



Lodging a Complaint with the CFIA

Questions? Contact christina@cog.ca.

Are you worried that a product labelled as organic is not really organically grown or processed?

If you believe that a product identified as organic is mislabelled and misrepresented, you can lodge a complaint with the CFIA. The CFIA's mandate includes:

- Investigating consumer and industry complaints,
- Developing programs designed to encourage compliance with the provisions of the respective Acts,
- Developing consumer protection policies ([CFIA](#)).

What is against the law?

It is against the law to label or represent a product as organic if it is not certified organic. This applies whether the claim is made on a product's label at the grocery store or a sign at your farmer's market. Look for the certifying body's logo to verify that it is certified organic. Visit COG's [Organic Labelling page](#) for more information.

Multiple laws deal with organic labelling:

- Organic Products Regulation (in force June 30, 2009);
- Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act / Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations;
- Food and Drugs Act / Food and Drug Regulations.

The national Organic Standards (CAN/CGSB-32.310-2006 and CAN/CGSB-32.311-2006) are not enforceable until after June 30, 2009, as they are referenced in the legal text of the Organic Products Regulations (SOR/2006-338). The Organic Products Regulations come into force on June 30, 2009. In order to be considered organic under the organic regulation, products must be certified organic according to the national standard by an [accredited certifying body](#).

Two Canadian laws prohibit deceptive labelling of foods in regards to their method of production or other characteristics – the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and the Food and Drugs Act. Until June 30, 2009, these are the only regulations in place to

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prevent misrepresentation of non-organic food as organic. Refer to [CFIA's Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising](#).

How do I make a complaint?

If you believe that a product identified as organic is mislabelled and misrepresented, you should bring your complaint to the CFIA. Here's how:

1. Identify the producer or establishment targeted by your complaint (Name, address, contact information);
2. Gather all relevant, supporting documentation, including:
 - a. Description of the problem;
 - b. Brand name of product;
 - c. Size, universal product code (UPC code – 12 digits), and best before date;
 - d. Date of purchase;
 - e. A daytime number where an inspector can reach you as well as your home address (for the purpose of identifying which CFIA regional office to refer your inquiry to);
3. Keep the remaining product in case a sample is needed for an investigation;
4. Call, mail, or send an E-Mail to your Regional Office of the CFIA with all above information (if available).

Take a look at [Quebec's CARTV's website](#) about lodging a complaint. You can use their [Complaint Form](#) as a template.

To Send an E-Mail:

E-mails to this address will be forwarded to your regional office

CFIAMaster@inspection.gc.ca

To Call or Mail:

General Inquiries Line: 1-800-442-2342

Atlantic Area

1081 Main St
PO Box 6088
Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 8R2
Tel: 506-851-7400 Fax: 506-851-2689

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Quebec

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Montreal, Quebec H3A 3N2
Tel: 514-283-8888 Fax: 514-283-3143
[See CARTV for more information.](#)

Ontario

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Western and Northern Areas

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