



CSGA Strategic Plan

DRAFT FOR MEMBER CONSULTATION

January 29, 2017

The Next Generation of the CSGA

CSGA members play a critical role in ensuring that Canadian farmers and their customers have access to the crop varieties that they need to succeed. Historically, the CSGA itself, in concert with its branches in the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia has played three primary roles:

1. the national standard setting body in Canada for seed crop varietal purity standards,
2. the national regulatory authority in Canada responsible for the issuance of crop certificates required in the seed certification process and
3. as an advocate for its members and the seed industry.

In the future, CSGA anticipates that it will be called upon to continue to play these roles and to potentially assume even more responsibility for the smooth functioning of the seed certification and regulatory system, in conjunction with other industry and government partners and guided by the following:

PROPOSED MISSION – *Represent and support its members, advance the seed industry and (with its partners) deliver and promote a flexible, responsive and cost effective seed certification system in Canada.*

In addition, the CSGA needs to establish a vision which sets out the world CSGA aspires to realize through the execution of its mission:

PROPOSED VISION – *The CSGA is an innovative, science-based organization committed to supporting a competitive Canadian agriculture sector as a respected global leader in seed quality assurance and genetic traceability*

The CSGA must also articulate the core values that it will guide it in the achievement of its mission and the realization of its vision:

PROPOSED VALUES – *Responsibility, Integrity, Accountability, Transparency, Collaboration, and Respect.*

And, it will need to establish a coherent set of key results to frame and focus its work over the next three to five years.

PROPOSED KEY RESULTS AREAS

1. **Trusted, High Performing Seed System**-The right regulations, systems, and processes to support seed and agriculture sector growth and prosperity.
2. **Member Support**-The right professional development and technical support services to facilitate member success.
3. **Sector Growth**-A growing seed industry that offers access to profitable new varieties and related value creation and sharing opportunities for our members.
4. **Partnerships**-Industry and Government partners mobilized to enable seed sector success.
5. **Organizational Efficiency & Effectiveness**-A CSGA that enables all of the above cost effectively.

KRA 1 – Trusted, High Performing Seed System

Context

The CSGA, its branches and its members play key roles in the functioning of Canada's Seed System and the regulatory system that enables it. These roles are crucial to the maintenance of industry and public trust in the system and its ability to serve the needs of an evolving agriculture and food sector.

This KRA is about ensuring that the CSGA and its members remain accountable for ensuring that the entire seed system is performing at the highest possible level.

CHALLENGES

CSGA challenges in this area are:

- Adapting Circular 6 to new technologies and new ways of doing business. For example: regulations need to be adapted to recognize opportunities like those presented by advanced seed cleaning technologies and new production technologies and practices.
- Making Circular 6 easier to understand, navigate, and implement.
- Establishing a consistent set of shared performance metrics that demonstrate how the system is performing.
- Identifying areas of inefficiency or opportunities for improvement in a structured, consistent manner.
- Building and maintaining trust in the seed system.

KRA 1 OBJECTIVE

Design and implement modern, relevant regulations with high compliance, minimal burden to seed growers, and which yield high quality seed

Sub-Objective 1.1 Circular 6 Modernization, Regular Review, and Improving the User Experience

- Review and modernize Circular 6 through: a) format changes that would allow separation of best practices from mandatory requirements; and b) revisions to varietal and mechanical impurity standards and land use and isolation distances to reflect most recent science, technology, market demands and production realities.
- Once the initial review and modernization of Circular 6 is complete, systematically involve membership in an ongoing review of Circular 6 to keep it up to date and adapted to changes in traits, varieties and production practices.
- Design and implement an online tool for growers to easily navigate Circular 6 from a desktop, laptop or mobile device. The tool should:

- support the grower through the entire seed production process and link as required to post harvest seed certification steps.
- ensure that all Circular 6 mandatory standards and related reporting obligations are clear for all crop types.
- Ensure that Circular 6 is overall easy to understand and implement for all seed growers.

Sub-Objective 1.2 Modernize the Seed Certification System to More Effectively Support the Wide Range of Seed Production Business Models

- Explore and develop approaches that better integrate the pre-harvest and post-harvest elements of the seed certification process.
- Explore and develop quality management and associated risk based audit system approaches to support the application of models that integrate oversight of pre-harvest and post-harvest elements of the seed certification process.
- Explore and develop approaches for incorporating seed grower professional recognition programs into any new seed certification system options.
- Explore and develop single window electronic certification system options to support seed certification system modernization.

Sub-Objective 1.3 System Performance Review & Improvement Cycle

- Develop with its government and industry partners a meaningful and measurable set of performance indicators for the seed crop certification system and seed certification system more generally, with a view to achieving predictably consistent outcomes over time.
- Establish an annual process to enact improvements to system administration in order to improve performance and output quality.

What Success Will Look Like...

- A national world-class, single window, online accessible system for all seed certification and related regulatory services
- A timely, flexible, and up-to-date seed certification and regulatory system that responds to members and broader agriculture and food sector needs
- Continued national and international recognition of the Canadian Seed Certification and Regulatory System

KRA 2 – Supporting Members

Context

The seed sector is diverse, with actors ranging from large life science companies to small and medium sized family businesses and everything in between. CSGA membership reflects this spectrum of businesses models and related interests. Present in virtually every major agricultural production area of the country, CSGA members include long-established seed professionals with a rich history in the industry, while others may be new to the industry and are just beginning to acquire the knowledge and experience of their peers.

CSGA has an important role to play in assuring a baseline level of knowledge and competencies for all seed growers, while at the same time enabling experienced members with a proven track record to be recognized for their superior competencies and performance.

This KRA is about ensuring that CSGA members of every type understand the Canadian seed production, certification and regulatory system and how to operate within it.

CHALLENGES

CSGA challenges in this area are:

- Lack of detailed information on who its members are and what they need.
- Protecting the integrity of the certified seed brand and ensuring a high level of trust, particularly with new entrants into the seed business.
- Experienced and established seed growers have only limited means to define and measure professional competencies and performance.
- Balancing a perceived need for a seed grower professional recognition system against the time and cost required to administer such a system and benefits that might accrue from it.

KRA 2 OBJECTIVE

Communication and Engagement with Membership is enhanced, Member contributions and needs are understood and professional competencies are recognized.

Sub-Objective 2.1 Develop a Membership Profile, Needs Analysis and Enhanced Outreach

- Undertake surveys to develop a profile of CSGA members to better understand and communicate the range and scope of their contributions to the Canadian seed and agriculture sector.
- Analyze member needs on an ongoing basis to determine the type and range of support that CSGA should provide to them.

- Communicate and engage with members on a more frequent and regular basis on issues of interest and concern.

Sub-Objective 2.2 Knowledge and Competency Tools

- Improve outreach for new, returning, or less experienced growers to support their efforts to both meet statutory requirements and develop good practices in relation to seed production and certification. In addition, undertake analysis to identify and address patterns of compliance or performance challenges.
- Design and deliver in-person and online modular learning products, available in both official languages, to support CSGA members to stay abreast of standards for knowledge, competencies, and business ethics of the seed sector.
- Working with partners and based on successful and affordable models in other sectors/industries, pilot and implement a knowledge verification program that makes sense for CSGA and its members.

Sub-Objective 2.3 Develop a Member Professional Recognition Program

- Complete a needs analysis and develop standards, training material and certification protocols to support a professional seed grower recognition program.
- Coordinate the development of a professional seed grower recognition program with the modernization of the regulatory system (KRA 1).

What Success Will Look Like...

- Members will have the specific knowledge and resources necessary to succeed.
- CSGA will understand the composition and needs of its member base to properly perform its policy, regulatory and advocacy work.
- CSGA members will be more engaged and involved in the work of the organization.

KRA 3 – Sector Growth

Context

As with any sector of the economy growth is critical for the seed business. Increasing appreciation for and sales of certified seed and the creation of value for members and their customers is core to CSGA's existence.

This KRA is about ensuring that CSGA members are positioned to contribute meaningfully to sector growth.

CHALLENGES

CSGA challenges in this area are:

- Need for increased awareness of the benefits of certified seed and the seed system to agriculture and society more generally.
- Need for a better understanding among members and their customers of how a fine tuned seed certification and regulatory system can contribute to value creation and growth.
- The need to capture emerging opportunities in non-traditional and under served markets.
- The need to position its members to capture the potential for new technologies and associated new and higher performing varieties to generate growth.

KRA 3 OBJECTIVE

The seed sector is positioned for sustainable, long-term growth and the value of certified seed is recognized throughout the value chain.

Sub-Objective 3.1 Provide Best Practices Support to Members on Contracting

- The amount of pedigreed seed acres produced under contract continues to increase. To encourage best practices and increase members understanding of contracting issues, CSGA is proposing to develop model contracts and explore other forms of support to members engaged in contracting.

Sub-Objective 3.2 Support Respect for Intellectual Property and Discourage Bad Practices

- Future growth in certified seed acres will be closely related to the continued use of certified seed as a means for developers to secure returns on their investments in plant breeding and to protect their intellectual property. CSGA proposes to increase its efforts to encourage increased respect for the intellectual property rights of breeders and developers.

- In partnership with others, CSGA proposes to work to reduce the incidence of “brown bagging” and other practices that reduce returns to intellectual property rights holders and certified seed growers.

Sub-Objective 3.3 Promote the Value of Certified Seed Up and Down the Value Chain

- Pursue and build support nationally and internationally for increased research and analysis to demonstrate the value proposition of certified seed to customers and policy makers.
- Undertake a long-term marketing plan to promote the value and reliability of certified seed to partners and customers up and down the value chain. Canada boasts a system of traceability, purity, and quality assurance, built on a diverse group of competent seed growers. Marketing these features will build demand and capture new customers in the long-term.

Sub-Objective 3.4 Expand CSGA Business

- Develop and implement a business plan to expand into non-traditional crop kinds and service products. CSGA can offer a range of valuable traceability, origin certification, and other data for commodities that are not traditional CSGA clients, such as health products and supplements, or cannabis.
- Leverage the core business strengths of CSGA to develop a strategy to market Additional Certification Requirements. Work with primarily existing customers to identify opportunities for CSGA to provide additional certification to meet market demands.
- Work with partners to ensure continued access for seed growers to niche and specialized varieties that represent a significant and growing share of the market and as well as to new life science technologies that may increasingly be within the reach of seed growers.

What Success Will Look Like...

- CSGA and its members will be armed with a strong case to promote the value of certified seed
- Increased demand for certified seed across a range of crop types
- Customers throughout the agriculture sector and in the general public will understand the value and importance of certified seed
- CSGA will leverage its reputation for quality and reliability to help capture new customers for its members
- Increased value for the entire seed sector over the long term

KRA 4 – Partnerships

Context

The CSGA provides regulatory services to its members and also advocates on behalf of them and for the sector as a whole. It has performed this role for the better part of a century and it has done so in a close working partnership with provincial/regional seed associations, governments, and other industry bodies. Over time the respective roles of government and industry have evolved, with industry assuming more responsibility in the process. Today, six industry organizations, the CSGA, Canadian Seed Institute (CSI), Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA), Canadian Seed Analysts Association of Canada (CSAAC), Canadian Plant Technology Agency (CPTA), and CropLife Canada share an advocacy and education role for the seed sector as well as responsibility for policy development and regulation with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC).

With both the CFIA and AAFC preparing for a new phase of seed regulatory program modernization, the six major seed industry organizations have banded together to develop a common industry vision for the future of the seed sector, in the form of the Seed Synergy Collaboration Project. The project is focused both on developing a common industry voice on key policy and regulatory issues and articulating a “next generation” seed sector vision that both industry and governments can embrace and work together to deliver.

To ensure the success of the Seed Synergy Collaboration Project, CSGA has stepped up to support its partners in a number of areas, including in the areas of seed regulatory policy development, government and public relations, integrated regulatory services design and other areas of importance to its members. With the increased visibility and closer working relationships that result from CSGA’s role in this project, comes an opportunity to more effectively advocate for progressive change and to mobilize its membership in support.

CHALLENGES

CSGA challenges in this area are:

- Lack of a clearly articulated and commonly held vision for the future of the sector as a whole
- Some organizational overlap and inefficiency (e.g. maintaining separate information systems)
- Pattern of government offloading and privatization without a strong and positive policy vision for the sector to guide it

KRA 4 OBJECTIVE

CSGA and its partners collaborate in the long-term interest of the seed sector to realize a strong industry-led, government-enabled seed system

Sub-Objective 4.1 Define A Shared Vision of an Industry-Led, Government Enabled Seed Sector

- With its partners, CSGA will work to achieve the following vision:
 - A strong, competitive and profitable sector that attracts investment, research and innovation, and that is valued for its significant contribution to society.
 - An industry-led system that is cost-effective, market driven, agile and responsive, and that enables Canada to do business globally.
 - A system that meets the needs of all stakeholders along the entire value chain.
 - A system that instills trust and that garners a high degree of support.
- And, in the process, confirm the respective roles of industry and government in relation to resourcing the system and to ensuring costs and benefits are fairly distributed.

Sub-Objective 4.2 CSGA Increases Its Leadership Role

- CSGA will work with partners to explore new regulatory models (with a willingness to assume responsibility for new types of regulatory services as required) as part of the development of a new shared vision for the sector; including working with its partners to improve service to members through the development of a single window seed certification service model.

Sub-Objective 4.3 One-Voice Government Relations

- Working with its industry partners, develop a single voice (to the greatest extent possible) government relations and advocacy agenda. The purpose of this will be both to influence governments to realize a shared seed sector vision, and also to establish the seed sector as an important player at the larger agricultural policy table.

What Success Will Look Like...

- A seed sector unified around a common vision for the prosperity of the sector
- Seed growers interacting easily and efficiently through one regulatory window
- Defined roles for industry and government, and a fair cost structure for all players
- Government and other industry associations view CSGA as a trusted partner
- Clarity on government's commitments to regulation, research, and resourcing for the longer term

KRA 5 – Organizational Efficiency & Effectiveness

Context

Key Result Areas 1-4 speak to a wealth of performance, policy, and partnership goals, all of which will contribute to the CSGA vision of the seed sector. CSGA's actions to realize this vision depend upon its own organizational capacity. Organizational capacity is multi-faceted and includes the people, systems, and financial resources that an organization brings to bear to achieve its goals.

CSGA faces an evolving environment that will demand competencies like partnership building, leveraging technology, and engagement. While not new, the importance of these attributes will be much greater than in the past, requiring the organization to adapt to meet this demand. Succession risks are also a major challenge for CSGA, as senior staff possess a wealth of knowledge and experience whose loss would be difficult to mitigate.

In addition, CSGA's technological infrastructure will have to continue to evolve to keep pace with new business lines, and new ways of collecting, storing, sharing, and marketing data.

The long term financial health of the organization is, of course, a critical consideration. CSGA must set the course for membership, certification, and service fees, in a way that is fair and equitable, and provides a solid resource base for CSGA.

CSGA will have to invest in governance and oversight to ensure that its management agenda stays true to its vision, and to support decision-makers with more information and analysis than in the past.

CHALLENGES

CSGA challenges in this area are:

- Limited guidance for skill and competency development for staff directors
- Attrition risk: senior staff and directors with extensive knowledge
- Financial framework of the organization based heavily on member levies
- Increased demands on core resource base

KRA 5 OBJECTIVE

The CSGA has the skills, infrastructure, resources, and governance necessary to realize its vision for the sector

Sub-Objective 5.1 People and Systems Are In Place To Support CSGA Goals

- Develop a long-term human resources plan, identifying the skills and competencies required now and in the future, and to manage succession risks. CSGA needs to know the competencies, skills, and language needs it will have to build and recruit for in order to drive success in the future.
- Develop a formal, costed three-year IM/IT plan. CSGA is increasingly an information business, and it must plan this business accordingly, including the costs as IM/IT operations can involve significant cost.
- Ensure that CSGA accounting and other administrative systems are clearly documented (enabling succession), and operating efficiently to avoid any impediment to member business or profitability.

Sub-Objective 5.2 CSGA Has A Solid Financial Foundation

- Develop a three-year financial plan for the organization to plot the current financial trajectory, including forecasted revenues and expenditures, to ensure that required resources will match expected funds.
- With member engagement, develop a CSGA funding formula for membership, certification, and additional service fees. Additionally, conduct a regular review of the funding arrangement and update as required. This will ensure that all CSGA members and clients pay a fair share now and for the future.
- Secure funding from the next Agricultural Policy Framework and other sources for selected projects.

Sub-Objective 5.3 CSGA Board of Directors Is Well Supported To Realize Its Vision

- Develop annual work plans in support of Strategic Plan objectives and implement a Board oversight strategy for regular review and course correction where necessary.
- Develop a rolling 18 month forward planning calendar with all major events, reviews, and decision points.
- Develop and implement a Board development plan including orientation for new Board members, learning, and performance management to support good governance of the CSGA.

What Success Will Look Like...

- Approved HR, IM/IT, and Financial plans in place to ensure that resources are in place to support strategic objectives
- Realistic revenue targets and a long-term funding model in place
- Planning calendar in place and decisions taken on schedule
- Overall performance evaluated highly

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