



Qs & As for Alternative Delivery of Seed Crop Inspection;
A Budget 2012 Initiative

Q 1. Why is the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) getting out of the direct delivery of most seed crop inspection?

A 1. 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 seed crop inspection which can be delivered efficiently and effectively by the private sector. As a result, the CFIA will begin reducing direct delivery of seed crop inspection services as of April 1, 2014.

Q 2. If seed growers were to agree to pay more for CFIA's crop inspection services, would the CFIA continue to deliver the services?

A 2. No. The purpose of this initiative is to shift the direct delivery of the seed crop inspection activities to the private sector as this activity is not considered to be part of the CFIA's core mandate. The CFIA will continue in its role as Canada's seed certification authority and will be involved in training, licensing, oversight and audit of seed crop inspection.

Q 3. Is it possible that some seed crop inspection activities will still be conducted by the CFIA?

A 3. Yes, it is possible. The CFIA may, on an exceptional basis only, be required to continue to perform direct delivery of seed crop inspections in those cases where an authorized service provider (ASP) is not available or where it is not possible to use private inspectors. Examples include: where necessary, to meet international requirements for the export of seed; and for contentious crop types such as industrial hemp or in situations where there is a risk associated with a specific variety (e.g., a variety developed for industrial purposes grown under contract registration).

Q 4. Could some seed growers end up paying less for seed crop inspection than others because the CFIA fees do not reflect the cost of delivering the service?

A 4. Private providers of seed crop inspection services will each set their own fees; therefore, it is not expected that costs for seed crop inspections will be uniform. As part of this proposal the CFIA will examine its seed crop inspection fees and review its approach to delivering seed crop inspection services in those situations where such

services are required on an exceptional basis. The Agency will also ensure that the CFIA is not an impediment to alternative service delivery (ASD) mechanisms that reflect the principles stated in the Notice to Stakeholders.

Q 5. What if an acceptable service provider is not available in my area?

A 5. There is a reasonable expectation that there will be private sector interest in providing seed crop inspection services. Over the next two years, the CFIA will work with seed growers and the seed trade to design and develop a national framework for ASD of seed crop inspection that reflects the underlying principles stated in the Notice to Stakeholders. In 2014, the CFIA will only be providing seed crop inspection activities on an exceptional basis as described in question 3. The long-term intent, however, is to continue working with the industry and other partners to minimize the CFIA's involvement in all seed crop inspection activities. It is recognized, however, that it may take several years to fully realize this objective.

Q6. This initiative could potentially result in increased costs to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Canadian Seed Growers' Association (CSGA). Will there be funding available to parties outside of the CFIA to offset these costs or to help with other costs from implementation of this initiative?

A 6. Funding will not be available directly from the CFIA. However, there may be government programs that the CSGA or other NGOs might qualify for.

Q 7. How will the CFIA ensure that there are enough trained private inspectors to conduct those seed crop inspections by 2014?

A 7. The CFIA normally hires about 120 casual inspectors to supplement the approximately 80 CFIA inspectors who conduct seed crop inspection on a seasonal basis. Some of these casual inspectors, who are already trained and experienced in seed crop inspection, could potentially be available to provide seed crop inspection services. As part of the Soybean Pilot Project for 2012 there will be additional training conducted for both CFIA staff (for oversight of alternative service delivery of seed crop inspection) and industry personnel. In 2013, there will be a major initiative to provide training for private crop inspectors.

Q 8. How will private sector delivery of seed crop inspection services be more effective and efficient than government delivery?

A 8. A private seed crop inspection system would be able to react to the rapid pace of change of the seed sector in a timely manner. Adoption of remote data collection technologies and innovative solutions to information management are expected with greater private sector involvement. The private sector should also be able to act quickly in response to sudden changes in demand, should they occur.

Q 9. What will the CFIA's role be in seed crop inspection?

A 9. Although its role in the direct delivery of seed crop inspection will be reduced to provide services on an exceptional basis only, the CFIA will continue to be involved in numerous activities in support of seed crop inspection, including training and licensing, as well as oversight of seed crop inspection and the performance standards that licensed seed crop inspectors will have to achieve.

Q 10. What incentive will there be for prospective private companies or individuals to deliver seed crop inspection services?

A 10. With or without changes to fees, the CFIA will be reducing seed crop inspection services. In some cases, seed companies may want to be licensed to conduct the inspection themselves. In other cases, independent, third-party service providers may offer seed crop inspection for fees that reflect the cost of delivering the service. As part of this proposal the CFIA will examine its seed crop inspection fees and review its approach to delivering seed crop inspection services, in those situations where such services are required on an exceptional basis only, to ensure that the CFIA is not an impediment to ASD.