

STRONG FOUNDATION. BRIGHT FUTURE.

Governance and Partnerships

June 2023

BACKGROUND

CSGA standards are developed by the seed sector for the seed sector. CSGA is proud that Canadian seed varietal certification standards and procedures are developed through an efficient process with broad stakeholder participation, including:

- **CSGA's Regulatory Services Committee:** Comprised of seed growers, seed company representatives, a seed analyst, an inspector, a plant breeder, and provincial and federal government officials, governing CSGA's standard development framework.
- **Eight (8) Crop Specific Working Groups:** Comprised of independent subject matter experts that encompass the entire seed sector and beyond.
- **CSGA's Public Consultation Process:** Open to all stakeholders to ensure that everyone can provide input into CSGA's standards and decision-making framework – empowering the entire seed sector value chain and beyond.

WHAT'S NEXT

As CSGA aspires to become the main administrator of Canada's seed certification system, we need a continued inclusive and service-oriented approach to ensure all relevant stakeholders are engaged in both standards development and the planning of a next generation seed certification system.

Since October 2020, CSGA has been developing a plan to build on our inclusive and service-oriented approach and expand stakeholder consultation and engagement based on the continued need for a high-level dialogue with the whole seed sector and government.

OUR PLAN

We have developed a plan to further expand stakeholder consultation and engagement by creating a **Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee** and **increasing external representatives** on CSGA committees.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee will not only strengthen connections along the value chain and ensure key stakeholders are engaged but also ensure SRM recommendations are effectively implemented, continually improved, and provide a high-level forum for discussion.

The Advisory Committee would provide a framework for the seed sector to:

- Collaborate on emerging, cross-cutting, big-picture issues or policies;
- Provide expertise, guidance, and input into policy, operations, and standards development; and
- Make recommendations to the CFIA, AAFC or other non-governmental organizations involved in seed and seed certification.

This collaborative approach would ensure that future policies, operations, and standards developed by the CFIA or other non-governmental organizations continue to be well-balanced and reflect the diverse perspectives of all stakeholders in the seed sector.

The Advisory Committee would not create:

- governing power
- fiduciary responsibility
- control by any one organization

EXAMPLES

There are similar examples to CSGA's proposal in Canada and abroad that demonstrate tremendous benefits, including:

- **AOSCA Advisory Committee:** The Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) is an international seed standard setting body and has successfully leveraged an Advisory Committee model since the 1960s and consists of industry, regulatory, service, and other organizations relevant to the purpose of AOSCA with each affiliated group/organization is responsible for selecting their own representative. A 2005 bylaw amendment gave the Advisory Committee the responsibility for reviewing proposed changes to AOSCA standards and providing guidance to the AOSCA Board of Directors.
- **Plant Breeders' Rights Committee – Canada:** Established in 1990 with a mandate to advise the CFIA Plant Breeders' Rights (PBR) commissioner on the application of the Plant Breeders' Rights Act and Regulations with membership comprised of individuals appointed by the Minister on various topics like the strategic direction and priorities of the Plant Breeders' Rights Office, and key legislative, regulatory, policy, and process initiatives to improve the intellectual property framework.
- **Plant Breeders' Rights Committee (PBRAC) – Australia:** In 2018, the Australian Government abolished the PBRAC in favour of a Plant Breeders' Rights Consultation Group to provide specialized advice on plant breeders' rights matters and 'this has enabled a more flexible approach to consultation and a broader membership.'

HOW IT WORKS

The Advisory Committee would:

- Meet two (2) times per year.
- Have an industry and government co-chair elected by the committee membership.
- Be comprised of representatives from organizations agreed upon by the SRM-Working Group and supported through public consultation.
- Ensure SRM recommendations are effectively implemented and provide a framework for continual improvement.
- Provide a forum for consultation, discussion, collaboration, and information exchange on policy, standards, and incorporation by reference/regulatory change.
- Be supported by AAFC through a similar financial and resource arrangement as the Seed Sector Roundtable
- Have no governing power, no standards setting authority, no fiduciary responsibility, or organizational budget or personnel.

POTENTIAL MODELS AND BENEFITS

We are proposing an organizational-based membership model, where the organization is responsible for identifying and nominating a member to the Advisory Committee.

Membership would be reviewed on a frequent basis (e.g., every three (3) years), and new organizations can join through member consensus.

To facilitate discussion, here are two proposed Advisory Committee membership models:

Value Chain Approach	SRM-Working Group Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASCIS Association • AOSCA or OECD Representative • Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) • Canadian Grains Council • CFIA • CSGA • CropLife Canada • Seeds Canada • Seed Change • Plant Breeders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public & Private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ASCIS Association ○ CSGA ○ Seeds Canada • Producer Groups • Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seed Change ○ Canadian Organic Trade Association • Technical Advisory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Canadian Grain Commission

An organizational-based advisory committee model would:

- Ensure key stakeholders are engaged
- Reduce nomination/selection bias and effort
- Remove personal bias
- Not require a new organization
- Support existing processes/organizations
- Be derived from the proven, sustainable, long-term model for AOSCA
- Be easily scalable to support other areas/ discussions as required

EVOLUTION OF THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In April 2021, CSGA first introduced the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee concept in its new business plan. At that time, the concept was intended to provide a framework for the seed sector value chain to provide input and guidance into CSGA in its role as Canada's national seed crop certification authority.

Through the SRM process, the need for a sector-wide advisory committee framework has become very apparent, and we feel that this concept is now best intended to provide input into the whole seed sector, including government and organizations such as CSGA.

If an advisory committee framework is not adopted through SRM, CSGA will continue to implement our Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee to help advise CSGA in its role as Canada's seed crop certification authority.

EXTERNAL APPOINTMENTS

Several CSGA Committees, including the Regulatory Services Committee, already permit external representation by role type (e.g., seed analyst, seed trade, and inspector).

Currently, these external individuals are identified by CSGA for their technical experience and appointed to committees by the CSGA Board of Directors.

To provide a pathway to those that want to participate in CSGA committees and make the nomination process more open, transparent, and inclusive, CSGA has started conversations with key sector partners like the ASCIS Association, the Provincial Seed Growers' Associations, and Seeds Canada to help provide nominations to CSGA on open/vacant external positions.

How it Could Work:

- CSGA would identify open/vacant positions and post them externally on our website
- CSGA would engage key stakeholder groups on the openings and solicit nominations
- If multiple candidates emerge, the CSGA Governance Committee would review and make a recommendation to the CSGA Board
- The process could be tied to a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement with external organizations.

Along with the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee, increasing external representation would not only strengthen connections along the value chain but will ensure that future policies, operations, and standards developed by the CFIA or other non-governmental organizations continue to be well-balanced and reflect the diverse perspectives of all stakeholders in the seed sector.