

Certificate of Specialization in Organic Agriculture:

The **Certificate of Specialization in Organic Agriculture** offers practical, hands-on experience and specialized skills in the field of organic agriculture. The courses will assist new and existing producers, as well as those interested in organic agriculture, to develop a strong understanding of many areas within the field. Offered online through web-based study, the Certificate of Specialization in Organic Agriculture provides the foundation on which to build a successful future in the field. Courses offered through the Certificate program are available for credit or non-credit. To receive the Certificate, students may choose four of the five available courses:

Beginning Fall 2008

Composting and Compost Use:

This course relies on activity based, hands-on learning. Students will have the opportunity to make their own composts and practice vital skills required to manage composting systems. This course examines how the principles of composting are applied, how to evaluate and manage an actively working pile and maintain optimum conditions for composting in organic agriculture and horticulture.

Transition to Organic Agriculture:

Producers considering switching to organic agriculture will benefit from this introduction to the subject. This course consists of five modules, enhanced by group discussions and the use of internet-based organic information resources. Students will be given a brief description of what is organic and why it is beneficial to the industry, as well as reasons for choosing organic production methods. Certification methods and practical approaches to planning and managing organic systems are covered throughout the course.

Principles of Organic Horticulture:

The overall objective for this course is to introduce you to the principles of organic horticulture production systems. Students will have the opportunity to take a close look at soil fertility, organic soil amendments, compost and mulches, crop rotation, plant health, management of diseases and pests, marketing and more. Case studies on selected organic farms and farmer profiles build a real world understanding for the topic.

Beginning Winter 2009

Organic Field Crop Management:

In this course students will be introduced to organic principles and practices applied to the production and management of field crops. In this five module course you will learn how to optimize crop yield and quality organically, practice sustainable soil and nutrient management and review organic certification requirements.

Organic Livestock Production:

Experienced producers and students new to organic livestock production can benefit from this course. In this five module course you will be given an introduction to organic livestock production, reasons for raising livestock organically, health management strategies and marketing methods, and a discussion surrounding ethical issues. Students will study during the term through discussion groups and internet-based organic information resources.

Also Beginning Fall 2008

Along with our Certificate of Specialization in Organic Agriculture, we offer additional online courses to further your knowledge in specialized areas of agriculture.

AGRI 3001: Issues in Agricultural Health and Safety

A series of on-line modules in agricultural health and safety designed for agricultural students, farm managers and owner-operators, and anyone else who wishes to obtain a better understanding of the health and safety issues present on Canadian farms. The focus of the program is to describe the health and safety situation in the agriculture industry, the major health and safety risks in this industry and highlight the importance of improving the current situation.

SPEC 4013: Global Seminar- Rural Sustainability:

The course consists of a learning community comprised of students and faculty from around the world who study key global issues of sustainability pertaining to the environment and food systems. The course uses a unique approach to global learning and evaluation based on real-world practices. The goal of the Global Seminar is to prepare future leaders and citizens of the global community to articulate policy agendas that will lead to a sustainable environment and a stable food supply. It is believed that the shared understandings that transcend national boundaries, cultures, and backgrounds offer the best hope for our future safety and security (Stuphin, 2003).

NSAC's Continuing & Distance Education (CDE) delivers life long learning opportunities to individuals for professional development and personal enrichment. We work to develop new courses that meet the growing needs for the industry that will upgrade individuals with professional skills and knowledge.

CDE can help expand your professional development in agriculture, environmental, plant and animal sciences, horticulture and more. Visit us online at <http://www.nzac.ca/cde> or call (902) 893-6666.