



# CCOF

Organic Certification Trade Association Education & Outreach Political Advocacy

For Immediate Release

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## **CCOF Readies Organic Community for Upcoming Canadian Organic Standards**

(August 13, 2008) Santa Cruz, CA – In response to the anticipated implementation of the Canadian Organic Regime (COR) on December 14, 2008, CCOF has launched a complete certification program, informative web page, and series of conference calls to prepare CCOF members and the organic community. CCOF has made the COR a top priority with an estimated \$164 million of CCOF member sales being exported to Canada annually.

CCOF was one of only four U.S. certifiers on a preliminary list to provide COR certification for U.S. businesses. CCOF expects to begin providing voluntary certification to the new COR in early September. While the standard is still under revision, proposed standards may adversely affect U.S. producers' ability to achieve compliance. The CCOF certification program identifies these concerns and allows CCOF members to demonstrate compliance to the COR and begin changes to their operations to achieve compliance.

All organic businesses interested in achieving compliance are encouraged to apply to CCOF's Global Market Access program as soon as possible. To help inform the organic community, CCOF will host two conference calls on August 27 and 28 at 10 a.m. (PST). Information about these conference calls and the new Canadian standards can be found at [www.ccof.org/canada.php](http://www.ccof.org/canada.php) or by emailing [canada@ccof.org](mailto:canada@ccof.org).

The first call, for CCOF certified members only, is scheduled for August 27th and will cover detailed standards issues and specifics about requesting immediate CCOF certification to the COR. CCOF members may contact [canada@ccof.org](mailto:canada@ccof.org) for information about this call. The second call, on August 28th, is open to all interested parties to discuss the upcoming COR regulations, ramifications, and general standards issues. To participate, dial (800) 944-8766 five minutes prior to the starting time of the call. When prompted, enter the conference code: 83931.

Jake Lewin, CCOF Certification Services Director stated, "The Canadian Organic Regime will have a profound impact on anyone exporting organic products to Canada. It is essential that they begin preparing now. Because Canada is such an important market for so many small and large companies, we've poured all of our efforts into developing information and solutions for our members and the marketplace. We are doing everything possible to ensure that CCOF certified products are completely compliant to the Canadian Organic Regime by the December deadline"

COR certification will be mandatory as soon as December 14 for products labeled as "organic" and transported from one province to another or between Canada and its trading partners. It is imperative that growers, livestock producers and processors undertake the steps to obtain COR certification

immediately in order to meet the December deadline. . It may take longer for some operations and their vendors to come into compliance, which may significantly affect sourcing of ingredients or supplies. CCOF, one of North America's oldest and largest organic certification agencies, certifies more than 1,900 organic farmers, processors, handlers, retailers, and private labelers in 29 states and six countries, including nearly 80% of the organic acreage in California. More than 350 supporting members are comprised of consumers, suppliers and other individuals and businesses interested in furthering CCOF's work.

#### About CCOF

CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers), a nonprofit organization, was founded in 1973 and is one of the nation's oldest and largest third-party organic certifying agencies. CCOF certifies, educates, advocates and promotes organic in California and elsewhere through:

- A premier organic certification program for growers, processors, handlers, and retailers.
- Programs to increase awareness of and demand for certified organic product and to expand public support for organic agriculture.
- Advocacy for governmental policies that protect and encourage organic agriculture.

For further information, visit: [www.ccof.org](http://www.ccof.org).