



Alternative Service Delivery of Seed Crop Inspection – Budget 2012 Decision

Notice to Stakeholders

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) will be working with industry to transfer seed crop inspection services to an alternative delivery mechanisms beginning April 1, 2014 as one of the Government of Canada's decisions pursuant to Budget 2012. This initiative will advance the Agency's longer-term strategic policy of reducing its role in direct delivery of seed crop inspection and contribute to the government's overall objective of fiscal constraint.

The underlying principles of the initiative are that:

- it is national in scope,
- it will focus on direct delivery of seed crop inspection by the private sector,
- the CFIA will continue to be involved in activities in support of seed crop inspection and certification, including licensing and oversight of private sector delivery of seed crop inspection,
- the CFIA will work with the sector to develop a national framework that will put the necessary mechanisms in place to enable alternative service providers to offer seed crop inspection services, and
- it will meet commitments for fiscal restraint under Budget 2012.

The CFIA is committed to its core mandate of food safety, consumer protection, and animal and plant health. This means that in the future there will be less emphasis on activities such as the direct delivery of seed crop inspection that could be provided more efficiently and effectively by the private sector.

While the CFIA intends to reduce its role in the direct delivery of seed crop inspection, it will continue to be responsible for seed certification in Canada. The Agency will still be involved in activities such as:

- licensing of persons to conduct seed crop inspection,
- entering into agreements with Authorized Seed Crop Inspection Services,
- oversight activities such as monitoring and auditing of those parties involved in seed crop inspection,
- setting the performance standards that licensed seed crop inspectors will have to achieve,
- developing training materials; and
- providing, when necessary, direct delivery of seed crop inspections in those cases where it is not possible to use private inspectors.



The immediate priority is to establish a functional framework for Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) of seed crop inspection so that inspections can be conducted by licensed inspectors beginning in 2014. In 2014, the CFIA will only be providing seed crop inspection activities on an exceptional basis, only where an ASD is not available or it is not possible to use private inspectors. The longer-term objective, however, is to have most, if not all, seed crop inspections conducted by licensed inspectors.

An Industry-Government working group (IGWG) will be working on a national framework that will assist industry to move towards ASD of seed crop inspection. This group was established in 2007 and includes the Canadian Seed Growers' Association, the Canadian Seed Trade Association, the Canadian Seed Institute and the CFIA. The original mandate of the group was to look at ASD of seed crop inspection, and it has experience working on seed ASD pilot projects. The new mandate of the IGWG is to identify key design criteria for implementation of this decision and come up with a number of options of how ASD of seed crop inspection can be best provided.

As part of this proposal the CFIA will examine its fees and review its approach to delivering seed crop inspection to ensure that they are not an impediment to ASD.