

## Organic legislation passes second reading at Queen's Park last week

Bill 153: Organic Products Act, 2017 passed second reading in the Legislature last week.

The bill is co-sponsored by NDP MPP Peter Tabuns and Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones, and would ensure consumer confidence by requiring that all organic products sold in Ontario have been certified.

The federal government adopted the Canada Organic Standard in 2009, so that all organic products sold across provincial borders or carrying the Canada Organic Logo must be certified as organic," Jones said. "However, in Ontario there is no restriction on what can be called 'organic,' meaning people are free to call any product organic regardless of whether the product is actually organic."

The bill is aimed at addressing this inconsistency and ensuring that consumers are able to have confidence in organic products. Jones pointed out five other provinces, Quebec, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Manitoba, have already created their own provincial organic standard.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and the National Farmers Union of Ontario, all support Bill 153's call to ensure that consumer confidence in organic products is maintained," she added. "Bill 153 passing second reading represents an opportunity for the Ontario government to consult with producers and consumers about how we can make a 'Made-in-Ontario' solution that addresses the gap in the organic standard that currently exists in Ontario."