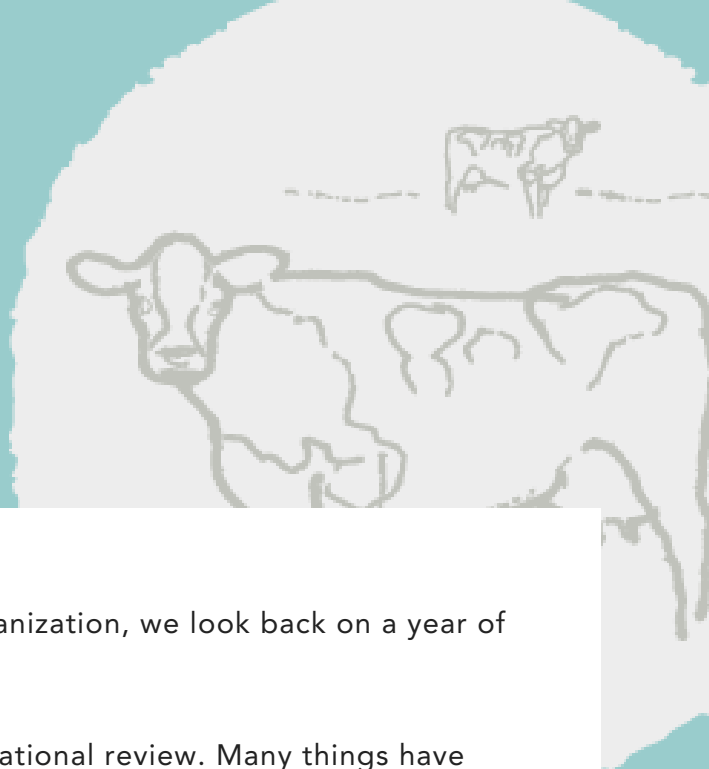




**ORGANIC BC**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2022**



# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



As we enter the 30th anniversary of this amazing organization, we look back on a year of incredible reflection and growth.

As we know, Organic BC is in the midst of an organizational review. Many things have changed since COABC was formed in 1993, and we recognize that the structure of the organization is outdated and would benefit from some needed changes. It has always been clear that this project would be complex, and over this past year our staff and directors (present and former) have undertaken the enormous task of ensuring we position ourselves to have a thriving organization and a unified organic sector for decades to come.

Over the last year, opportunities for engagement have resurfaced. Regional workshops and gatherings are popping up throughout the province and Organic BC Podcasts continue to roll out. Organic BC has played a key role in BC's regenerative agriculture initiative and has been given the opportunity to contribute to a more sustainable future for agriculture in the province.

Looking ahead, we anticipate a wonderful celebration at the 2023 BC Organic Conference in November. Join us to meet new people and old friends as we socialize and learn. We'll honour all of the contributions of folks over the last 30 years, so get your old photo albums out, pull out some old board meeting minutes and come and celebrate our amazing accomplishments!

Thanks to our incredible staff, board members, accreditation board, certification bodies, volunteers and all who continue to support and contribute to Organic BC's important work!

**Niklaus Forstbauer, President**

# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



While a key focus for Organic BC this year was sector development and advocacy for organic farmers, processors and distributors, we also strengthened the foundation of our organization. In addition to running our annual programs and services, the Organic BC team worked diligently toward making the organization more resilient, impactful and forward-thinking.

Regular operations are complex, consisting of Organic BC's two wings: sector development and accreditation. The success of these two wings is due to strong leadership and dedicated volunteers, all guided by the organic principles and consideration of the long-term impacts of our work. While we work to maintain organic integrity and support farmers, we're always considering the links between the environmental, social and economic realms of the food system.

Conversations in 2022 focused on building upon the last 30 years to ensure continuous improvement, support and knowledge sharing. Although this organization has existed for so long, the relationships, the community and the knowledge go beyond that, then and now, as we continue to pivot and grow.

I'm proud of this team for what we accomplished in 2022. It's been a fine balancing act driven by hard work, care and passion. Thank you to our volunteers for managing the day-to-day of their own businesses while also taking the time to move our sector and our organization forward for the greater good.

I look forward to celebrating with you at the in person BC Organic Conference in November 2023.

**Eva-Lena Lang, Executive Director**

# ORGANIC BY THE NUMBERS

British Columbia's organic market is thriving! Dig into stats on the high demand for organic products, plus consumer trends and opportunities, in our new report, released in 2022 and created in collaboration with the Canada Organic Trade Association.

*Funding for this report has been provided by the Governments of Canada and British Columbia through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.*



**Read the full report**

[organicbc.org/organic-market-2021](https://organicbc.org/organic-market-2021)



## KEY STATS

- BC was home to approximately 11% of Canada's organic operations.
- There were an estimated 525 primary producers operating on over 1.3 million acres, and 325 processors and handlers.
- BC is the province with the third largest number of organic livestock producers (133) and the province with the largest pasture acreage, making British Columbia the third largest market for fresh meats, poultry and seafood in Canada.
- 68% of BC grocery shoppers purchased organic groceries weekly in 2020, above the national average of 64%.
- The market for organic food and beverages in British Columbia reached an estimated \$508.1 million, showing 15.6% year-to-year growth since 2017.
- Trade data show that BC has the second highest organic import figures in the country and the second highest per capita, while exports from British Columbia only account for 4.2% of total Canadian exports.

# GOVERNMENT AND SECTOR RELATIONS

## BUILDING CONNECTIONS

In 2022 Organic BC continued to develop and strengthen collaborative relationships with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF), partner organizations and academic institutions. These relationships are critical to the work we do in ensuring that the needs and concerns of organic farmers, processors and distributors are heard, that knowledge within the organic sector is recognized and shared, and that innovation and growth is supported.

## KEY THEMES OF 2022



### **BC Ministry of Agriculture**

Executive Director Eva-Lena Lang met frequently with the Organics Industry Specialist and senior ministry staff, had several meetings with Minister Popham, and attended the annual BC Budget Lock Up in February, one of only four participants from agriculture invited. Key areas of focus in 2022 included the Environmental Farm Plan and Beneficial Management Practices programs, Avian Flu, support for extreme weather events including the AgriRecovery and AgriStability programs, and the RAAN.

### **Regenerative Agriculture and Agritech Network (RAAN)**

Our executive director was a key participant in the advisory group & technical committees, providing input into the RAAN goals, strategies, policy & program development, and the 2023 conference, working to ensure that organic agriculture is included in the regenerative agriculture conversation.

### **Climate Change**

In 2022 Organic BC worked with Farmers for Climate Solutions (FCS) and their members to help ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation were integral parts of the new Agricultural Policy Framework (2023-2028). The APF includes the majority of public funding in Canadian agriculture including funding transferred to provinces. Work included developing briefing and media materials and identifying and training farmers in our network to engage in the process.

# GOVERNMENT AND SECTOR RELATIONS

## BC Agriculture Council (BCAC)

As a member of the BCAC, our role is to ensure the perspective of organic producers and processors is included in BCAC's overall policy and advocacy work. Executive director Eva-Lena Lang participated in general manager meetings and Organic BC's President Niklaus Forstbauer served as vice-president of the BCAC board of trustees. At the BCAC Agriculture Days annual lobbying event, Organic BC met with NDP and opposition MLAs and staff and supported BCAC's key messages on rising input costs, farm classification, environment and climate change, and farmland trespassing.

## IMPORTANT SECTOR ISSUES

Organic BC works closely with our national partner organizations, the Organic Federation of Canada, the Canada Organic Trade Association and Canadian Organic Growers, on key issues affecting the organic sector.



## GE Seeds

We actively opposed and continue to resist the CFIA's proposed guidance that would allow the release of GE seeds without any government oversight or mandatory notification. This proposal seriously threatens the viability of organic food and farming. For more information please see the [CBAN](#), [COTA](#), and [National Farmers Union](#) websites.

## National Funding of Organics

Though organic agriculture is sustainable and resilient, since 2017 the Government of Canada has drastically reduced its support for organic agriculture. Organic BC is supporting the proposal of a Canadian Organic Program to grow sustainable agriculture for Canada, and to maintain Canada's competitiveness in world markets. A national organic program would provide permanent funding for the review of the Canadian Organic Standards and for the societal and ecological services delivered by organic farming.

# SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING ORGANIC



## WHERE WE WERE IN 2022

- Peace River
- Cariboo
- Vancouver Island
- Vancouver
- Fraser Valley
- Squamish
- Okanagan
- Similkameen



Plus many more regions virtually!

## OUR DIGITAL REACH

### WEBSITE



35,000+ views

15,000+ users

### SOCIAL MEDIA



145,000+ accounts reached



1000+ new followers

## ORGANIC BC SWAG

Increasing brand awareness through Organic BC merch: toques, tees, totes, caps and travel cups.



[organicbc.org/shop](https://organicbc.org/shop)



# SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING ORGANIC



CHAOS & CONVERGENCE  
2022 CONFERENCE  
ORGANICBC

## BC ORGANIC CONFERENCE

In light of the pandemic, we switched the 2022 BC Organic Conference to a virtual format which took place on February 27 and March 6. The conference committee had some great brainwaves when it came to creating a new program, including the incredibly popular pre-conference beer and bevvie night, all-new podcasts, a presentation on mental health literacy, a conversation on regenerative certification, and the launch of our [Soil Health Series!](#)



**Read the full conference recap:**

[bcorganicgrower.ca](http://bcorganicgrower.ca)



## BC ORGANIC GROWER

The BC Organic Grower is an excellent way for Organic BC's members to stay informed, and to celebrate organic farmers and food producers. The print and digital magazine reaches over 600 growers and is distributed at events throughout the year. Online, articles from 2022 were viewed over 10,000 times.

In 2022, all issues were guided by the overarching theme of convergence: bridging the gaps between generations, healing the divides between communities, pooling our knowledge, and making different decisions for how we want to be as we face an uncertain future. Thank you to all the producers and experts who share their words and wisdom, and to advertisers for their support!



**Subscribe, read past issues or advertise**

[bcorganicgrower.ca](http://bcorganicgrower.ca)



# SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING ORGANIC

## FIELD DAY @ FRESH VALLEY FARMS



On September 18 we held an in-person field day at Fresh Valley Farms in Armstrong. Participants took a tour of the farm and learned about their rotational grazing practices, cover cropping and forage program, on-farm slaughter/cut/wrap, and field management, and dove deeper into the transition of one field to organic.

They also heard from two guest consultants & instructors, Percy Folkard and Greg Tegart.

This project was supported by the BC Climate Agri-Solutions Fund. Funding for the BC Climate Agri-Solutions Fund was provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Agricultural Climate Solutions - On-Farm Climate Action Fund.

## VIRTUAL FIELD DAYS



During the 2022 BC Organic Conference, we launched our Soil Health Series, featuring virtual farm tours and conversations with producers around the province: Hutley Acres (dairy), Wild Flight Farm (vegetables) and Claremont Ranch Organics (tree fruit).

In 2022, extensive work was also done on our Organic Innovation Series, which launched in 2023. Collectively, these educational videos have had over 40,000 views!

Organic BC gratefully acknowledges funding from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a joint funding agreement between the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.



**Watch now at:**

[youtube.com/thisisorganicbc](https://youtube.com/thisisorganicbc)

# SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING ORGANIC

## ORGANIC BC PODCASTS



The Organic BC podcast is an educational resource for farmers, gardeners, processors and other members of the organic food and farming community in British Columbia and beyond!

In 2022, we released 12 new episodes and began planning for the release of more episodes in 2023.



**Tune in at:**

[organicbc.org/podcast](https://organicbc.org/podcast)

## BCAC FLOOD FUND



After the disastrous floods in November 2021, Organic BC strongly advocated for organic farmers, participating in provincial and federal consultations to support emergency management and recovery. Unfortunately, current eligibility criteria for crop insurance, AgriStability and AgriRecovery funding prevents many small-medium scale diversified farms from accessing these critical supports.

Organic BC was awarded \$30,000 from funds donated to the BCAC Fund for Farmers, which we distributed to 8 organic farms impacted by the flooding.

## ORGANIC WEEK



Thanks to everyone for entering our giveaway, sharing our new report, [The Organic Market – British Columbia 2021](#), engaging with the many happenings around the country, spreading the word, and coming out to our events, including our field day at Fresh Valley Farms and the BC Ag in the Classroom Cook-Along, featuring Chef Randle and agricultural insights from organic farmer Chris Bodnar.

# SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING ORGANIC

## ORGANIC BC FORUM



This year we had a big increase in engagement in the Organic BC Forum, with over 400 participants from all regions posting questions, answers, exchanging ideas, sharing resources, and more.



**Join the conversation! Sign up now:**  
[organicbc.org/forum](https://organicbc.org/forum)

## PACIFIC AGRICULTURAL SHOW



It was great to connect with hundreds of people at the show, educating folks on the value of organic, how to get certified, and what Organic BC is all about.



# ACCREDITATION

The core work of the Accreditation Board is to perform the vital task of accrediting and/or recommending accreditation for member certification bodies. This procedure is critical to the BCCOP and COR programs and is accomplished with utmost regard to quality control.

<b>7</b>	<b>548*</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>5%</b>
certification bodies	operators certified or in transition	operators certified to BCCOP	operators certified to COR	operators certified to BCCOP & COR	BCCOP operators in transition

\*Operators in multiple categories were only counted once

## UPDATES

### Accredited CBs

- SOOPA discontinued their accreditation to the BCCOP and SOOPA operators transferred to NOOA.
- BCARA withdrew their COR accreditation. They continue their accreditation to the BCCOP.

### Retired

Rochelle Eisen and Dwight Brown. We extend our gratitude for all they have contributed and wish both of them well in all their future endeavours.

### New rep

In June of 2022, Jack McLeod, COR Producer representative, joined the Accreditation Board.

### Staff update

In July, we wished Maddie Haynes all the best in her new endeavours, and welcomed Dana Negoita as Accreditation Program Manager.





# ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES

## **TRAINING AND INFORMATION SESSIONS**

The 2022 Roundtable information session for CB administrators, Certification Committees, and Verification Officers was held in conjunction with the BC Organic conference in February 2022. Trainings to enhance certification programs were provided.

## **IMPARTIALITY COMMITTEE**

The Impartiality Committee (IC) met twice in 2022 and reported to the Organic BC Board that all COR accreditation decisions were made impartially.

## **SURVEILLANCE AUDITS**

Audits conducted included: COR verification audits of PACS, regional program audits & document reviews, COABC Accreditation Board (AB) internal audit, and a witness audit on the AB, conducted by the CFIA. The witness audit found that the COABC accreditation program remains in compliance to the CFIA's COR requirements as a certification verification body (CVB).

## **APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**

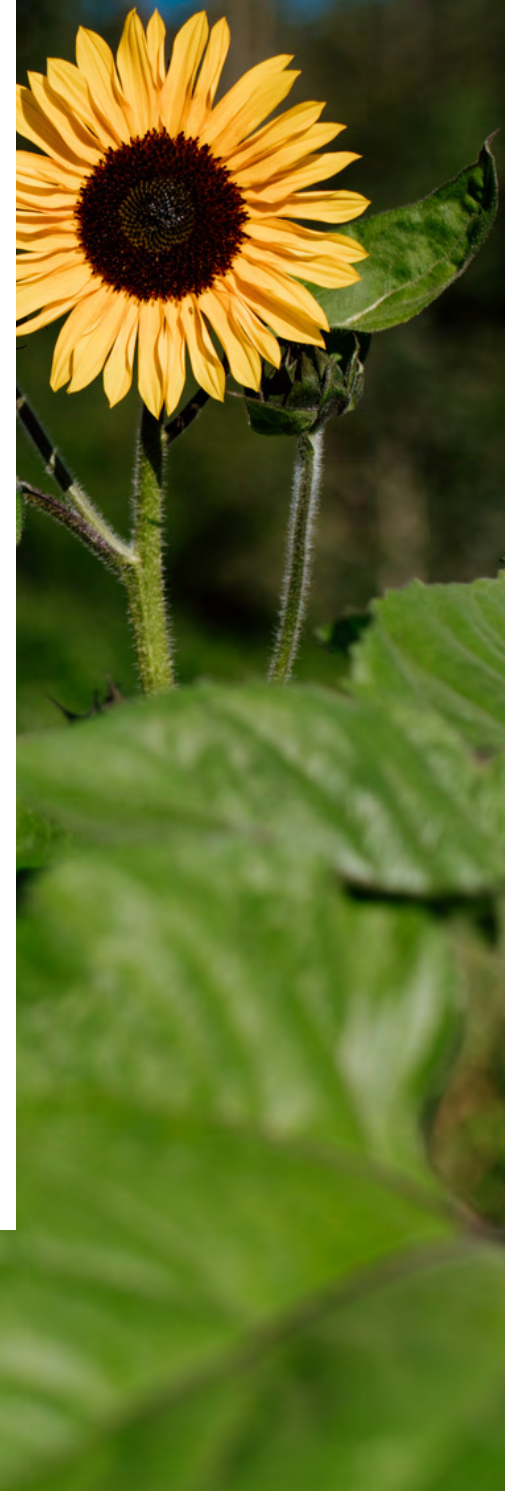
No new complaints or appeals were received by the Accreditation Board in 2022.

# ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

In November 2021, Organic BC launched a multi-phase review of the organization's financial, governance and operations structures, supported by a consultant and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The purpose of the Review is to provide a framework for changes that will enable Organic BC to be financially resilient, to increase its impact, and to ensure the organization can grow a well-regulated organic sector in BC.

Phase 1.0 was completed in March, and a report was presented to the Board. We initiated Phase 1.5 in April, with more detailed work undertaken by two working groups comprised of board members and other key stakeholders. The ensuing report identified several aspects of the organization where change is a priority in order to meet our objectives.

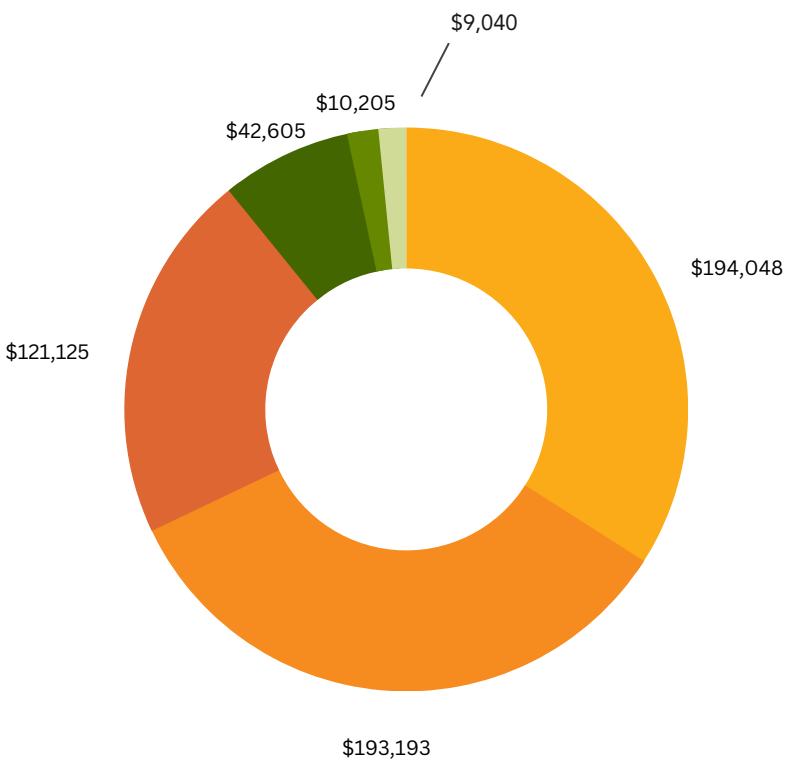
Phase 2.0 began in October and will continue in 2023. Some of the actions include contracting a financial assessment of Organic BC's accreditation and certification services, stakeholder surveys, a policy change proposal for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and a 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.



# FINANCIALS

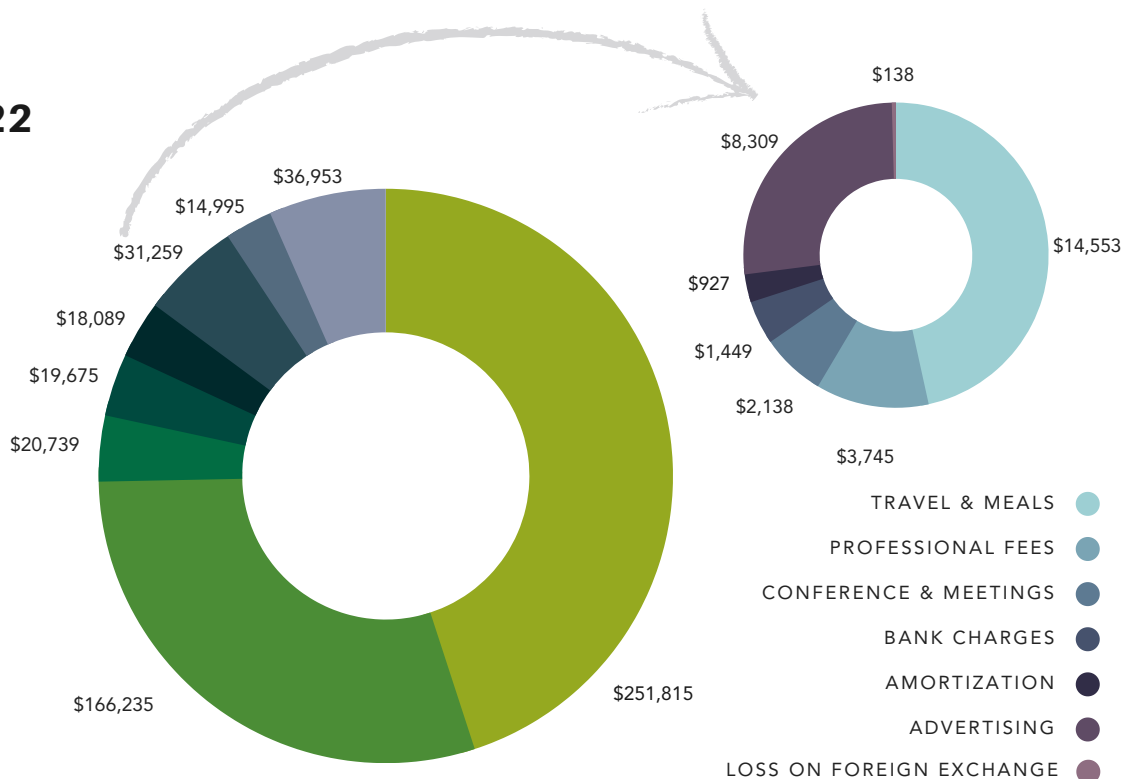
## REVENUE 2022

- FEES & SUBSCRIPTIONS
- GRANTS
- CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP
- SPONSORSHIP
- AUDIT FEES
- OTHER



## EXPENSES 2022

- CONTRACT FEES
- WAGES & BENEFITS
- COMMUNICATIONS
- OFFICE
- OTHER
- MEMBERSHIP & FEES
- RENT & UTILITIES
- DONATIONS & SUBSIDIES



# MEET ORGANIC BC

## OUR MEMBERS



**Pacific Agricultural  
Certification Society  
(PACS)**



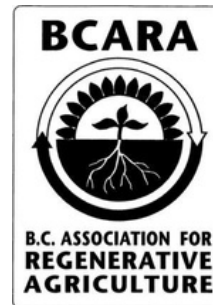
**North Okanagan  
Organic Association  
(NOOA)**



**Kootenay Organic  
Growers Society  
(KOGS)**



**Living Earth Organic  
Growers Association  
(LEOGA)**



**BC Association for  
Regenerative Agriculture  
(BCARA)**



**Islands Organic  
Producers Association  
(IOPA)**



**Biodynamic Agricultural  
Society of BC  
(BDASBC)**



# 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Niklaus Forstbauer**  
President  
BDASBC



**Ken Smith**  
Treasurer  
PACS



**Corine Singfield**  
Director  
BCARA



**Lana Braun**  
Director  
KOGS



**Jennifer Atkins**  
Director  
IOPA



**Robert Vanderlip**  
Director  
LEOGA



**Jordan Marr**  
Director  
NOOA



**Josh Brown**  
Director  
NOOA



**Brody Irvine**  
Director  
PACS



**Bart Bounds**  
Director  
PACS



**Carmen Wakeling**  
Director  
PACS



**Rebecca Kneen**  
Associate Director Organic  
Federation of Canada



**Emma Holmes**  
Associate Director Ministry of  
Agriculture and Food

# 2022 STAFF



**Eva-Lena Lang**  
Executive  
Director



**Maureen Loft**  
Accreditation  
Director



**Maddie Haynes**  
Accreditation  
Administrator



**Dana Negoita**  
Accreditation  
Administrator



**Mary Paradis**  
Operations  
Coordinator



**Stacey Santos**  
Communications  
Manager



**Kristy Kruschel**  
Office  
Administrator



**Carol Edwards**  
Bookkeeper



**Crystal Arsenault**  
iCertify  
Coordinator



**Moss Dance**  
Designer  
BC Organic Grower



**Darcy Smith**  
Editor  
BC Organic Grower



**Michelle Tsutsumi**  
Conference  
Coordinator



**Sarah Stewart**  
Conference and  
Extension Coordinator



**Jordan Marr**  
Podcast  
Producer

# 2022 ACCREDITATION BOARD



**Dwight Brown**  
Certification &  
Inspection Member



**Rochelle Eisen**  
Certification &  
Inspection Member



**Nadene Gurulé**  
Certification &  
Inspection Member



**Alicia Hudson**  
COR Processor  
Member



**Renee Prasad**  
Consumer &  
Environmental Member



**Jack McLeod**  
COR Producer  
Member (Livestock)



**Nicolas Walser**  
BCCOP & COR  
Producer Member

# THANK YOU!

## 2022 SPONSORS

renewal

RENEWAL PARTNERS



## SENDING GRATITUDE TO OUR COMMUNITY

A huge thank you to over 50 volunteers that helped us steer the Organic BC ship and kept it sailing!

And our most heartfelt gratitude to all our operators and organic champions everywhere, for your ongoing commitment to a sustainable food system and a healthier world. We are here because of you!



Cover photo credit: Maylies Lang x Northbrook Farm