

Growing Certified Seed

A one page summary of how to grow Certified seed in Colorado

Making Decisions: The first step in growing certified seed is deciding which variety to grow. When growing many crops (wheat, beans, barley, oats, etc.) PVP status and possible royalty structures need to be considered.

Planting: Next, find a source of Foundation or Registered seed (or germplasm in the case of natives). You may need to be authorized by the genetics provider to receive and plant this seed (see above). Let the CSGA office know you plan to produce Certified seed. Review the land requirements in the CSGA Standards book. Select a clean piece of land, preferably free of any noxious weeds. Thoroughly clean out the drill before planting.

Prepare Fields: In the spring or summer, fill out an Application for Field Inspection, which also serves as a Membership application. The deadline for each crop is listed on the form. The appropriate fees are due with the application. Treat the fields with herbicides if necessary to control weed infestations. Rogue fields of unwanted plants prior to arranging field inspection. Know the field standards for the crop you are producing!

Inspections and Harvesting: Call the CSGA office to arrange field inspection approximately two weeks prior to your expected harvest date. Meet with the inspector to provide directions to fields and discuss any problem areas. Observe good harvest practices by cleaning combines, grain carts, trucks, and bins between varieties. Send in a preliminary germination sample, if desired, to make sure the seed is of proper quality to merit conditioning.

Conditioning: Condition the seed through an Approved Conditioner to meet certification requirements. If you condition your own seed, you must be a Class V conditioner. If the seed is custom conditioned, it must be done by a Class I Approved Conditioner. You may transfer seed to an approved conditioner or to another seed grower who will sell the seed with his label. Notify CSGA of the transfer by filling out a Transfer Form.

Testing: While conditioning the seed, pull a sample for analysis at the lab. See the CSGA Standards for the proper way to pull a sample. Send 2 pounds of seed in a clearly marked container to a seed testing lab. Most seed is sent to the Colorado Seed Lab at CSU with a Seed Sample Form to clearly identify the seed and requests tests. If the seed passes all specifications, the CSGA will issue a Certification certificate for the seedlot.

Selling: Once the seed has been certified by the CSGA office, it can be marketed, labeled, and sold as Certified seed. You must label the seed, either with a Bulk Sales Certificate or Bulk Invoice Label (if sold in bulk), or a bag tag (adhesive or sew-on) if sold in a bag. Labeling the seed is a requirement of CSGA, the Colorado Seed Act, and the Plant Variety Protection Act. Not labeling the seed is a serious violation which can lead to expulsion from CSGA and legal action from both the State and the variety owner.

Questions: Do not hesitate to call the CSGA office at (970) 491-6202 with any questions about seed certification in Colorado. Also feel free to visit our website at www.seeds.colostate.edu to learn more about our program.