maybe we can still be certified.

1. Streamline 2. Some requirements are unrealistic. Many validate requirements against expectations of consumers. 3. If 100% organic is not attainable, the consumer will probably feel that 99% organic is still order of magnitude better than GMO/pesticide grown.

We offer what we call "better than Organic" which points to our high commitment to soil building and chemical free growing practices

to allow for small scale multi-location farmers who follow the organic standards as best they can

Probably not. They might get smart about rotational pasturing, but it's unlikely they'll accept humanure.

Less administrative work and costs. For a small producer, it is generally a better investment to seek out direct customers for the product instead of looking to get certified.

I mill certified organic grain into flour and repackage certified organic grains. Recording all my input sources and tracking my output seems pointless when my customers have no concerns. And all my input grains are from certified facilities. Annual repetition of application just makes poor use of my limited time.

spend less money on repeated surveys like this one.

Not sure if this is actually practical given my particular circumstances (grazing on other people's land, for example).

If it were cheaper/participatory guarantee type system for instance, we would join to show solidarity for what it stands for and keep abreast of developments.

I have not looked into this.

Like I said, the paperwork is no big deal.

We don't own the land we farm on - so if there was a way to account for that that would help. Also - I have no idea how urban land would fit into the standard - we are a multi-site farm.

Pesticides must not just be allowed for organic because they are from "natural" sources or have historical precedent. They should be more effective and have significantly reduced side-effects compared to their conventional counterparts. Organic certification doesn't currently account for the broad spectrum of "organic" pest control options - nothing to potentially more harmful than some conventional growers.

If it were a simple process without a tedious recording process

Sure. Certification costs on a sliding scale based on annual income. Provide the resources necessary to fulfill our filing obligations. Provide free training for small farms to ensure proper reporting. Web-based reporting.

See above, address those issues.

Different categories or levels of certification may make it more applicable to many more farms.

I think it needs to be more "sensible." Perhaps there could be different degrees of certification, such as "does not use chemical fertilizers or pesticides or GMO crops." The current classification seems very broad

I have no idea?

Less expensive.

It certainly would attract new customers that are interested, but they should be wary.

reduce paperwork burden, reduce cost, start making local a priority as opposed having to use inputs trucked in from very far away.

restore public confidence

No..even what they call ALLOWABLE applications will never go on my land

We don't know enough about the process to comment.

i just need to know the rules and requirements and to know where to go to get info. i understand that a course can't cover everything.

It would be really good if I could go to our local verification officer and she could help me thru all the forms and paperwork. But she says that because she is a VO, she is not allowed to do that.

Lower certification fees and less paperwork

Sliding certification cost scale from bigger farms to smaller ones.

yes

C - Would your business benefit from being certified organic?

It could

Possibly

no. our CSA has waiting lists.

At this point, no. We purchase our inputs at certified organic prices (we purchase cert. organic inputs) and sell at cert. organic prices. We can't keep up with demand at this point.

When we first started out we did certify. It was useful for us to have a third party verification for customers who did not know us in the beginning.

No. I try to strike a balance between offering food at a reasonable price so it is affordable for as many people as possible and making money. From my business position organic certification means charging more. I am a food for the masses kind of farmer, for example, my percentage of 'premiuim' products for sale extends to only 15% of my

Not sure. As mentioned above if we were to move towards wholesaling it probably would. However, we haven't yet had a customer tell us they were choosing not to purchase our products because we were not certified organic!

Maybe if there was more competition from other local producers in our area that would change our answer, but currently, we would not benefit except in the situation mentioned in b), where we could have sold a cash crop for a

Not at all.

Yes, as I think it verifies to the consumer that our practices are ecological.

Yes and No, I am not sure it would change our customers views of us but it would be nice to have a seal of approval for all the hard work that we have done on this farm for our customers.

Not enough to warrant the current paperwork.

no. see answer to question a.

nefit

Yes.

I believe that it would benefit.

not much

Certain aspects I am sure would benefit. Wholesale herbs, medicinal plants, mushrooms anything value added.

Probably.

I don't know, but it's possible. The people who buy our farm products have enough of a relationship with us to know that we grow using no chemicals and don't treat our livestock with antibiotics or drugs unless it's life or death. I'm not sure that they would be willing to pay more for our products if they were certified organic.

In its current form, we do not believe our business would directly benefit from organic certification. As mentioned above, if we were to expand and/or change our marketing model, we expect that obtaining the organic certification would facilitate marketing and communication. On another note, we do want to support the organic movement and we do value the existence of the organic certification. We are aware that there are many indirect ways by which our business benefits from the existence of the organic certification.

I believe it gives a sense of legitimacy for potential customers that may not know us.

Nope.

It would open up some markets for my product to be sold on a wholesale level to stores and certain local businesses i.e. a local certified organic bakery where I could sell cabbage and basil to make sauerkraut and pesto for their business will only be able to sell as certified if buying from an organic farm. I wish to explore these business opportunities in the next few years

We would not use the Certified organic label as a way to increase prices, it's more a pride of production and an public statement and confirmation for our customers of a quality product.

A clear profile, acceptance from Organic Farmers, eventually new market opportunities.

Yes. I would like to be able to sell seeds.

no

Hard to say. My market does not currently require it of me, but my business may still see benefit from certification.

yes

Mostly, it would make it a lot easier to describe our farm to customers. This is not a major difficulty, but, it really sucks to explain to people that we feel that we are using a practice that we consider more environmentally friendly than the certified organic alternative. I see little tangible (fiscal) benefit to certifying.

As a former producer I can attest that being certified organic is a plus.

likely because that is what new customer that don't know us look for. Our market customer trust us and know our organic area is reclaimed farm land and we are not using any products (which there are going to be more of in the future) on it not even ones registered for use on certified organic farms. For health reasons there are consumers unable to eat certified organic produce but an eat ours.

hope so

No. Our business has grown significantly as a result of our choice to NOT certify. We stand alone in our farming convictions, share those with the public, remain open to their questions and visits and do not require a third party to vouch for our integrity. The local food market does not need a third person in the mix.

Absolutely! I do explain to people that all my practices fall under Canadian Organic Standard but I cannot afford the yearly fee of \$500.00...people have to take me at my word. If I was certified, people could take me at my certification papers.

At this point.. I am not sure. I think yes, but I presently sell my organically raised animals and produce as "grown & raised using certified organic feeds" and practices. Presently I am not able to use the words Organic just because I haven't paid for a piece of paper and an inspection every year.

yes

yes

As above.

all my current clients are familiar with my production methods and trust me. If new markets come under consideration certification would be helpful

yes

Yes

1. No, as we are marketing through direct relationships, rather than a box on a shelf.

Every little bit helps

yes

We could sell into one more of the four grocers on the island, which is no great loss, because they don't support local farmers in so many ways (since Soebys took them over) that every local has written them off.

Not likely.... The world has moved on. Now that multi-national companies are in the organic segment and imports from China are on the market, the customer is looking for something more authentic. I want to know my customers and have them trust me as an individual producer. I have no desire to be an un-differentiated organic commodity producer who competes for attention in distant markets.

I think certification would give me a slight increase in market share and ease of sale. But again I am not sure if it would justify on my bottom line at the current certification process.

perhaps

no

Yes, I think so. I would prefer to be certified as we strive to follow organic practices in all the work we do here with livestock, egg production, and crops and I think the certified organic label does have some weight with consumers.

Yes - I would be able to sell my grapes at a premium

It would just quicken the conversation at the market stall. It's just simple to say: I'm certified organic. Explaining why I'm not certifying is just a longer conversation with more questions.

Possibly.

eventually we will certify for marketing purposes but at this point it just doesn't make economic or ecological sense to certify.

hard to realize organic premium

Perhaps but because we are so small most people trust us anyway

not likely

Maybe. Depends on what we plan to produce going forward.

It is hard to say. I would prefer to be able to say "I am certified", but given the existing barriers, it may not happen.

Probably a little, in assuring possible customers, but at this point the benefit is not enough to balance out the extra work needed in order to get the certification.

yes

possibly. I could sell my cull cows as certified organic although there is no marketing channel at the present time.

Yes, probably in the near future. Not selling very much now, but we're getting there.

don't think so

I'm planning to sell mostly at a farmer's market and farm gate, and hopefully to a few stores in town. I don't think certification will make a big difference for my first few years, but I think it will benefit me long term. I also believe strongly in the concept of independent certification for growers claiming to be organic.

probably, we have attempted it before.

Only with new markets.

Minimally at this point but as our business grows it will play a bigger role.

not sure. Customers are becoming very suspicious of all labels. The best label maybe no label and say here's our farm come out and see for yourself what we do.

As of this point we are looking at about 50/50

Yes...credibility without explanation

Possibly long-term, as we branch out and cease to sell directly to the consumer (we are currently selling, small-scale, to a local co-operative grocer and two restaurants, but if we expand, this might be to our advantage). Also, we understand that people are willing to pay more for 1) a local product, and 2) an organic product. The nature of our farm implies that we must charge more than what is seen at the local supermarket, and I am sure that a label would allow us to do that without too much fuss.

yes, i know it matters to me as a shopper so i assume the same from my consumers

I think it would...I am going to try to get certified.

yes

Only marginally since we only sell locally/regionally.

yes

don't think so. it is about knowing your farmer and their practices. and local seems to be more important.

D - Certified Organic - I chose to be certified for the following reasons:

Long historic involvement with certification

inertia - and believing certification has somevalue

My customers value organic food and so it seemed easier to certify and be able to say Yes, we're organic, than to explain our growing practices.

Market access Personal values

to stand in solidarity with other organic farmers, because I am annoyed by other farms at the Farmers market where I sell who claim they are organic, but indeed are not - and I am frustrated by how this confuses consumers and don't want to be part of that confusion, plus, it is still easier and cheaper, and takes less of my time, than starting something like a PGS would - although IF there was a PGS path in existence, I might consider that instead of certification

trust in the organic label. I buy organic products because I know what it means, anything else, you have no idea how it was grown. We're certified to give our customers the same peace of mind.

support organics, market under the CO umbrella, links me with other CO farmers

provide customers with quality assurance and traceability

To ensure my customers that my organic practices are sound.

environmental heath benefits, demonstration potential for other small-scale growers, education potential for school groups and community members, benefits of having the term "certified organic" on a product or service (CSA)

Because by being certified, there is much more confidence by the consumer that they are getting what they expect I.e., a pesticide free and other organic standard product.

To assure all of our customers that we know & follow the Canadian Organic Standards & are inspected by a 3rd party. Summer tourists, who do not know our farming operation, are assured that they are getting an organic product. Certification shows that we are serious in assuring our customers that our produce is the "real thing". Also by becoming certificated, we demonstrate to conventional farmers, to the government, to the local population that the organic movement and growing safe produce is important to us and our fellow certified organic growers. We present ourselves as a united front.

Outside verification of what I say I do Market access and differentiation

To be organic

I like that a group of my peers look together at best practices and support one another

Importance of certification in principle Importance to provide proof of my organic status to customers

consumer assurance do not trust organic claims of non certified -too much misuse solidarity with certified farms/business

recognition in the market for eaters

Can sell to organic-only stores in Fredericton. Use organic practices long-term.

So my customers can quickly identify that I don't use chemicals.

We believe in the principles of organic farming and therefore want to be part of helping this sector grow. Also allows new customers to find us based on our farming practices.

To have my product certified.

For the assurance of customers. In order to have the organic nature of products verified. In order to farm using sound ecological principles and methods.

It's good business to have paperwork, reports, business plans, traceability, accountability etc.! The organic certification process ensures we continue to enhance and grow a healthy profitable business & environment. Plus, we are human can't remember and know everything...nice to know a 3rd party has our backs...keeps us on our we support the system. Although it does not benefit our business in terms of prices nor sales since our consumers all know us, we feel it is important to support the system of certification.

We took over an operation and it was already certified. We believed that it was the morally right thing to do, to keep it certified. So that our customers would have confidence in our product.

third party attestation of practices proud to display the certificate clear code of practice

I believe that the certification has a better chance of guaranteeing stewardship of the land and accountability to the consumer.

I sell my cash crops as certified organic

when we first started farming organically and before the COS 2009 it was assume by everyone in the marketplace that if you were labelling as organic ..you needed to be certified

Was certified from 1995 until 2010. Used to grow cash crops.

To be able to sell products to other certified farmers and to retailers. Livestock was for some years not certified as there was no demand and farm gate sales didn't care about certification. Customers rather see for themselves the animals, not papers.

we were not certified and when people would see our produce they would become skeptical^ therefore the certification, as of 2000 and that way our produce was 'inspected, and people came to realize that organic was possible and preferablke

health of people animals and planet

1. I believe in organic and want to support the movement finanically 2. It is a benefit when selling to a certain section of farm market customers 3. Feel the more members a large voice in government decisions

I believe in organic practices.

Accountability. We have also found that many people saying they are organic, have not read, and do not follow the organic standard of Canada. The consumer is really being mislead

To qualify for marketing opportunities

I am a start-up operation, so certification buys me consumer credibility.

A significant segment of our clientele is in the city, and being certified organic is meaningful to them. Our farm is in Quebec, where 'organic' is a controlled term, thus we can only say we are organic if we are certified, which distinguishes our farm at the market. More certified organic producers provides leverage for policy changes at the provincial and national level, whereas "organic, non-certified" is not a recognized label and has no clout.

Back in the early nineties our truly organic farm was competing with a beef producer who claimed to be organic (to get a premium price) but actually used implants, insecticides, etc. We became certified to distinguish our operation from his.

only way to protect the integrity of organics easier to sell product

Our customers wanted us to be certified.

it's the right thing to do for the land and animals; access to farmer mentors and other knowledge resources through our certifying body; price premium; way better peer group than conventional ag!

- I appreciate having an organic standard which lays out what constitutes organic practice - some of my buyers would not be interested in my product if it were not certified organic

Mainly for the publics eye. My practices are definitely organic, but I am open to bringing a deeper holistic approach to my pracitce

Concern that the province of Ontario would ratify the standard & make it impossible for me to advertise using the word "organic" unless certified.

It was/is the right thing to do. It gives consumers the only measure of confidence that they can have when buying groceries. It helps farm workers and the planet and the livestock.

to be certified means truly organic rules

being certified gives our business greater legitimacy

It is important for us to participate as farmers. We feel like the only way for certification standards and processes to improve is to participate. Our customers (farmers mkts, wholesale, CSA) like to know that we are certified.

When I started out few people knew what certified organic meant including me so it was educational, also there were lots of outright charlatans naming anything organic

Market access Belonging to farm organisation

It keeps us on track, we follow all the rules and we can offer our product with integrity. There is a paper trail.

proof of product ease of selling believe in the system

because I believe in organic to be pure and this way I can keep up dated

I want to have some form of certification as a former professional (veterinarian) for my farm products

It is legally enforceable and is about process, not necessarily product. Transparency.

Accountability for customers consistency amongst growers Consistency in what "organic" means to keep the influence of small producers in the certification process helps to uphold small details that I might not be aware of - i.e substances that are prohibited

-our customers expect/demand it -it provides us with a level of legitimacy -it is important to us, as we believe that certification is the only way to move the sector forward

I believe in third party verification. As much as I would like to trust other individuals at their word, the truth is at the end of the day no one is checking the uncertified farms. If there is no certification for organic, the system is ripe for being taken advantage of. I know the system is not perfect and that organic certification is still prone to being watered down, but at least through certification we have some organization and means to have a say in the process and the standards. I don't want to have to check on other farmers myself, nor do I want to pass moral judgement on whether another farmer is trustworthy or not. I'd rather just know we're all being audited, by a professional, and held to the same minimum standards. Finally, I value the support, mentorship, and community of my organic certification association.

to be certified means to show i am not using chemicals or gmo to the buying public

When we grew cash crops it was important for the price difference and because we believe organic production is the only safe and logical method of production. Certifying our farm helps spread the word about organic values.

Commitment to organic principles; more legitimate than other claims, as it is third-party verified, to communicate to customers; profitability, more sales when certified organic

we where farming it almost organic already. health for each one that lives here, on the farm.

I very much respect what certification does,so that proper practices are followed to maintain consumer confidence

Since I was not selling from the farm, I thought it would be a way to reassure customers that I really was organic. Plus I thought I would sell fresh produce or dried herbs to certified organic processors. Both have turned out to be useful although I think it may be a small percentage of my sales. I think being certified organic may give me an advantage in being accepted as a vendor in some farmers markets.

At the time I certified, there were no sources for certified organic seed garlic and I worked with OCPP to enable such sources.

Chemical cost was adding too much financial risk. Did not like using chemicals Felt Organic farming had the chance of being more profitable. Was interested in orgainic farming practices.

1. To access organic grain market. 2. To be an example for others.

proof to market a management milestone

we choose to make our commitments to sustainable agriculture practices visible and verifiable to our customers.

Force us to maintain better records Raise the bar for internal production standards and practices Access markets where the process is trusted Convey our message of high standards to the end user

To be organic

Certification process important to validate claims of organic practices and separate our products from those that claim to be organic without verification. Allows customers not close to our farm to be assured that we do what we integrity, value for customers, increased market opportunities, and most important: improving the environment and peoples health

I am raising my animals on organic feed an on pasture anyways and I felt that by certifying I could receive more for my goods.

Re-selling to other businesses that require it.

I am part of the JustFood start-up farm program in Ottawa along with approximately 10 other farmers. The farm is in the final stages of certification so I will subjected to the certification requirements this year. I therefore did not choose to be certified but must none-the-less comply with the regulations as part of the program. When I leave the JustFood farm I will not be seeking organic certification.

More profitability for our small farm and superior quality of food for consumer.

As most agricultural chemicals used to control other forms of life than the crop are highly toxic, even if not immediately so, thus it is essential to reduce or disallow their use. Many carcinogens produce disease in a chronic rather than acute manner so it is very difficult to be sure that any particular chemical is the cause. Not using them is the only sure way forward. I did post doctoral studies on organophosphates (used as nerve gases) the result is I try to farm ecologically (organic?). At least my extended family is getting minimal exposure to toxic organic -certification is the best tools our eaters or customers have in order to have the best possible safe food

E - As a certified organic grower, do you have any concerns about the current certification process?

I do - which is why I agreed to serve as the convener of this working group

I think it has failed to work for small local direct marketing farms

The cost was our biggest initial barrier.

It's expensive and burdensome for the farmer and yet seems not rigorous, like it would be easy to cheat if I wanted

I've been certified now for 7 years so it is now rather routine, so no. At first yes - it took me a long time to 'translate' forms and processes that were clearly designed for large farms with field crops to a small vegetable farm with multiple varieties. But once I set up systems for this, now it is much easier

Yes. The paperwork is too cumbersome. The fees are too high. Getting approval for inputs from our CB can sometimes takes a long time, and in some instances when they've come back with a 'not approved' their reasoning behind the decision was lame (i.e. 'because the company didn't call us back, so we assume they're hiding something')....

Not all CBs are adept at their jobs and their inefficiencies discourage many from certifying. Standards aren't perfect: some too lax and some impractical - problem is a national standard that tries and accommodate all of Canada's diverse growing zones and other factors

- the cost of certification is quite high for a mixed-use bio-dynamic yet small farm (some items, although they qualify, are not certified in order to keep costs down)

Yes it certainly seems designed for large scale cash crop farms, discourages small farms from certifying, which then waters down the meaning of organic to the consumer. We need to bring small farms on board to certification with a more attractive package.

Laborious paperwork, my specific certifier needing the same paperwork every year regardless of changes or 'misplacing' paperwork and having to resend or get signatures over again.

With the recent reports in the news about residues found in certified organic product, weather true or not, it cast doubt in the mind of consumers. Not that I am looking for more indent inspection and paperwork, we must find ways to maintain that consumer's confidence.

I feel that there should be a differentiation between big farms who sell wholesale to grocery stores etc. and small farms who attend farmer's markets, have small CSA's etc, because we are like day & night. However certifying with ACO (Atlantic Certified Organic) I do not feel that the paperwork is too heavy & the questions do relate well to smaller growers. That is one reason why I held back from going with a larger certification body, because I am a small direct marketing farmer.

Yes, it is tedious and requires a lot of work and cost

Only the price. Too expensive

Yes, It's getting into big Ag business without the human face and community, Also concerned that in BC any farmer can call himself organic.

It is paperwork heavy! As a person who is also involved with a CB's certification processes, I know that it is rigorous and carefully done - but again, it is only a snapshot.

Very costly for small scale operators causing financial hardship Not all CB's are created equal - some very unprofessional. I do not believe that the standard is being applied equally across the country.

Yes, designed to work for industrial market place and thus costly and beauricat

Yes. Paying \$700 pa to be certified and inspected is high when you're mainly selling vegetables and fruit. Also, isn't there a conflict of interest in paying for the inspection? Plus the paperwork has to be repeated every year when it has already been filed for previous years - the certifying organization is not adopting methods that reduce paperwork and that is adding to the cost and time to turn around documents. We are still waiting for a final certificate from 2013's process.

It's not designed for a small operation.

The process has become cumbersome for the farmer and in our situation expensive considering our net profit. On a broader scale, with the Organic Sector growing rapidly, there is an increase in the number of farms becoming certified that strive to only meet the minimum standards without really being committed to the principles of organic farming. This lessons the integrity of organic certification for all.

expensive and time-consuming

Certification too slow, with verification papers coming late in the year after the previous certification has expired. Happens every year. Same information filled out every year.

I wish some of the process/certification plans/paperwork were set-up for small market gardeners. Each Province should have the same Rules & Regulations.

we want to ensure that the ideology of reuse and recycling stays at the forefront of the process - that is, allowing used drill stem for fence posts is a logical use of a finite resource and does not indicate support for fracking. That also means encouraging a closed system as much as possible with the least imported inputs.

It is time consuming, it is expensive...and for the most part our customers don't care! Our product is on the shelves beside other products that are not certified in stores that tote the line "all of our products are organic!"

expensive for the small producer

It is extremely onerous and what each inspector concerns themselves with is different. Too much time is looking at the paper trail and not enough looking at the gardens.

As a small farm, there are too many pages to fill out that don't concern my operation and a lot of it is repetitive questions. As of right now I am trying to get the eggs we have certified organic and am having problems with my certifying body about it.

there are many farmers who are using the word organic but do not know all the standards involved or the permitted substances allowedthe label non GMO is becoming more acceptable to the consumer

The cost.

Paperwork is extra work and inspection cost too high. There should be the same standards and regulations for all Countries. There is little incentive to go organic as it is not recognized for it's benefits to the health of people, water and the environment. farmers across Europe receive subsidies for operating organically and protecting groundwater covering certification cost and more.

only how fearful not certified farmers can be. If you're really doing it right, there is nothing to fear except the price of cert.

not regulated or enforced in my province leaving the door wide open for all to make the claim.

1. The amount of paper work is too much for small growers and does not reflect the amounts that we are planting in gardens compared to farmers that plant acres of one product 2. Cost of certification is not affordable to small growers and you either have to give up an item or event you may need to pay for the certification (in my case the ACORN Conference is something I do not attend so that I can pay my fees)

yes, the playing field should be levelled - right now it's those following healthy practices that spend precious time and money to get certified. Conventional agricultural practitioners don't have to.

Not a lot. It is difficult to certify a small amount of animals or birds as the cost is prohibitive. Vegetable and field crops are much easier.

The Certification fee for our small operation (37 ac row crops; 18 pasture/forage) is now \$700+, which I feel is a bit much, considering what services we receive for this fee.

1) Under our CB's system, market gardeners have considerably more paperwork than field croppers. 2) Initial and base certification fees inordinately reduce profits for small and start-up farms. 3) Additional certification fees quickly become prohibitive for small diversified farms; the more you work with nature the higher your certification fees. 3) Effectively impossible for me to raise certified organic (CO) livestock larger than poultry: can't find online directory of breeder or stock CO producers, can't find online directory of CO processors, haven't found local CO producers or processors either. 4) CO site inspection fees for non-CO processors are prohibitively expensive for small producers. 5) CFIA's one set of rules for all sizes of livestock processors has been driving small livestock processors out of business or forcing them to restrict their focus and scale up, even though the recalls and problems that give rise to increased regulation predominantly arise from large processors. A cynic would note that under the current system a large processor could reduce its competition by creating conditions in their company that could foreseeably require a recall that would require expensive modifications to correct or prevent. 6) The CFIA seems to have no enforcement of the organic label below cross-border trade, so anyone trading locally can say they are organic. This dramatically reduces the value of certifying.

The current process seems increasingly designed to facilitate wholesale inter-provincial and export sales, and to be focused on meeting the needs of agribusiness and large retailers, more than promoting and advancing organic practices and local economies. With big players at the table, I am concerned about whose interests are eventually going to be served.

We are small operators marketing 20 head of beef and 20 hogs annually to a local market (within 50 km.). It seems that every year I do battle with ProCert regarding the use of a local abattoir. The proprietor is obstinate enough to up us with ever changing regulations imposed by, essentially, the CFIA. Also, product labeling seems to be a grey area, depending on the certifying inspector.

no

Yes it is long, complicated and costly.

I'm very new to it so don't have too much to comment on in this regard other than to say that I've heard of some rather large discrepancies between certifying bodies that allow practices I would not consider in keeping with the spirit of organics (i.e. our CB allows beak trimming of chickens?), ivermectin use on livestock etc. Also, in our area (vancouver island) there are currently no certified organic slaughter facilities within a reasonable and not-cost-prohibitive distance from our farm, which means we couldn't realistically have certified organic livestock even if we upheld organic standards on our farm (which we are doing with the exception of feeding non-organic restaurant kitchen scraps to pigs). This creates all sorts of problems, including making it hard to justify to the restaurant owner the cost of purchasing organic feed if we can't even market our animal products as organic on the menu.

it's not required of all operators

- I believe we need to have an intra-provincial certification process in place. I am at a disadvantage in my local farmers market where other farmers who make organic claims are not verified.

Some of the branding that is taking place, that spills over, plus what you hear from the California industry (true or not) affect the labeling.

Extremely challenging to get amendments approved for use. The process of having a certifying body approve requires me to be able to get information about products which the manufacturers will not share. Often the process has been so slow I've had to resort to foliar applications or crisis-solving practices later in the season rather than engaging in soil building early in the season as I'd prefer. Sometimes I feel like being certified organic makes it MORE challenging for me to engage in ecologically sustainable practices. Sometimes I know that another certified organic grower has had a product approved, but I still have to start from scratch with my certifier and re-find information that they have obviously already been given before (otherwise the other grower would not have had it

Yes, it is becoming too watered down to accommodate industrial organic agriculture. It doesn't evolve into stricter criteria as organic inputs become available.

very expensive for what they do

the fees associated with certifying remain a legitimate-sounding reason NOT to certify for small or very small

Not at the moment

As a small scale short chain grower the certified organic status is not of as much importance now, also as I have built up a long time clientele

Expensive, bureaucratic, repetative

It is expensive and not 100% effective.

too much gov't control those only interested in profits

no except I would like to see country where items are grown on labels. if there is more than 1 country maybe 90-95 % be list. as well lets jump on the band wagon and label our organic stuff as being GMO FREE

Too expensive couldn't afford it without a pension

Being unable to use the national logo if I go low risk. I try hard each year and then for my diligent duty they say I am unable to use the logo.

I am concerned that people aren't certifying which I feel reduces the usefulness of certification for me. Don't feel that some standards (for animals in particular) are good enough.

-we are a small scale operation (10 acres) and solely family run, the amount of time we spend on the paper work, and actually inspection (usually about 3-4hrs during our harvest season) is very draining on our resources. My husband and I both work off farm as well and have limited time/resources to dedicate to paperwork

No, it's fairly straight forward and I would keep similar production records anyway for general business planning and soil management.

yes i think more canadian testing on grains need to be done. i mean testing for gmo , chemicals and quality. for beef more testing for gmo and hormones.

Yes

Some of the information required makes sense for us to keep, as it improves our own knowledge of our farming process and helps us with crop planning. Some of the information required only seems necessary for larger operations with multiple employees and is harder for us to be motivated to keep records of.

no aopa has been good

it is a little to winded, as a certified producer for many years there is a lot of redundancy that drives me a little crazy, there should be more emphasis on policing of the industry, somebody that knows how to fill out paper work well can abuse the system and many of the farmers with true passion for what they are doing get discouraged by the concern of paper pushing over true understanding of the process

Yes. Lots. I left my CB and moved to another one. I have not encountered the problems with new CB as I did with old one - but I believe sloppy inspection standards (understatement) and poor response by administration hurts the entire industry. 1* (see c below) A certification system that works on the basis of one crop at a time does not work for a bio-diverse permaculture/froest garden system. I harvest what grows itself, as well as what I plant - Purslane popped up - yum yum - pick it and take it to market, but not on my "crop list" - therefore not certified. 2* Expensive for a small producer - is there an economic advantage that justifies the expense? 3*

certification is an economic burden for grower because costs cannot be realized in the marketplace

Very much so

Not as stringent as it could be. How closely the bushels produced vs bushels sold are audited.

No concerns.

very costly

Yes! In response to several of the members of our Certifying Body we tooled up to meet the accreditation requirements for ISO certification. We had NO IDEA of the level of complexity (=cost) that would be required to implement and maintain this service. Now, as a small grower with only 1 out of province customer along with many other of our members, we're finding the costs - both financial and bureaucratic - of continuing with our regional certifier to be increasingly prohibitive and problematic and unjustifiable.

not with the process, some minor issues with the standards and labelling requirements

too expensive for small producer

None. Would appreciate Ontario regulating the use of the term "organic" like some other provinces do.

it's cumbersome for small diverse producers. If all I had was 100's of acres of corn, soy and cereal grains, the record keeping and renewals would be simple. With a few acres of pasture, grains, gardens and smaller flocks/herds of beef, dairy, chickens, broilers, turkeys, ducks, bees, etc, its a much bigger challenge.

As a beginner it is hard to get the paperwork sorted out. I don't have any templates to work from and am just waiting for my first inspection to find out what I should have been recording and how to do it.

I think it's a bit flaky. The organic industry says buying certified organic is the only way to ensure that one is indeed eating organic, but I have never had an unannounced inspection. Without unannounced inspections it is EXTREMELY easy to circumvent the system - i.e. I could use prohibited substances here and there on the 364 days of the year that I am not being inspected and no one would ever know. This makes certification not only expensive but also less worthwhile and it leaves consumers susceptible to being duped into buying an expensive product for no good reason. I think there are many non-certified growers who are completely honest and are following the organic standard, while I'm quite sure there are larger certified organic growers that are not following the standard and still receive certification. There must be a consistent and fairly high rate of unannounced

For a one person operation the bureaucratic requirements are far too onerous and the financial benefits questionable. It is not that there are no benefits at all but rather that those benefits are outweighed by the added work and money required to realize them. The certification process is very obviously primarily designed for larger scale operators with employees dedicated to clerical tasks. For them the certification serves as a proxy for trust and a method for increasing revenue. At the scale at which I operate I can have personal relationships with the majority of my customers. The trust that ensues largely precludes the need for an outside body's seal of approval. There is also the aspect of financial rewards for the certifying outfits and the bodies that produce the regulations; they are businesses after all, and benefit as the number of certified operations increase. Is the drive to certify small scale farms primarily for the certifier's and regulator's benefit or are there more altruistic reasons at work? The answer to this will have a large impact on the type of reforms that can and will be considered. For the smoothest operation and best results I think it is important to limit bureaucracy's unnecessary involvement when ever possible. The incentives behind the drive for certification therefore differ across varying levels of scale and orientation. The one-size-fits-all regulations do not reflect this. I also do not believe that the regulations, as well meaning as they are, address the main issue facing agriculture today, namely sustainability. It is quite possible to follow the rules precisely and be no more sustainable than any industrial ag operation. Sure, there are crop rotations, etc, but virtually all of the medium to large scale operators that I am aware of would fail just as readily as non-certified outfits should their access to external inputs be restricted in any way. I suppose that food security is beyond the purveyance of a system that only addresses a narrow section of issues regarding food production. Given the enormous problems inherent in our food production and distribution systems the issues addressed by going through the organic certification process as written do not seem all that important.

As we sell meat, it is difficult and lengthy with slaughter and butcher. There are no certified slaughter plants or butchers in the area (only one in Ontario as we know). Inspectors request to visit all areas therefore additional time and costs are involved as well as these small scale slaughterhouses and butchers do not welcome additional inspectors on their property as they are already regulated with numerous demands from the other agencies. If we request additional inspections they will refuse our animals and leave us with long distance to travel for the animals which reduces the quality (stress on animals) and again costly expenses.

Overall and at this relatively early stage of organic production methods it is as much as can be inspected. The background of inspectors is often insufficient in agricultural and chemical knowledge but will improve

-being a market grower myself, I definitely find that the paper work is excessive especially about needing info on my conventional fields. They only should focus on the organic land.

F - Improvement - Do you have ideas of how to improve the current certification process or how to design a process that could better serve a farm like yours?

Lots and hoping to hear lots more from folks who respond to these questions

We are very happy with the model of my CB's Small-Scale certification program. We would be happy if our local certifying body was able to do something similar.

My farm is so small, an easier process would be better and less expensive, it would make it (certification) more accessible to me. And by just as rigorous since the current process has lots of holes.

on line checkbox system - and it seems in the past year CBs are heading there anyway, in the end, every farm NEEDS to keep their own records though, and this is just about organization skills - I don't think there is a more efficient way around this. Plus, farms could get funding now under GF2 to do learn and set up these systems for the first time - so that helps with the first time,

Return to some sort of peer review process, or at least regional. Maritime farmers are familiar with products other maritime farmers use. It makes no sense to have my file reviewed by someone on the West Coast when I'm in Less cost. More flexible regulations where appropriate.. for example, regular temperature readings of compost piles (really?) I have worked within the organic standards as a field manager and friends farms and to temp test a compost pile is low on the list of things to do.. almost everyone knows how to run a hot compost pile and the general feedstocks used in composting are generally low density in nutrients and pathogens/bacteria which makes it very hard to mess up composting.

I likemy CB's method: one form when you first join and instead of filling out a huge form every year thereafter, you just fill in changes. Minimizing paperwork makes a big difference to many. Also, not all farms care about ISO accreditation but it's greatly raised the cost of certification. It would be good to have a level of cert. for small farms marketing locally, priced accordingly.

the general public is easily confused between Certified Organic and local items labelled 'organic' The certification label needs more relevance and prominence particularly at farmer's markets

Yes a small, mixed crop/market garden, application and flat fees for small farms, a more friendly interpretation of standards for small farms to read and understand the parts that apply more to them. Eg. charts with bin numbers and tracking not so useful to small fresh food producing direct marketing farmers. Eg. Charts that allow for you to write in only one crop/variety per field number does not work for small mixed farms.

Streamlined, modern digital forms and submission tools (like this survey)

If I could send my paperwork (via electronic mail) as it comes in to my certicator, i.e., invoices, organic certified paperwork etc, it would simplify my job, and would provide the inspector with most documents before the physical inspection.

I feel the costs are high for small farms and that holds back many new producers who might become certified. Filling out the same material year after year, repeating all the information that you have entered year after year is time consuming and redundant. New information for the current year, and recording changes from the previous year should be made, but not rewriting everything, providing the same farm data, eg. farm maps etc, year after Not really.

Yes. Lower the price especially for people who sell less than 10000 dollars

Not allow non-certified farmers call themselves organic. Keep local

Allow applicants who are renewing and do not have changes to fill in a fast-track form. Ensure inspections actually occur during the growing season.

I believe that a annual inspection will always be necessary, the process is fine. Anyone complaining about the application and yearly inspection need improvements on their end. Reducing the cost to small scale operators so that there is some parody with large scale (same percentage of sales) will make the cost easier to swallow

Yes, the peer process worked in the past. check out COAB proposal that was droped because legal suite by Pro Use technology to save previous year's results so that we can just update the form - not supply years of data...

It would be nice to have a certification for small farmers, who wish only to sell locally, that would be simple and cost effective. In the previous certifying body, MCOG, there was a peer review component, which was not only educational but also added integrity to the process and a component of common sense.

Not have to redo the whole application process every year. Once it's done, it should suffice. Only changes should be noted.

Certification runs for a calendar year, not lapsing at peak season (in July). Forms more geared to small-scale operations, rather than large acreage.

Since we are so small and serve only a local market, it would be nice to have a low price attached to certification. This might allow others in a similar position to be certified as well.

We are almost at the point of giving up, what is the purpose of spending all this time, energy, and money on a system that has so many holes in it. I understand small growers, who are at farmers markets or sell direct to consumers, but as soon as their products are passed on to a third party (ie retail store) they should have to be certified in order to use the word organic.

group certification that does not require every farm to be inspected every year, pool and pool manager

Simply look at the inputs (seeds, fertilizer, mulch etc) Check buffers. Compare crops to seed inputs. Look at organic certificates. Enough.

have a better system for organic standards, I'm finding that what is good for one certifying body is not the same for the other.

require that all farmers using the word organic be certified...redesigning the application to include farms that do business intra provincially.....have some sort of evaluation of their farm practises

Lower the price, or have sliding scale.

Application forms should have all the basic information from the last year already entered with room for changes. Also there should be an online option (might exist already) to fill out the application.

since conventional farmers have no accounting to do and get deductions for their non organic inputs, why shouldn't the government make it equally accepted that certification cost nothing? it would be interesting then to see who does and who doesn't.....

Every province needs to enforce the federal regulation or adopt their own system.

1. Paper work needed could be changed to reflect the amounts per row or beds that small producers use. 2. A low certification fee would encourage those growers that want to be certified but can not afford too. This would increase the numbers and give us a greater voice in agricultural decisions. 3. A government subsidy for organics would go a long way in getting more small farmers to certify.

Certification costs should be covered by the government to encourage more to be certified. Record keeping should be standardized with templates. Certifiers shouldn't ask for data that we weren't told we had to collect.

Would like to see a fee structure which more reflects our size of operation

1) If there are any economies in only certifying to Canadian standards, then pass them on to producers in reduced fees. (I think this already happens, and it would be tough to enforce.) 2) CFIA livestock processor regulations should recognize scale. Principles-based regulation would be better than the current rules-based regulation, e.g. "appropriate sanitation" versus "wash the equipment this often with this product". A risk management framework may be helpful, e.g. a processor must implement policies and procedures to mitigate issues when the magnitude of consequences crosses some threshold. The magnitude of potential problems from small scale processors are much smaller so they should have far less a priori compliance requirements. 3) Perhaps there could be a way for organic producers to collaborate for site inspection of a non-CO livestock processor. E.g. the website of processors or processor associations could have a bulletin board where producers interested in a site inspection could post contact info. This info would only be visible to the processor and other producers who had posted their info (and their respective CBs). These bulletin boards would be less useful on CB websites. 4) Enforcement of organic certification at the local level. This could be funded by Ontario's local food act, for example. Enforcement could be shared with or done by more local organizations than CFIA, e.g. Farmers Markets Ontario. 5) Organic crops and biodiversity are proven responses to climate change, so government funds such as Growing Forward 2 could fast-track approval for using GF2 funds to significantly subsidize organic certification fees, particularly the additional fees for more diverse operations. Similarly government could subsidize CO large livestock to kick-start the industry to catch up to consumer demand by eliminating the start-up costs (i.e. must buy breeding stock and raise them CO during the last third of gestation for offspring to be CO). 6) Develop and promote geographically-searchable (e.g. within 100 km of a postal code) online directories for certified organic livestock producers (distinguish breeding stock from feeders) and processors. 7) Government (OMAFRA?) fund the addition of a "certified organic" field in the Ontario hay listings: <http://ontariohaylistings.ca/>

The process itself is not onerous. Our farm far exceeds the standard and has very thorough and transparent record keeping, and yet the inspector wastes a lot of time on minute details of our production. -adapting the paperwork to reflect highly diverse productions selling direct-to-consumer. -training inspectors to be able to use 'best judgement' and 'common sense' when dealing with diverse, small-scale farms. -making 'organic' a controlled 'appellation' across Canada, to encourage small farms to get certified.

I'm hoping that this endeavor will deal with the aforementioned issues. We must not discourage small abattoirs; We cannot exist without them. We must not burden small certified producers with unnecessary regulations; they will just opt out. I recognize that food safety and Organic integrity are paramount. We can address my concerns without compromising either.

no

Simplify the multiple layers of certification. ie We have a small cold frame yet they charge us for a greenhouse. We wash and bag our produce so they charge us a processing fee.

Where unsuitable certified organic slaughter facilities do not exist and where the government is not willing to provide them, allow livestock to be labeled as something official like "organically raised" to inform consumers that we did everything right on farm. Look further into weighing the relative ecological value of recycling vegetable waste (even if not organic) by feeding to livestock vs. composting it in some other facility and perhaps consider a change to this regulation

make certification mandatory for all

Petition the Ontario government to institute an intra-provincial certification requirement.

I would go beyond being transparent to Translucent. Sharing with the public what are the true benefits and challenges within the certification. And its growth of education to public awareness. I know this does already exist but taking it to the level of the true pros and cons of what is happening in the industry and dialoging for solutions

List of approved inputs/amendments Clear process for gaining approval for products that have meet the standard which does not require the grower to convince manufacturers to share "proprietary" information with us. Faster turn-around on approvals.

CBs should NOT be for profit, that taints the entire system. Certification fees should be fairer and the certificate should be good for several years with spot inspections used in the off years to ensure organic integrity.

not that nothing changes year in year out

- subsidies for fees for farms below a certain income threshold?

Not at the moment

Require record keeping but have less inspections if nothing significant has changed from year to year.

Make it more learning-focused. Farmers that attend training get certification credits. Inspectors are allowed to advise. Change the focus of certification from focusing on faults to focusing on improvement

My certifier is far away in Quebec and not well represented in the west. More local presence and more inspectors would help.

less paperwork list of approved inputs by all CBs

as a consumer I want to know when it says certified and a product of Canada etc that is grown in Canada or what ever country its a product of

Perhaps certify process should be only once in three years once certification is achieved

Make sure there is room for the inspectors to use common sense with the rules that are in place. 20acre farm vs 200acre vs 2000acre might take a different approach, the inspectors need support as well.

Streamline certain processes - make sure inspectors have history on hand before doing inspection so we don't repeat same things over and over. Have a reciprocal database of certified businesses so that small business doesn't have to spend so much time proving the certification of business they buy from. Have growers interact with just one person - i.e the inspector so that things are not confused in the process of communicating with both

-we believe that the first time someone certifies it should be an in-depth process, to ensure the validity of the certification and to make sure the grower fully understands the expectations and regulations of certification. But to be expected to fill out the SAME forms with the SAME information year after year is redundant. There should be a simplified renewal process. It also seems that different certifiers have different expectations and each inspector seems to have their own interpretation of the standards, so each year we are never really sure what to expect. The rule that an inspector can only inspect the same farm for 4yrs in a row is good in theory, but every 4yrs you have to explain your entire operation and all of the unique aspects of it to a different inspector.

I would feel better served by organic certification if there was regulation and enforcement of the term "organic". I live in an area where many farms claim to be organic but are not certified, however there is no enforcement of this term and I know for a fact that some of them are using practices that are not allowed in the standard.

not to improve but i think some advertising on tv to tell our system to the world.

Our farm is relying more on local support, so I think international certification is less valuable to us. I would like to see smaller regional units of farmers that know each other having a method to verify and mentor organic growers. Less paperwork and cost, but more meaningful interaction.

Simplified record keeping. As this is our first year in the process of becoming certified organic, we found the initial paperwork process quite daunting. We wanted to do everything right, but sometimes didn't really know what was being asked or required, and did not receive timely responses from our certification body. Now, we are assuming that any questions that arose can be dealt with when our VO comes to visit, but it would be nice if there was more information provided on filling out the initial paperwork, especially around the farm plan. For example, it was asked how many treated posts we had on the farm. Since we just moved to our property we weren't sure if the posts (which were here when we moved) are treated or not. It would be helpful to know, when this question is being asked, if this is something that will affect our certification. Do we need to remove the fence posts, or can we replace them as needed, or are they fine indefinitely? These are questions that arose at multiple stages of the initial paperwork process. Also, certain records that are required to be kept, seem unnecessary for a small scale. For example, storage records. We keep harvest records because it is important for us to know our yields and also what we are bringing to markets. However, as it is only my partner and I, with a single walk-in cooler, we know what is going on with the storage, but it seems unnecessary to write down, or, for that matter, to have to label everything, date everything, etc. We harvest on Friday for Saturday and Sunday markets, putting Saturday stuff on one side of the cooler, Sunday stuff on the other. We bring the vegetables to market, if any don't sell, they are composted. It adds an unnecessary element, in our opinions, to have to assign lot numbers and dates and how long things are not at this time.

more direct consultation ,not by inspectors ,but by other certified farmers who have a passion for proper adressing of the true issues

1* Ombudsman for the farmer - dealing with certification bodies and inspectors. Right now if one gets the worst inspector ever (I have had them) and they make an mistake (willfully or otherwise) it is the farmer's responsibility to request and pay for another inspector if there is no other solution offered by the certifying body. Back to the point about hurting the whole industry (in b): if an ombudsman was in place, and a particular company kept having complaints against it, and records were open - then one assumes that would be incentive to improve. I had an inspector actually forge my name on an inspection summary. Bizarre thing to do - but fitting with what I assumed his natural inclination to "poor judgement". I assumed he (or someone in head office) thought it was reasonable to digitally forge my name rather than travel all the way back to get my actual signature (he just tossed the unsigned form to me as he left). I doubt there is a certifying body in Canada that has not heard about this. I find it interesting that the carbon copies of the inspection summary has disappeared. That would be the only proof that a forgery has occurred. A photo copy has to be signed by the inspector stating that it is a true copy in order to be of the same proof as a carbon copy. So - needless to say - I think carbon copies of inspection summaries should be mandated.

2* The paper work I submit is geared for conventional farms that use organic methods. Permaculture, forest gardening, restoration agriculture, natural farming, farming with nature....the descriptive names go on and on - and all do not fit the crop planted, crop harvested model. I "wild craft" harvest in between the trees and shrubs in the orchard. Crop list? I would like to write see last year, and any other useful native plant that I identify this year. A young orchard nurseryman told me he looked into certifying, and decided against it because the paper work did not apply to him and his practice. Organic Certification has not caught up to alternative agricultural models. The only solution to this is a form/designation specifically for perennial farming (or mostly perennial - with some integrated annual) systems. This ends up being "the farm/land is certified" not just the crop. The system is certified therefore all produced in that system is certified organic - it is holistic and accurately describes reality. 3* As a small producer I think I am paying for the principle of organics - not for a real economic advantage. I don't know enough of the economics of my certifying body to know if they can afford to give a small producer discount or rebate. But, that

The process and what it tells consumers must remain flexible to the demands of consumers. The process is highly based on people telling the truth, maybe there should be room for laboratory random audits. Unannounced audits are too few.

Reduce cost of certification by convincing more farmers to join.

alternate between inspection & paperwork years

We want to be part of developing a credible, but rational, verification process to serve our part of the organic industry that could be offered as an option by our local Certifying Body.

More guidance as to what materials are allowed for organic and their sources. Otherwise the process is not to bad. Growers that have poor records might complain but that is easy to change

Make it less expensive

No, we're okay with the process and have been through it enough so that it's become routine. We work with our certifier and inspector to accommodate scale issues.

No, but I'd love to see their be applications designed for large scale and small scale farms.

Certifying bodies could provide or even sell tracking software modules - would be a win/win in my opinion.

Seeing as the requirements of the current regulations disadvantage small operators financially and from a workload perspective, and that there are different incentives to certify depending on the size of the farm it would seem reasonable to adjust those requirements and fees in accordance with operation size. At the smallest scale I think that some type of self reporting would suffice. I believe that small operators are less likely to cheat as they do not have the same financial or operational incentives to do so. In my experience the larger the operation the less the moral imperative serves as a guidepost to behaviour. The tracking requirements from seed to sale could be relaxed considerably. After all I am not in a position to benefit in a meaningful way by sneaking three extra bunches of non-organic carrots onto my market table. Risking a hard won reputation is simply not worth it. With less work required on the part of the certifier the fees could be significantly reduced, or fees on the larger operators could be raised to subsidize the smaller ones. Once I am no longer under the umbrella of JustFood (we are all under one certification which is included in my program fees) the fees as they now stand would represent a significant percentage of my profit. \$500 on a \$100+k operation is not a problem. It is much more so on a \$20k gross business. Perhaps there could be different levels of certification: Self-reported, Inspected yearly, Fully sustainable,

We already work closely with the slaughterhouses and butchers to request first in morning slaughter or butchering to reduce contamination. It would really help the small producers if there were certified organic slaughterhouses or butchers. With all the regulations already in place for these small plants it is almost impossible for these places to make a living. We have heard many of these places that need to upgrade their facilities which is also very costly for them. 3 areas of improvement: attract the existing slaughterhouses and/or butchers to become certified organic. Reduce the paperwork, inspections and cost for the small producer. Advertise to consumers the benefits of certified organic. It seems that all the above are left with the small producer and by doing so - it is almost impossible to make a living as we need to be everywhere. We sell our products "from certified organic beef" and work closely with our partners to ensure consumers that they are getting the quality that they demanding. The consumer demand right now is to purchase products directly from the farmer. They want to know how and where their food is coming from. If the agencies that certified us can help us other than just inspect us - that really would

Only education, education and more education for inspectors etc. their knowledge is learned by rote and often lacks depth of knowledge of agriculture, toxicology and animal husbandry.

-exclude conventional acres -definitely lower the certification fees by half cut back on unrelated aspects of the rest of the farm

| G - Other comments, suggestions or concerns you would like to share | Years of experience as certified operator | Produce, product | Market (local, provincial, national, international) | Market access (Farmer's market, groceries, CSA, etc) | Optional - Gross Revenue |
|--|---|---|---|--|--------------------------|
| | | Frozen meat - beef - pork - chicken, Apples, in the past CSA - most by direct sales - 44 years farm experience - 38 organic | | | \$80K - \$120K |
| I hope this will work | 28 years - 1986-2014 | Beef, pork, chicken, eggs & apples | local & mail ordered - 200 mile radius | mail order and farm sales - some stores | \$120K + |
| Thanks for doing this project - be good to get the organic movement back together if possible | | veggies | local | csa | 0 - \$20k |
| | 1 | Mixed vegetables, some fruit, herbs, cut flowers. | Inter-provincial | Local farmers' market, stores, restaurants. | \$40K - \$60K |
| I am in the process of looking to get certified organic, but I hope that there won't be too many things that I have to change | | salad greens and herbs, dairy sheep, meat chicken and pigs | local | farmers market, restaurant and processor | 0 - \$20k |
| | | vegetables, meat, grain, maple syrup | local | farmers' market, csa | \$80K - \$120K |
| We would like to support the standards and we follow them, but would like to see an improved price structure to make certifying more affordable to the very small guys. | | market garden veggies, eggs, chickens | local | farmers market, CSA | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 1 (in transition) | strawberries | local, provincial | Farmers markets | 0 - \$20k |
| It is of fundamental importance to me that I get to use the word 'organic'. so if another system comes along (like PGS), but using it would mean I couldn't label as organic, then I would not go there anyway. I like the idea of moving to a risk-based model - clearly my 2 acres of vegetables, where I save most of the seeds myself, pose a small risk for a prohibited practice or substance - so I wonder if for low risk farms (either by size, or sales channel or something) it is necessary to do the annual visit for example. Maybe it is a desktop exercise, declaration, and a site visit every so many years - like a license renewal. We complain a lot in the organic sector about food safety regulation not being differently scaled for small farms - and yet here we are doing the same 'one size fits all' for certification. I call this the 'pantyhose myth'. Every woman knows that one size fits no one. | seven years certified | vegetables, fruits, herbs, flowers | local | CSA, buying clubs, farmers markets | \$40K - \$60K |
| Sometimes I have felt like I was under a microscope, like our file reviewer/CB assumed we were doing something wrong and trying to hide it. This attitude is extremely off-putting. I would have thought CB's would be wanting to support and encourage new organic growers. Also, it would make our lives easier if the CB's would be willing to publish products they've approved for use on organic farms; rather than make us reinvent the wheel everytime we want to use a product. If there was a 'go to list' that was updated every year, this would make life a lot easier! | 3 | mixed vegetables | local | farmer's market, CSA | \$40K - \$60K |

| | | | | | |
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| certified growers need to learn not to put down conventional growers, and other growers that are not certified. We are all farmers, and just choose different methods, which also happens within the organic industry. Organic is not the be all end all and should not be always pushed that way. Organic farmers need to always realize that conventional farmers are changing to improve their farming methods. Sometimes the pests are beyond control. Ie. the strawberry virus may overtake the berries if not managed correctly and as of Nov. there was not an organic plan for controlling it, forcing those that would like to grow organic or have an income to spray. | | veg | local | | \$60K - \$80K |
| I sat on the organic standards committee a few years back representing Food Secure Canada. | | fresh produce. lots of open pollinated seed production for selling. | Nova Scotia and the Maritimes mostly. Across North America and beyond with seed sales. | website sales, farmers markets, seedy Saturdays, consultations, retail outlets | \$80K - \$120K |
| | 15 years | vegetables, fruit, meat | local | CSA, farmer's market | \$60K - \$80K |
| | | veggies (CSA), grassfed beef, pastured pork, eggs | local | CSA, local buying club (Salatin style) | \$120K + |
| | | Vegetables and Meat | Local | | \$60K - \$80K |
| | | Vegetables, eggs, honey | local | CSA, farmer's market | \$20K - \$40K |
| We have used organic food in the past and have found the quality poor. In 2013 we found a feed mill that supplies excellent GMO free food. Would like to see better quality food at a fair price, also easier forms to fill in. | | CSA, pasture raised chicken turkeys, pasture raised berkshire pork, honey, farmgate eggs, livestock nigerian dwarf goats, berkshire pigs, goats milk soap | local | Winter farmers markets and CSA | \$40K - \$60K |
| An education programme for the general public to - dispel the notion that organic is only about not using synthetic inputs - the added value of Certified Organic with respect to animal welfare, soil management, etc - the integrity of seeds, feed, etc sourced from organic suppliers | 5 | poultry, eggs | local | farm gate | 0 - \$20k |
| There needs to be a less onerous (both paperwork and price) process for those who want to support the concept, but have no requirement for export or sales to remote customers. | | mixed produce | local | chefs, farmers' market | \$120K + |
| some small farms choose to certify and some don't. It depends on where they operate, which markets they sell to and future plans. Whats right for someone in Toronto might not be right for someone in Brockville. The standards currently respect this difference - while we all have a responsibility to maintain organic integrity but some of us may need legislated acknowledgement more than others. please let each small organic farm decide for themselves. | | mixed vegetables | local | CSA and restaurants | \$60K - \$80K |
| I will circulate this survey in our local circles. | 15 | organic vegetables | local | CSA, Farmer's Market | \$120K + |
| | | vegetables | local | CSA farmers market | |

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| I feel the entire certification business should be put under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture. Corporations shouldn't be involved. We have Canadian Organic Standards now. Do we have enough Canadians concerned about Organic values to force the government to fund certification? The price for organic goods would come down; the privately-owned, 'middle-men' wouldn't be taking a cut of the 'auditing' and the organic farmers wouldn't have to pay extra to prove themselves 'certified'. | | Apples, Apple Cider | local | Farmer's market, on-farm store | |
| I don't know much about the process, so I may be repeating things, but perhaps indexing fees to gross farm income might help. A reduced rate for new entrants may attract them. Perhaps more established farms drop certification because they have a well established client base and no longer need the logo to make sales. Perhaps they could be enticed to retain their certification if it only had to be done every few years rather than every year. | | meat and vegetables | local | Farmer's market, direct sales | 0 - \$20k |
| | | vegetables and eggs | local | CSA | \$120K + |
| | | Vegetable produce, cultivated mushrooms | Woodstock, Fredericton NB | CSA, wholesale and farmers market | 0 - \$20k |
| Organic certification is poorly understood by the public. As a producer and advocate of organic foods I am/we are asked often if organic is really a thing or if it is just a word tacked on to a food product. Consumers do not realize that there is a certification process, that it is federally and internationally recognized, that it is rigorous, and leads to better products. | 5 | mixed vegetables, root crops, herb, small fruits and berries | local | small internal CSA | 0 - \$20k |
| | | herbs | local market | farmer's market | 0 - \$20k |
| | 4 years | Greenhouse tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, beans | Local and provincial | Farmers market, groceries | \$80K - \$120K |
| | | eggs, lamb, honey, chicken, turkey, garden vegetables, apples | local | direct buying, farm gate | \$20K - \$40K |
| We find the new trend of not bothering to certify very discouraging, as we have always seen certification as a mark of assurance of true organic food, and important for the public to see that. It is a way of educating the public - putting "Certified Organic" in the public eye, so we stand out as different from conventional, and not wishy-washy like natural, free-range, no GMO's, non-medicated (the list goes on forever). By being certified organic we are all of those things in one - we can be trusted to hand them a product that is true to our standards, as the farmer has to know the right way to grow & handle their organic product. We never did drop the "certified" once the standards were out, as too many other growers say they are organic, when they are not "certified organic"!! | 8 years certified organic. 25 years farmer | Market vegetables, herbs & small fruit | local, provincial | 2 farmer's markets, restaurants, farm gate. | \$20K - \$40K |

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| I would like to see a type of certification that takes into account factors that relate to labor conditions and family agriculture. "Organic" currently does not go beyond strictly production practices, and it seems to me there is a big piece missing. A holistic understanding of growing practices should include the well-being of producers/workers and broader socio-economical dimensions of food production. In theory, perhaps there is an opportunity for small scale organic certification to expand its scope to include social, economical and ecological aspects of sustainable food production? In practice however, I do not know what this would look like, but I am keen to take part in further conversation on this topic. | | Vegetables | Local | 75 member CSA | \$20K - \$40K |
| I think anyone who says they grow organic products should be certified. | 12 | Over 40 crops plus pork, beef, chicken, and eggs | local and provincial markets | CSA, Wholesale, Roadside Market, Farmer's Market, | \$120K + |
| | 3 | vegetables | | mobile farmers market | 0 - \$20k |
| | 20 | vegetables, fruit, herbs, seed | local | farmer's markets, CSA, restaurants | \$120K + |
| There should be, in the fee schedule, a category for small producers who are just in transition or who have limited product which reflects their financial status. | 23 | apples | locally and provincially (limited) | Farm markets, U-Pick, independent stores | 0 - \$20k |
| very concerned that the standard is not being applied consistently by all CB's and/or regions | five | mixed vegetables | local | CSA, farmers market | \$20K - \$40K |
| Do not need more rules, If the burden of being certified becomes to onerous people will not bother and it will hurt the whole organic movement. Keep it simple. | | veggies, pork | local | Farm Market, farm gate, & CSA | \$20K - \$40K |
| The concerns are international and alliances could be made to include peasant, agroecology, fair trade, Via Campesina. | 40 | vegs, grain, fruit, cattle | all | all | |
| | | mixed fruit, veg, lamb, eggs, chicken, duck | local | Farmer's Markets, CSA | \$20K - \$40K |
| Customers largely want local, not organic products. | 6+ years | Vegetables. fruit | local stores, restaurants and market | Oromocto market, CSA boxes | 0 - \$20k |
| | 4 | | | | \$20K - \$40K |
| Unfortunately until clean, sustainably raised food is the norm, it seems a necessity for a viable small organic farm business to certify at some point. I do intend to certify once I have obtained a stable place to grow the food and operate my farm business. I have been tenant farming for several years now with not much security that I will be on the land from one year to the next. As a small new farmer without land ownership, it is difficult to maintain standards from year to year, and to follow proper crop rotation and cover cropping without knowing 100% where you will grow next. I am also not always sure what has been grown before my presence on these farms, and therefore have been unable to stay on a farm long enough to properly transition the land. | | Vegetable, chickens, goats, pigs | local (within 50kms) | CSA, farmer's markets, local community food centre, some restaurant sales, some farm gate sales | 0 - \$20k |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|--|--|---------------|
| Many Certifying Bodies seem to have adopted the practice of using Gross Income Sales to set the certification fees. We would prefer to see the fees based on number of product categories certifying (ie. livestock, vegetables, greenhouse, maple etc) or some other more equitable measure. We feel gross sales have more to do with the type of product you sell rather than the size of your operation, ie. profits from livestock farming as a percentage of gross sales is much lower than some other farming ventures ie. vegetable farms. | 19 years | Beef, pork, chicken, turkey, veg's, | local | Farmer's Market, deliveries, CSA | \$120K + |
| Organic farming is marginal as it is. The cost for certification is a big factor for everyone. | 6 | grapes, grape pomace, wine | local, provincial | hoping for farmer's market | \$20K - \$40K |
| Please stop non-certified produce being marketed, labelled, touted as organic. Tie in certified organic and GMO-free. | 13 | salad greens, vegetables, herbs, flowers | local | farmers markets, restaurants | \$60K - \$80K |
| I'm in Norther ON...wish inspectors were closer. These past 8 years more northerners are requesting Organic education/knowledge...I've seen the growth and still not enough...would like to see more farms transition! | 7 years. | Vegetables, Chickens, Turkey & Pork | Local | Farmer's Market, CSA and Local Grocery Store | \$40K - \$60K |
| | 10 | organic vegetables, grain, forage, chicken meat and eggs - not organic: beef, pork | territorial (provincial) | direct sales, farmers' market, small retail | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 7 | Sprouts | local | Direct, retail, farmers markets, resturants | \$120K + |
| lack of local meat processing is a Canada wide problem. Some interesting ideas in COABC Small scale Certification Project report, ie USDA Certified naturally raised, have also looked at AWA, but no control on inputs. Farmer declarations. affidavits of following COR a possibility. We buy US organic salad greens, but Industrial scale vegetables and organic don't fit together in my mind. Same with PC Organic Product of China peas? Organic needs to be local to have validity. | | freezer cuts of grass finished beef | Local | direct farm gate sales to consumers | 0 - \$20k |
| enforcement of the regulation in every province to include intra provincial trade. Level the field and stop those using the "organic" label who aren't certified. | 11 | NS meat, herbs, berries | local | farm gate and farmers markets | \$20K - \$40K |
| Preparing for certification is as bad as doing my income tax. Farmers farm. There are cheaters in the world and you need to be able to catch them but don't treat us all like criminals. Lower the costs. | I have had 3 inspections. | Certified Organic vegetables, fruits, sprouts and value added products | Local | Farmer's markets, local restaurants and small stores | 0 - \$20k |
| | | mixed vegetable s | local | csa, planning whole sale | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 12 years | cash crops, vegetables, eggs | cash crops usually sell to North American buyers | CSA, farm gate, small local stores | |
| | 30 years | poultry/livestock / eggs/produce | local/provincial | direct sales | \$120K + |
| Is there really any difference in certifiers? Can the process of choosing be easier? Can the record keeping be made easier for new and small farms? | 15 | Vegetables and Herbs | local | CSA, farmer's market | 0 - \$20k |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---------------|
| | | garlic, asparagus crowns, veg | local | farmers market, mail order | 0 - \$20k |
| | | fruits and vegetables | Local | Restaurant | \$20K - \$40K |
| | | beef vegetables flowers | local | farm gate | 0 - \$20k |
| It might be good to group small producers for a joint inspection to share cost. Producers in an area not far from each other and who share and trade together. | 30 in total 16 in Germany 14 in Ontario | beef, potatoes, poultry, grains, flour | local and provincial | farmgate, wholesaler, sale to CSA's | \$60K - \$80K |
| While I respect that inspectors cannot provide advice or recommendations to improve the farm that they inspect, considering the investment that the farmer must make to certify (administrative and fiscal), this would be true way to differentiate organic practices from conventional. Honestly, the inspector is the best person to do this and I would be much more likely to certify if there was a component of performance improving to inspections. This would be particularly true if the inspectors are experienced enough to understand how a farm really works. Maybe an inspection team is required with one component being inspection for certification and another being farm practice improvement. Better yet, make the inspection simply a farm enhancement and test products for pesticides. | | Vegetables | local | Farmers Markets and CSA | \$120K + |
| | 18 | vegetables U flowers | Ottawa, ontario Byward Mrket | | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 11 | mixed | local | farm gate | \$20K - \$40K |
| be able to make decisions on individual situations. | | Grown (organically)potatoes, beets, onions, leeks, carrots, squash, beans, tomatoes | local | farmer's markets, farm stands, other farmers stands | \$40K - \$60K |
| If the cost of certification continues to rise then we will only have the big farms as certified growers. This will then lead to large mono culture farming which we know even done organically is not the best for a farm business and especially for the earth. | 16 years | herb and vegetable plants and fresh | local | farmers markets | 0 - \$20k |
| | 0 | various vegetables and herbs | local | farmers market, CSA, groceries | 0 - \$20k |
| | 2 | vegetables, field crops | local for veggies, field crops regional | farmers market, csa, | \$20K - \$40K |
| Will not be certifying our orchard or livestock operations because of higher fees incurred | 10 | small grains, livestock, fruit | local | direct marketing | |
| The large livestock processing issues above go beyond the organic industry. | 1 | market garden, non-quota broilers, pork, adding more in future | local only | farmers markets, direct (friends and family), exploring wholesale and CSA | |

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| The fee schedule and the concept around the certification program is silly. We produce and sell many food types. To individually certify them all separately is silly. If you offered a way to certify the whole farm I would be interested in learning more about it. | | beef, chicken, pork, bison, wild boar, guinea fowl, turkey, duck, goose, lamb, hay, mixed grain, veg & Honey | local | CSA, on farm - never sold at a farmers market. | \$120K + |
| Thanks for thinking about the little guys, like me! | | Veggies | Local | Farmer's market & CSA | 0 - \$20k |
| I don't find certification to be burdensome, but it feels a bit manufactured as a process especially as applied to our small family farm. If we were in the US (particularly NY state), I would be inclined to take part in Certified Naturally Grown, a "non-profit organization offering certification tailored for small-scale, direct-market farmers and beekeepers using natural methods". Maybe there is some inspiration to be drawn from their grass-roots, common sense, volunteer-based approach without abandoning the national standard that is the product of so much hard work. | 5 | vegetables | local | farmer's market, CSA | \$60K - \$80K |
| I appreciate that the concerns of Certified Organic small scale producers are being addressed. | Organic since '86. Certified in' 93. | beef, pork. | local | farm gate, health food stores, restaurants. | \$60K - \$80K |
| | | Beef, Chicken, Pork, Lamb, Turkey, Ducks, Eggs, Vegetables | Local | Local farmers Markets & at the farm , online ordering | \$20K - \$40K |
| We have been certified for many years even when we grossed only a few thousand dollars. A full certification process is an educational experience which can't be replicated with shortcuts. Organics does have a price tag in both time and money but this is also somewhat reflected in organic prices. A willingness to certify shows some commitment to organics. I am wary of alternatives. Can we keep the same process in place for everyone and give help in the way of workshops, etc. to help new/transitional farmers understand organics and the certification process? | 16 | fresh vegetables | local | groceries, restaurants | \$40K - \$60K |
| | about 20 years | root vegetables | local, provincial, national | wholesale | \$80K - \$120K |
| | 0- just applied, if all goes well, we'll be awarded transition status this year. | mixed veg., fruits, herbs, flowers. Pastured turkeys, pigs, rabbits, laying hens. | local: a single restaurant owns the farm and everything we supply goes directly to restaurant | restaurant | \$40K - \$60K |
| the canadian system of exempting trade within the province from certification is absurd and out of step with international norms. This allowance of the phrase "certified organic" devalues certification. | 10 | many | mane | | 0 - \$20k |

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| | 20+ | vegetables | local | farmers market, grocery stores, organic distribution network | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 0 on my own but 5 with working with a farmer | A variety of fresh summer market garden veggies and winter storage veggies. | Local | Direct sale, Farmers Market, Grocers | 0 - \$20k |
| | | heirloom vegetables and fruit | seasonal local market | CSA, Farm Gate and weekly email | 0 - \$20k |
| streamline the paperwork so it is less of a nightmare to an already busy farmer. | | cheese eggs veg | local | on farm market | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 5 | vegetables | local | csa, farmers market, restaurants | \$80K - \$120K |
| | | Many vegetable varieties | Local (Calgary inner city) | Farmer's markets and CSA | 0 - \$20k |
| | | Sour cherries | local | primarily to processor | 0 - \$20k |
| Federally approved mobile slaughter should be permitted. Would instantly increase animal welfare. 'Wild' livestock; deer, bison, can be slaughtered on farm while well behaved sentient beings have to endure horrors in their last hours of life. | 25 | Beef, duck | provincial | web presence, kijiji, farm gate | 0 - \$20k |
| With our land being spread out between several "landlords" we do not see how we can enforce the standards especially with neighbours who may be spraying weeds etc. What we really need is cities to become certified Organic. Through history it has always been cities that put pressure on the farms to FriesenJo and produce what people in the cities need. | | vegetables all kinds and greens root vegetables | local market only | farmers market, CSA, restaurants, grocery stores | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 12 years | field grains | local | farmer market local flour mill | \$80K - \$120K |
| we are a very small farm and for our first 2 years we could not justify the expense of certification, however our experience selling at farmer's markets convinced us to certify (also we could better afford the cost after 2 years growing the business). There is VERY LOW market demand for certification in our region, in spite of a HIGH DEMAND for organics - there is much cynicism about the need for certification and as a result there is also much opportunism from unscrupulous growers calling themselves 'natural' or 'spray-free' . So long as fees do remain significant, there is this legitimate-sounding reason not to especially for very small scale growers. If the fees were more accessible, there would be no reasonable reason NOT to certify..... and of course the VO and the CBs all need to recoup their costs too. | 4 | mixed fresh vegetables | local | farmer's market, CSA | 0 - \$20k |
| | 6 | Vegetables, Hay | Local | Farmers Mkt, CSA, Food box programs | |
| I think this is a great initiative, hopefully something comes of it. | | seasonal field and greenhouse vegetables | local | farmer's market, farm stand, online ordering collective | \$20K - \$40K |
| | 24 | market garden, berries, fruit | local | FM, direct from farm, CSA | \$120K + |

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| | | seeds, starts, raw goat milk, eggs, veggies, fruit, nuts, educational events | local | raw milk via herd share arrangement, two farmers' markets, three grocers | \$80K - \$120K |
| | 22 | Carrots, beets | local | wholesale | \$40K - \$60K |
| While I know a path exists, I would like to see a better ability to move land and livestock back and forth from organic production methods. In my operation, I practice integrated pest management which does not entail zero tolerance for non-organic production techniques. I follow that path because it best fits the needs of my livestock and land. I do not like dogmatic dictates on how I should operate my farm. As a land and livestock steward, I work with nature and sometimes I find that nature needs a bit of help. For example, I would never consider raising a child without vaccinating them for common diseases like polio or other infectious diseases. I consider the non vaccination movement as a form of child abuse. My attitude extends to livestock and the land. Not taking reasonable steps to avoid disease is abuse of either the animal or the land. | | canola, wheat, barley, goat, sheep | local | direct to customer, elevators for grain | \$40K - \$60K |
| There is no policing and organic growers who break the rules give us a bad reputation. Small farmers are sincere about providing healthy food. Now the big players are in, the goal is making big profits. | 11 years | fruit, herbs and vegetables | local | Farmers' Market, CSA, stores, restaurants | \$40K - \$60K |
| | | flour and packaged grains | local, provincial | Farmer's market, retail stores and CSA | \$20K - \$40K |
| | | berries, veg, poultry, lamb, eggs | local | farm gate and Farmers' Market | 0 - \$20k |
| The take over of the processing industry by conventional business. This can only lead to shrinking prices and less control by dedicated processors. | 13 | cereals,oil seeds | provincial, national | na | |
| I would like to see that diatomus earth can not aced 2% total combined wether is in deed or feed separately. | 15+ | 100% grassfed and finished beef | local | direct to consumer | \$40K - \$60K |
| What happened to the results of the previous studies, working groups? | | organic vegetables | local | yes | \$20K - \$40K |
| | Approx 12 years? | Lamb | farm gate | | 0 - \$20k |
| Basically one size does not fit all so there needs to be accommodation in the suites of regulations to pick and choose effectively what will apply to each farm's situation. Going through all the documents each time and filtering out what is or is not needed takes time but if the work is done on the regulation end, the farmer is best left to just doing the farming and not trying to interpret the rules. | 10 | poultry, market garden, field crops | local | community market, local retail, CSA | \$20K - \$40K |
| | | eggs, duck, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, apples, berries, vegetables | local only (within 50 km) | CSA, farmer's market, farmstand | 0 - \$20k |

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| | 8 | vegetables | local | CSA | \$80K - \$120K |
| We need to have an education campaign helping the public to understand the difference between certified organic and not certified. We often feel penalized for certifying when it comes to farmgate sales because our price point is higher than our 'non certified' competition and the general public hasn't yet bought into the value of certification, so for us it is an expense that doesn't always prove it's worth. | farm=16yrs, us=4yrs | Certified organic green and white asparagus, garlic and rhubarb | local | direct to stores and farmgate | |
| I am concerned about this new proposal to certify the producer (based on the SOL program), rather than the current system that certifies both the producer and the farm. While I do agree we need to address the issue of small-scale urban farms that are simply not able to meet the COS, I don't think certifying the individual is the best approach. Since these producers are small-scale and not likely exporting out of province, I think we should come up with a system like LEED: we could have regular certification and then perhaps categories like "urban" or "small-scale" organic. There should be parameters on area and if your farm is over a certain area and therefore capable of applying for regular certification, then the individual should not be allowed to opt for the producer certification. And everyone should still be audited- third party verification is integral to the system. | Worked on certified farms for 6 years, recently started our own farm- been in operation for 1 year. | Vegetables | Local | Farmer's Market, CSA, farm-gate, wholesale | \$20K - \$40K |
| i guess more advertising on tv to tell our organic system to the world . also i think market gardeners , if they are tiny like 1 acre need a cheaper way to be certified. maybe a volunteer cerifier to approve these market gardens. or a group certification. | 5 | organic grains | international | grain flour mills and brokers | \$120K + |
| The type of group I am suggesting already exists, but I don't remember where. Our London Area Organic Growers' group is a very informal version, but lacks the level of verification I think we need and it does not mentor its members. | 11 | hay, pasture, livestock | local | facebook, word of mouth | \$20K - \$40K |
| | >1 year | Mixed vegetables | Local | Farmers' markets | \$40K - \$60K |
| not so much about our certification, just the things the government is putting in place, that is concerning. | 6 | beef, wheat,barley, and oats | local and international | no | \$80K - \$120K |
| | certified 8 years ethically based farming 30 yrs | | edmonton | | \$120K + |
| Certifiers lost touch with small growers | 34 years certified/non certified | Vegetables/Plants/ Lamb/beef/chicken/ pork / Duck/Vegetable seeds/ Hay | Local | Farm Gate | 0 - \$20k |
| Nothing at this time. | | grapes (and soon wine) | local and provincial | N/A | 0 - \$20k |
| I managed a certified organic farm for 4 years, so I'm familiar with the process. I'm not certifying my own farm because it is so small that the cost is prohibitive. | | diversified vegetables | local | farmers' market | 0 - \$20k |
| It would be cool to see an organic standard designed for urban growers, as well as growers who don't own land - maybe it's called something else or structured differently, but it would be great. | | veggies, micro greens | local | farmers' market | 0 - \$20k |

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| Thanks for doing this survey. | 6 | Fruit, vegetables, herbs etc. | local | farmers market, restaraunt and co-op | 0 - \$20k |
| | | apples | | | |
| | 2 | milk, beef, garden vegetables | local, provincial | farmers market, dairy board | \$80K - \$120K |
| | | Market gardening, hay, grass-fed beef, eggs | local | On site pick up | 0 - \$20k |
| I think this survey was designed to provide pre-imagined answers. Poorly designed. | 14 | | | | |
| Yes. Regarding organic inputs, for someone seeking to be certified in the organic market gardening business it is almost impossible to find 'organic' straw for mulch or 'clean' straw that has not been sprayed with anything. Most organic farmers use it on-farm for bedding or their own production. Pesticide, herbicide and fungicide use is so wide spread, that sourcing organic straw is difficult. | | Heirloom vegetables, culinary and medicinal herbs, bedding plants | local | farmer's markets, organic outlets, direct sales, events/festivals | 0 - \$20k |
| | 10 | Grains | | | \$80K - \$120K |
| | 15 years | wheat, flax, beef, eggs | international, provincial | grain buyers, organic feedlot, local health food store, network of private customers | \$20K - \$40K |
| | | garlic, honey | local | available if needed | 0 - \$20k |
| | | Vegetables and Honey | Local | CSA | |
| | 25 | grains, poultry | provincial | any,all | \$120K + |
| | | market fruit and vegetables | local | farm gate, market, restaraunts, groceries | \$20K - \$40K |
| | | 150 beef calves (800 lbs each) per year | provincial | none | \$120K + |
| | 30 years | salads, vegetables, herbs, flowers, eggs, | local plus 1 interprovincial | restaurants, CSAs, farmers markets | \$120K + |
| | | | Campbellville | | |
| I would not like to see the process made easy. People complain about cost but it is not expensive and pretty well all of those people are giving excuses as to why they cannot certify and claiming they are 'organic' | 1 | Vegetables and salad greens | Local, some provincial | Chefs, Farmers Market, retail stores | \$120K + |
| | | veretables, fruits | local | Farmers Markets 3 | 0 - \$20k |
| The process should be 2% of sales | 3 | Vegetables | local | mobile farmers market | 0 - \$20k |
| | | Herbs, cut flowers, value added products | local | Farmer's market, farm gate | 0 - \$20k |
| Closing the regulatory gap and educating consumers on what organic means (simple things like no GMO, for example) would encourage non-certified farms to seek certification and begin the process because there would be a benefit to them. Until then, why would small farms bother unless they are committed for other reasons. | 7 | garlic and other produce, chicken eggs, dairy goats | local but some on line garlic orders from all across Canada | Garlic through festivals and on line, veg and eggs at farm gate | 0 - \$20k |

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| many things affect the quality of our food, if folks really want the best they should be involved in growing it themselves. | | maple syrup, vegetables, pork, beef, firewood, lumber, hay, straw, some grain, baking, eggs | local | farmgate, farmers' market | \$40K - \$60K |
| I like David Suzuki's comment wondering why organic farmers need to prove what they don't do; and why don't conventional farmers need to document and prove their inputs. There needs to be LOTS more consumer education about what "organic" is and why it matters - to create the markets we need. | | veggies, honey | local | farmgate, farmers market, restaurants | 0 - \$20k |
| More excel type forms. The Dry Matter Intake form is great. It would be nice to see forms like that for seeds, inputs, etc. The current forms don't have nearly enough space to allow for the many inputs that we produce and use on farm. | Since 2006 | chicken, eggs, pork, beef, turkey, ducks, dairy products, fruits, veg, honey | local | Farmers market & CSA | \$40K - \$60K |
| | | fruits, vegetables | | CSA, market | 0 - \$20k |
| | first year | pork, chicken, eggs, turkey, fruit | local | organic farmers market | 0 - \$20k |
| | na | produce, fruit, meats, poultry | local | csa, farmers market, on farm store, road side stand | \$120K + |
| | | general | local | | \$60K - \$80K |
| Organic should be 100% natural...no exceptions...no wormers ...no meds...no pesticides or herbicides..even if they are plant extractions..they become concentrated and are no longer organic | | vegetables...beef...lam b...chicken | local | farmers market and csa | 0 - \$20k |
| Great survey topic! | | 47 different kinds of vegetables, pastured eggs, pastured poultry | local | CSA, Farmers' Market, co-operative grocer, restaurants, on-farm sales by appointment for poultry and eggs | \$60K - \$80K |
| | 8 | Organic seedlings for sale to home gardeners | local | farmer's market, garden centres, stores | \$60K - \$80K |
| That a certification process exists at all is in my mind an indictment of the type of food system that we have. Returning to a true local (not Thunder Bay to Ottawa! total PR BS) farming model will reduce or even eliminate the need for this type of labeling. Knowing who actually produced the food that you are eating, and how, should not be the exception but the rule. We can either return to a just and sustainable system voluntarily ahead of time or be forced at great social cost to do so once the inputs that support the present non-sustainable system are in decline. | 4, non-certified organic | Fresh Veg | local | Farm gate and CSA | 0 - \$20k |
| | | beef, fruit, seeds, honey | | | 0 - \$20k |
| The demand is growing and we believe that there is room to grow for the small producer and become certified however at the moment the costs are too high (certification, feed, modifications, paperwork, inspections, etc.) Many are selling organic however are not always following the rules and that again is not working well for the certified producer. | 13 | beef, poultry, eggs, vegetables, | local market | farmers market, CSA, farm gate | \$40K - \$60K |

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| I think it is crazy that organic producers are in a way 'penalized' with fees for being organic..it is an additional cost that should not have to be carried. The government should subsidize these fees as a way of encouraging more organic producers. | | kale, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, carrots, beets, lettuce | local | Farmers Market, local marketing cooperative, online | 0 - \$20k |
| I think we, operators and inspectors, are doing not too badly at this stage. | 12 years plus | Lamb, seabuckthorn and hay | Farm gate | | 0 - \$20k |
| -many other people would certify if the process would be simplified and fees would be decreased for small farm operations Ex. I give 10 percent of my gross sales to certification, which is excessive and the future of my certifying my become questionable! | 5 YRS | fresh carrots, beets ,potatoes | local | farmer's markets, independent organic stores | \$20K - \$40K |
| | | Vegetables | local | farmers markets, CSA, coops, restaurants | \$20K - \$40K |
| | | Vegetables | Local | CSA, market stand | 0 - \$20k |
| | | direct farm sales | local | on farm store | |
| | | various veggies and herbs | local | farmers' market, local co-op grocery store, farm gate | \$40K - \$60K |