



Terms of Reference

CSI Organic Certification Process Review Committee

1. Roles

A. To annually review the CSI organic certification processes to ensure:

- The decisions are made in a fair, impartial and non-discriminatory manner;
- The decision-making process is made by competent individuals; and
- The decision-making process addresses the necessary elements of the applicable standards.

B. To provide advice and recommendations on program design to the CSI upon completion of the annual review.

C. To provide market information, where appropriate, to assist CSI in the development of services that satisfy customer needs.

D. To hear any appeals made of a decision by CSI in reference to an issue of non-compliance or the cancellation of certification, in writing and orally if desired, and to make a decision on the merit of the appeal to either confirm the decision by CSI.

2. Membership

Members that represent the organic value chain will be invited to the committee. This will include:

- Primary Producers – one crop producer and one livestock producer
- Simple Processors – one representative
- Complex Processors – one representative
- Handlers/Brokers – one representative
- Retailers – one representative for independent retailers and one representative for national retailers
- Consumer – one representative

Where possible, members should be clients of CSI and also represent different geographical regions. When a member represents an association, the member shall be designated by the association.

New value chain categories may be established by the committee.

The membership must be approved by the CSI Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may add additional members not representing the organic value chain as necessary provided that their number is less than 50% of the total membership.

As ex-officio members, the CSI shall be represented by the Executive Director and one Organic Compliance Evaluator. The committee may ask for a CSI organic inspector to participate as they see fit. The committee shall also include one member who is representative of the business conducted by the Canadian Seed Institute.

3. Membership Terms

Terms of membership will be 3-5 years, for the first 5 years that the committee operates, to allow for continuity. After the first 5 years, the term of membership will be 3 years. Memberships can be renewed.

4. New Members

Any member can recommend a new member to the committee, and/or new members may be proposed by CSI staff. New members must fall into one of the categories listed above. Any potential new member is contacted to ascertain their amenability to participating in the committee prior to their name being presented to the CSI Board of Directors at the November annual board meeting.

5. Meeting Guidelines

- a. Chair – The Chair must be a member of the committee and may not be an employee of CSI. The Chair will be selected from the members at the beginning of every meeting.
- b. Notification of meetings – The Past-Chair and the Executive Director will work in cooperation to select meeting dates and notify all members.
- c. Setting of Agendas – At any time, committee members may suggest agenda items to the Past-Chair, who will ask the Executive Director to create an agenda for each meeting.
- d. CSI's organic certification procedures, instructions to inspectors, applicable internal process maps and forms used in certification are made available to committee members prior to the meeting.
- e. Frequency – The committee will meet once per year. Additional meetings will be convened if necessary to hear any appeals or to deal with any other issues which may arise.
- f. Location – Annual meetings will be conducted by conference call unless the committee has deemed it necessary to convene a face-to-face meeting.

- g. Quorum – Quorum will consist of at least three members, including the Chair and at least two organic value chain members.
- h. Decision Making – Decisions will be made by consensus when possible. If a consensus is not possible, a majority vote will be required.
- i. Costs – The CSI will cover all meeting costs, including travel costs of members to attend meetings. Members' time to attend meetings is voluntary.
- j. Attendance by others – Associates of members who represent associations may be invited to attend provided that their attendance is made known to the committee and they abide to the confidentiality arrangement.
- k. Meeting Conclusion – At the end of each meeting a resolution will be made to indicate if, based on the sample of information reviewed, the certification decision making of the CSI is or is not done in a fair, impartial and non-discriminatory manner.

6. Communications

Minutes of meetings will be distributed to members within 30 days of the annual meeting. The chair will provide a report of the Committee's meetings to the CSI Board of Directors at their next scheduled meeting.

7. Rights and Obligations of OCPRC

If the OCPRC identifies a risk to CSI's impartiality in the manner in which it designs and/or delivers certification activities, this finding must be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors by the Executive Director. The Executive Director must report back to the OCPRC on the actions taken by the Board in response to the identified risk. If the Board of Directors does not take action to address the risk to impartiality, the OCPRC has the right to take independent action (e.g. by informing authorities, accreditation bodies and/or stakeholders).

8. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

Pursuant to the organic standards under which CSI is accredited, all members will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and a conflict of interest declaration. All members agree to destroy all material supplied to them during the meeting with the exception of meeting agendas and minutes.

9. Amendments

These terms of reference will be reviewed at each annual meeting of the committee. Amendments may be made by a consensus of the committee members.