

1. What does “organic” mean with respect to aquaculture?

Organic aquaculture is a holistic system designed to optimize the productivity and fitness of the aquatic ecosystem, including benthic organisms, seaweeds, aquatic plants, aquaculture animals and people.

2. What will the Canadian organic aquaculture standard mean for consumers?

The word "organic" on aquaculture products will mean an accredited certifying body has verified that the production methods meet or exceed the Canadian standard for organic aquaculture production. The certifying body for Target Marine Hatcheries is *Global Trust* an accredited certification body with over 15 years experience delivering certification to globally recognized standards and leads the world in new areas of Eco-Label, Sustainability and Consumer Trust certification. To learn more about *Global Trust* visit www.gtcert.com

3. What are the major differences between organic and conventionally raised seafood?

- Antibiotics are prohibited. Treated animals may not be sold as organic.
- Stocking density of animals is limited according to the species under production.
- GMO aquatic animals and plants are prohibited.
- Pesticide treatments are carefully restricted.

Feed is controlled: No growth-promoting hormones, No GMO feed ingredients, No artificial colouring, No synthetic appetite or flavour enhancers. Fish meal and fish oil must be organic, when commercially available.

4. How does the standard address animal welfare?

Organic aquaculture facilities must be managed to maximize welfare and minimize stress:

- Housing - Animals shall have sufficient space that meets stocking requirements. Cultivation within a secure system designed to avoid containment breaches and escape. Use of lights is limited, construction materials may not contain leachable toxic chemical agents
- Diet - Feed shall be compatible with natural environment diets and meet the species' specific nutritional needs.
- Water Quality - Operations must be situated where water is not subject to contamination and meets the species' needs.
- Slaughter - Slaughtering must minimize pre-slaughter and slaughter stress.

5. How is waste addressed?

The standard sets measurable requirements to minimize the impact of waste. These include defining stocking density rates, cleaning procedures and the cleaning and feed materials that must be used.

6. Can land based farms using recirculating aquaculture systems apply for organic certification?

Yes. The organic standards set down the methods of production that must be followed in recirculating aquaculture systems. The draft US standard also allows for land based recirculating aquaculture systems.

7. What is the goal of the organic aquaculture standard – why was it established?

The goal of the organic aquaculture standard is to encourage sustainable and environmentally sound seafood production. About half of the fish eaten today are farmed, and this standard was developed to provide an excellent production tool to aquaculturists, and recognize those who choose to produce their fish and shellfish according to more rigorous requirements. The standard sets uniform rules for organic aquaculture production.

8. How was the National Standard for Organic Aquaculture created?

The standard was developed by a committee established by the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB), including representatives from industry, regulatory bodies, consumer advocacy groups, First Nations, and environmental groups. The CGSB employs a transparent process, publishing draft standards for public review to ensure input from all interested parties.

For more information please visit <http://www.aquaculture.ca/files/organic-standard.php>