

Breeder Memo 2025

This document provides information for plant breeders regarding Breeder seed plot production. Please consult the [Application Support Document](#) for general instructions on how to apply for seed crop certification and membership and for highlighted changes for the 2025 crop season.

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Affiliate Membership in CSGA - Stay Connected. Stay Informed.

Being a CSGA Affiliate Member is a great way to stay connected to Canada’s seed certification system and the broader seed community—especially in years when you’re not applying for certification of your Breeder seed. As a recognized Plant Breeder, you are considered a Regular Member in any year you apply for certification of Breeder seed. In years when you are not entering seed into certification, you're eligible to continue your involvement as a CSGA Affiliate Member. Breeding institutions/facilities are also eligible for affiliate membership, whether or not its Breeders are producing seed in the current year.

For just \$240 annually, Affiliate Members can attend CSGA meetings, submit member proposals, and vote on matters that directly affect their membership class. You also gain the opportunity to elect—and run for—Affiliate Director positions on the CSGA Board, ensuring your perspective as a plant breeder continues to help shape the future of our sector.

Your expertise and involvement are vital to the continued strength and evolution of Canada’s seed system. Affiliate Membership keeps you informed, engaged, and at the forefront of the conversations driving innovation, sustainability, and seed regulatory modernization. We invite you to [learn more here](#).

[Apply for Membership Today](#)

Applications for CSGA Seed Crop Certification – Submit early!

Plant breeders are encouraged to submit an *Application for CSGA Seed Crop Certification* before the Form 43 submission. Please use the application form found on the “Forms” tab in [SeedCert](#). This ensures prompt completion of invoicing, payment and variety file activities, and timely issuance of your crop certificates.

New in 2025: The *Application for CSGA Seed Crop Certification* of Breeder plots should be submitted in the name of the Breeder who is responsible for the production. To ensure that the breeding institution will have access to the crop certificate and associated documentation online, the Breeder can assign the crop certificate to the institution or can include the Institution as a third party on the application form. The breeding institution would have to complete a *Third Party Account Information and Consent* form. For more information, please contact Brianna at bchouinard@seedgrowers.ca

Note: If your Breeder plot is to be inspected by a third party, the crop application deadline dates must be respected. These dates can be found in the [Application Support Document](#).

Breeder Seed Tags

Breeder seed must be properly labelled as Breeder seed if the seed is transferred or sold to another party. For seed which has been certified by the CSGA (CSGA has issued a crop certificate number), CSGA will provide Breeder seed tags upon request. Breeders must use their own tags if the seed has been approved by – but not certified by – CSGA (CSGA has issued a pedigreed reference number).

CSGA is currently running a digital tag pilot project for Breeder and Select seed, where modernized tags are printed directly through SeedCert. These tags bear a QR code that, when scanned, grants the user access to a digital folder for documentation that the Breeder chooses to be associated with that seed. If you are interested in participating in this project, please contact Alex at abouma@seedgrowers.ca.

If you have any questions about labelling Breeder seed, please contact the Certification team via email or call (613) 236-0497 ext. 8806. If you wish to order Breeder seed tags, please contact Client Support via email or call (613) 236-0497 ext. 8803.

Tags Bearing Breeder Signatures (Form 40)

Breeder seed that has not been previously certified and which will be producing Select, Foundation, Registered, or Certified seed will be required to have a pedigreed reference number. To acquire a pedigreed reference number, the responsible breeder should complete the *Application for Approval of Breeder Seed* (Form 40), found on the Forms tab in SeedCert. Submission of the form will result in the issuance of a pedigreed reference number, which can be included on a Breeder's or company's personal seed tag or label to demonstrate that CSGA has already approved the parent seed as eligible for certification. Note that CSGA Breeder seed tags are only to be used where CSGA has certified the seed by issuing a crop certificate.

Important: Breeder seed does not have to be pre-approved by CSGA if it is sown in Breeder plots.

Reminders for Associate Plant Breeders

So long as their work is being overseen by a CSGA-Recognized Plant Breeder (RPB), Associate Plant Breeders (APB) have the same privileges as a fully recognized breeder (RPB). For example, APBs may submit an Application for a *Breeder Seed Crop Certificate* (Form 43) provided they have an RPB's authorization to do so. Active APBs will be asked for the name of the RPB overseeing their work and their authorization.

If you are an APB and wish to become an RPB, please submit an *Application for Plant Breeder Recognition* (Form 43A), which can now be found in a digital format on the "Forms" tab in [SeedCert](#).

CSGA Learn Online Plant Breeder Program

Through CSGA Learn, our online seed learning platform, we support plant breeders in seed certification with a program designed to help them learn the requirements for producing certified Breeder seed in Canada.

The CSGA Learn [Plant Breeder Program](#) (\$85 CAD) will help you understand the CSGA Plant Breeder recognition process, the requirements for variety registration and Breeder seed certification and recognized Plant Breeders' responsibilities.

Quality Management System

For CSGA certification, Breeder seed must be produced within a Quality Management System. If you have not updated your QMS in some time, please plan to conduct a review to ensure it is reflective of your current practices. For more information, please consult page 2-2 of the new [Canadian Breeder Seed Requirements](#).

Applying for Certification of New Varieties

CSGA requires that all varieties entering seed crop certification be entered into CSGA's variety database using one of the three pathways:

- The CFIA Variety Registration process
- The CSGA Form 300 process, or
- CSGA's "Enter a New Variety into Seed Crop Certification" form

The "Enter a New Variety into Seed Crop Certification" form can be found on the "Forms" tab in [SeedCert](#). If the variety is to be grown in Quebec, it requires a description in both English and French.

Breeder Seed Demotions

Breeder seed which has been certified by CSGA that is to be demoted to Foundation status requires a Foundation crop certificate number from CSGA. New crop certificate numbers can be requested by submitting Form 45, which can be found on the "Forms" tab in [SeedCert](#). As part of this process, a representative sample must be sent directly to the CFIA:

Canadian Food Inspection Agency – Ottawa Plant Laboratory (Fallowfield)
3851 Fallowfield Rd
Ottawa, ON K2J 4S1

Breeder Seed for Export

Breeders are encouraged to apply to CSGA for certification of any Breeder seed intended for export to facilitate acceptance in the country of destination. Remember that CSGA Breeder seed tags are only to be used when CSGA has certified the seed by issuing a crop certificate. It leads to confusion if an importer receives a CSGA Breeder seed tag without a CSGA crop certificate number.

If you have retired from plant breeding and do not wish to receive similar correspondence in the future from CSGA or if you have any questions or concerns, please let us know by [email](#). Also, if you are a recognized breeder and have been forwarded this email because you didn't receive one yourself, please let us know.

Management of Reference Material Seed Submitted to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency

This article has been provided by the Seed Science Unit at the CFIA's Ottawa Laboratory

Reference material seed submitted by Breeders for Form 300 and Canadian Registered Varieties is retained by the Seed Science Unit at the CFIA's Ottawa Laboratory (Fallowfield). Once received, these samples are documented and subsampled for planting in reference material control plots. The remaining seed is then transferred into airtight containers and placed in long-term storage in the National Archive of Legal Reference Material.



The National Archive is a customized temperature and humidity controlled walk-in refrigerator.

During the growing season, the reference material control plots will be inspected multiple times at each growth stage and compared to their Description of Variety (DoV). These plots also serve as controls for the Domestic, Export, and Import pedigreed seed samples planted in sequence beside them.

- Examples of pedigreed production tested in the Variety Verification Program:
 - Domestic: Select status crops of self-pollinated crop kinds; Foundation status crops of cross-pollinated crop kinds; and Breeder status crops demoted to Foundation or Registered status
 - Export: all export seed lots of OECD Pre-Basic, Basic, and a portion of Certified and Not Finally Certified seed lots
 - Import: seed lots multiplied abroad under Multiplication Agreements

The reference material submission will continue to be subsampled and grown as a control every season a seed sample is received for Domestic, Export, and/or Import pedigreed seed production for that variety.

Once there is only enough seed left for one final reference material control plot, a replacement sample request is sent to the Breeder to obtain more seed in order to continue the work of the Variety Verification Program. The replacement sample is planted next to the final control plot of the remaining seed from the previous reference material source in order to verify the variety's identity. Replacement sample requests may also be sent if the germination of the sample has deteriorated or if less than 2kg was originally provided.

If a variety is still available on the market, it is plausible that the Seed Science Unit will receive a sample of its pedigreed seed production and will need to request a sample of reference material from the Breeder.

For more information on the CFIA's Variety Verification Program, visit the "Variety Verification Program – Questions and Answers" page on the Government of Canada website.

Any inquiries for the Seed Science Unit can be sent to:
cfia.seedscience-sciencedessemences.acia@inspection.gc.ca