



The North Dakota Seed Journal

SEPTEMBER 2010

Newsletter of the North Dakota State Seed Department

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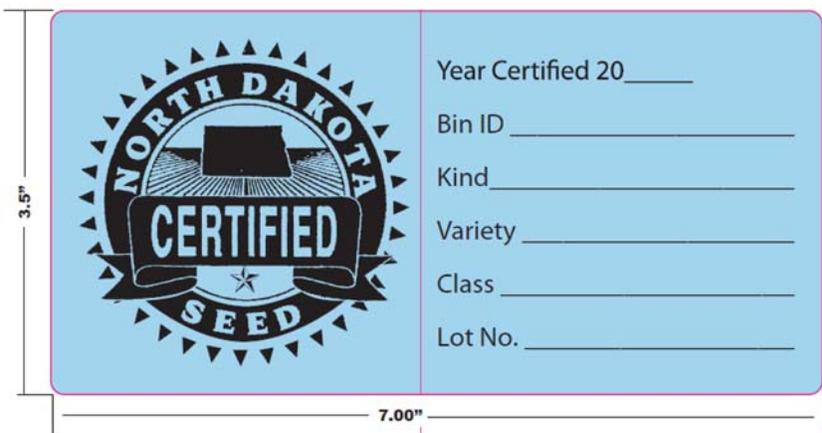
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Bin Labels Designed for Proper Identification of Seed

Steve Sebesta, Deputy Commissioner

North Dakota seed certification regulations require that all bulk bins containing certified seed must be labeled with kind, variety, class and lot number. Among the approved seed conditioning and bulk retail facilities across North Dakota, there are 3,748 bins approved to store certified seed. Through annual inspections and regulatory audits, we have found that not all of them were properly labeled every year. On occasion, this has led to misidentification of seed lots as to the correct variety. Some of these identification problems have gone undetected until regulatory inspections and sampling. Depending on the timing of those inspections, there is a potential that some of that seed could be sold and delivered before the problem is detected and resolved.

To assist conditioners and retailers in keeping records straight, the Seed Department has developed adhesive labels for all approved bins. The labels have a clear, adhesive flip cover that folds down over the area that is used to record the lot information. This protects the written area from weathering. The bin labels will be provided at no cost to certified seed conditioners and bulk retailers and will be distributed during facility inspections this fall.



North Dakota State
NDSSD
 Seed Department

The North Dakota Seed Journal is published and edited by the Seed Department, State of North Dakota, under the provisions of Chap. 258, S.L. 1931, as administrative and instrumental matter required for effective transaction of the Department's business and for properly fostering the general welfare of the seed industry in the state.

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Updated Certification Rules Available On-Line

New seed certification regulations and standards went into effect July 1. The most current version is available on our website, www.ndseed.com in the **Field Seed Program** section under **Standards**. Bulletin 51 will be re-printed in the next few months.



From the Commissioner's Desk

I've been so distracted this week by the Brett Favre soap opera and Chelsea Clinton's wedding that the deadline for Seed Journal articles snuck up on me. Lest we forget, there are also oil spills, financial meltdowns, 24/7/365 political advertisements and North Korean saber rattling to distract a person from other important day-to-day issues. It's not that these issues aren't important; they just become so overwhelming that they become background noise in the business of daily life.

I find that I become a bit one-sided in discussions here, focusing on issues surrounding field seed crops and neglecting another very important part the seed industry in North Dakota and our work here; potato seed production and certification. Disclaimer and clarification alert: potato seed business is not background noise, I'm just easily distracted ... and fail to give due consideration in print to this critical segment of the agriculture industry.

North Dakota has produced potato seed since the 1920's, and stands today, second only to Idaho in certified potato seed acres. Historical highs for production occurred in the 1980's, topping

out over 40,000 acres, then gradually declining to a low of 12,500 acres in 2005. Production rebounded, and has leveled off in the range of 16,000-17,000 acres during the past five years. Grower numbers have fallen about 50% over the past two to three decades, to the current 30 or so farms producing seed potatoes. There are dozens of reasons for the reduction (financial, marketing and legal risk being primary) but North Dakota's seed potato production industry remains strong and viable today by comparison to any other in North America.

In terms of NDSSD's work, the Potato Program is the largest of the five major areas: Potato, Field Seed, Regulatory, Lab Services and Administration. Our program provides field inspection, shipping point inspection, winter test growouts, laboratory testing and nuclear seed production among many other services to our growers. As with any certification effort here, our customers are really more like partners. Our staff, especially our field inspection team led by Willem Schrage and Mike Oosterwijk, is intimately involved with our growers' operations nearly on a daily basis. In short, this program is a high-impact,

high-cost, high-priority element of the department's operations.

Lastly, there is another piece of the potato seed certification triangle that deserves mention, our collaboration with NDSU programs. Our staff works closely with Dr. Susie Thompson (breeding), Drs. Neil Gudmestad and Gary Secor (pathology) and Dr. Nick David (extension) among a host of other faculty and technical staff to improve the product being generated by the seed industry in North Dakota. All three entities work hand-in-hand to ensure that the best quality seed is available to the commercial industry here and nationwide. The collegial relationships developed over decades are a major and positive influence in the continued success of potato seed production.

This short synopsis of the partnerships doesn't do justice to the breadth of technicalities involved in this program area. I hope it provides a snapshot of the system and its parts, and the importance of potato seed production North Dakota.

Best wishes for a safe, profitable and smooth harvest season.

- Ken Bertsch..... State Seed Commissioner
- Steve Sebesta..... Deputy Seed Commissioner
- Willem Schrage..... Director, Potato Program
- Joe Magnusson..... Seed Regulatory Manager
- Galen Briese..... Seed Certification Manager
- Mark Hafdahl..... Seed Laboratory Manager
- Jeff Prischmann..... Diagnostic Laboratory Manager
- Kris Steussy..... Administrative Officer
- Mike Oosterwijk..... Potato Program Supervisor

Unconditioned Carryover Reports Due October 1

Unconditioned, carryover seed from fields that passed field inspection in 2009 (and/or prior years) must be reported to be eligible for final certification this year. Carryover reports were mailed to seed growers the end of July. All field-inspected seed that was not submitted for final certification last year must be reported to maintain eligibility.

Carryover certified seed does not need to be reported, however, a new sample must be submitted to the department for a new germination test to ensure it meets labeling requirements.

New Crop Pre-Germs

Testing seed for germination soon after harvest ensures that the new crop germination is good and has the potential to meet certified seed standards. Producers are encouraged to keep the following in mind if they utilize this service.

When submitting your samples for a pre-germ, field numbers must be listed on the sample paperwork or envelope in order to verify what field, or fields are represented by that sample. Samples submitted without field numbers will not be considered representative of a finished lot.

In the past we have called the producer or conditioner to determine the fields represented by the pre-germ in order to use that test result for final certification. Due to the time involved in tracking this information down, we have adopted a new policy this year. Pre-germs will only be accepted for final certification if all field numbers match exactly. If no field numbers are linked to the pre-germ test, we will automatically set the sample up for a new germination test.

The field number is found in the upper left hand corner of the Field Inspection Report. Applicants receive a copy of the report for each field inspected. The field number this year is something like S1098765. It is not the number that you assigned the field on the application.

Pre-germs are not accepted for final certification of fragile crops such as soybeans, lentils, field beans, field peas and chickpeas. Germination tests must be conducted on the sample submitted for final certification.

While the pre-germ sample may indicate whether the seed is suitable as a seed crop before the added expense of conditioning, we recommend doing another germination test on the conditioned seed lot to ensure that the test is conducted on the sample that is representative of the finished seed lot.

Summer Potato Virus Testing

Jeff Prischmann, Diagnostic Lab Manager

The annual potato summer virus testing program was held during July 20 through August 4. This testing allows certified potato growers an opportunity to test seed fields for viruses including PVX and PVY. Bt-Cry3a tests were also offered for GMO detection. This testing service is optional to all growers with the following exception: PVY tests are required for all Silverton, Shepody, and Russet Norkotah varieties, regardless of generation. These varieties are considered to be latent virus carriers and do not always express symptoms in the field.

The lab performed virus and GMO tests on approximately 200 potato leaflet samples. Each sample was ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbant assay) tested using 400 individual leaflets composited into 40 test wells of ten leaflets each. Bt-Cry3a tests were conducted using ten test wells of 40 leaflets also using ELISA. Approximately 75 samples were Bt-Cry3a tested. Over all, the amount of virus detected was low. No PVX or Bt-Cry3a positives were detected in any sample. PVY was detected in a small number of samples.

All the samples submitted this year for testing were of excellent quality. Generally, samples were tested within one day of receiving the sample. Thanks to all the growers who submitted samples for testing. We greatly appreciate the care in packaging and prompt delivery to the lab. Growers who have questions about test results or how a test is performed, are encouraged to contact the lab.

Ascochyta Testing Reminder

Pulse crop producers are reminded to submit samples as early as possible for any seed lots requiring Ascochyta testing to ensure adequate time to complete the test. The Ascochyta test is an agar based grow-out test that requires 8-10 days to complete once the test has been started. The Diagnostic Lab has experienced a significant increase in the number of Ascochyta tests during the previous testing season and many of those tests were conducted late in the season. As a result, growers are advised to submit samples as soon as they are available this fall. Early season testing will allow us to more efficiently process your sample and in turn, provide you better testing service.

The Ascochyta test is required for labeling of chickpea and lentil seed, and test results must be on the label.

The department currently charges \$88 for Ascochyta tests on field pea, lentil, and chickpea using a sample or test size of 500 seed. Please contact the department for more information and thanks for your past testing business.

Tips for Submitting Seed Samples

Steve Sebesta, Deputy Commissioner



Kar-nak [kahr-nak] –verb to predict results or determine the unknown through extrasensory perception.

I am old enough to still consider the late Johnny Carson as the late-night king of comedy. Today, his schtick would be considered corny and tame. Many of you probably remember his

character, Karnak the Magnificent. Some have even adopted the term “karnak it” to imply that they possess the powers to determine the unknown, or in other words, to guess.

When it comes to documentation requirements and detailed records, however, it simply isn’t acceptable to “karnak it”. Our staff is talented, but the ability to karnak incomplete reports simply is not among our skills, and quite frankly, we’d look silly wearing that hat.

I bring this up because we are entering a busy time of year, when seed samples arrive for testing. Seed testing is critical to determine the quality of a lot and we understand the importance of getting results back to you as quickly as possible. However, our efficiency depends on the information you provide us with each sample you submit.

When submitting a sample to the Seed Department for testing it is extremely important to provide all the required information. Incomplete or inaccurate information will result in delays due to follow-up required on our part. The extra work required on our part to collect the information that should be provided initially on your part really bogs down the system. We cannot process a sample for testing until we have the required information. Here are a few tips to remember when you submit samples.

Reminder...

Research fees are due September 15. If you have not already done so, please remit payment promptly to the Seed Department for seed labeled in your name, sold through June 30, 2010. Do not pay your county crop improvement or ag association. The only way we can correctly reconcile your account is if the report form and check are sent directly to the Seed Department. Research fee reports must be returned even if no sales occurred. Thanks to those of you who have already paid your fees.

For common seed or certified samples submitted for preliminary testing:

1. Use the manila envelopes (available from our office).
2. Include a return address so we know who to send the results to.
3. Identify the kind, variety and lot number.
4. Identify which tests you want conducted. Consult Bulletin 51 or our website for specific test requirements.
5. Identify field-inspected seed by using the current field application number (e.g. S1012345) — **not** the lot number of the seed that was planted. Pre-germ samples that do not have fields identified will not be accepted for certification.
6. If we are supposed to send a copy of results to someone else, or bill someone else, let us know.
7. Submit enough seed for all the tests you want done. See our website (www.ndseed.com) for sample size requirements for specific tests.

For samples submitted for final certification:

1. Use the plastic sample bags.
2. Complete a Sampler’s Report for each lot (**remember — each bin is a separate lot and requires a separate sample**).
3. Be sure to fill in all blanks on the Sampler’s Report, especially the field number(s) that make up the lot.
4. List all the tests to be conducted.
5. If we are supposed to use test results from a pre-germ, or a disease test that was previously done on the lot you are submitting, be sure to provide those test numbers so we don’t repeat those tests.
6. If the sample submitted for final certification includes more fields than the pre-germ sample represented or different field numbers, new germ and disease tests (if required) are required.
7. If the seed is being re-tested or has been re-conditioned, be sure to provide the certification number from the initial sample.
8. Have the Grower’s Declaration signed, if required.
9. Insert the paperwork into the sleeve with our mailing address visible.
10. Fill the plastic bag with seed, making certain to seal the zip-loc seal as well as the second, adhesive seal.

Consult the North Dakota Approved Seed Conditioner’s Manual for more details or call 701-231-5400.

Seed Regulatory Activities

Joe Magnusson, Regulatory Manager

Regulatory Sampling

All seed exposed, offered or transported for sale to the public must be truthfully and properly labeled and represented. The Regulatory Program is responsible for collecting samples from seed dealers and vendors, analyzing the seed and comparing the results to what is stated on the label. If a discrepancy is found, a "Stop Sale" order is issued and the product must be relabeled or removed from sale.

The Regulatory inspection team collected 1,803 samples for truth in labeling testing. "Stop Sale" orders were issued on 47 seed lots that were improperly labeled or found to be out of tolerance with label claims. The following is a breakdown of the "Stop Sales" issued:

Out of date labels	19
Low germination	9
Excess inert matter	8
Incomplete labels	4
Wrong variety	3
Excess other crop	3
Excess noxious weeds	1

The following is a breakdown of the crops we analyzed:

Alfalfa	20	Field pea	34	Safflower	3
Barley	78	Flax	14	Sorghum	2
Canola	109	Grass	9	Soybean	742
Chickpea	1	Lentil	6	Sunflower	60
Corn	177	Mustard	3	Sweet clover	1
Durum	34	Oat	10	Wheat	360
Field bean	137	Red clover	3		

We found 15 certified seed samples out of tolerance with ND certification standards: seven for excess other crop, three for other variety, three for excess weed seed 3, and two for excess noxious weeds.

Our diagnostic team discovered two samples of wheat that did not test true to variety. Both lots of seed had been sold to a conditioning facility by one grower who delivered the seed from the wrong bins or the seed was mixed during harvest. We were able to stop the sales prior to any seed being sold.

Seed Labeling Permits

Any person or business that labels seed in North Dakota must have a Seed Labeling Permit, report seed sales and submit a fee annually to the State Seed Department based on those sales. According to our records there are 90 certified seed growers and eight nonresident seed dealers that do not have a permit to sell seed in this state. An application for a permit will be sent to growers that certified and labeled seed for sale in 2009-2010 to bring them into compliance.

The annual reporting form for seed sales was sent to permit holders June 30 and was due August 1. If you have not returned your report, please do so as soon as possible. The reporting form must be returned even if no sales occurred during the reporting period. If you did not sell seed and you wish to cancel your permit, check the appropriate box at the top of the form and return to our office. A late fee applies on forms that are returned after August 1. A second notice and reporting form will be sent in September. If you do not send the reporting form back to our office we will cancel your permit and you will not be able to certify and sell seed in North Dakota.

Submit Samples Early To Avoid Delays in Final Certification

One of the most significant certification rule changes that went into effect July 1 was the requirement for variety identification testing for spring wheat, field peas and barley. The variety ID test must be completed for each lot of seed for certification to be completed. The reasons and benefits of this new requirement were outlined in the March issue.

Last year's records indicate that a significant number of seed lots were submitted for final certification after March 31, ranging to 36% for spring wheat to 46% for field peas. Because of the time required to complete the tests it will be important to submit samples to the department as soon as possible to avoid delays. Waiting until just before planting starts to submit samples for final certification will certainly result in delays. The department is committed to doing everything possible to complete the tests as quickly and as economically as possible, but we need your help. We can't start the tests until we get the sample.

The Seed Department strongly encourages you to complete certification on these crops as soon as possible to avoid delays.



Reminder...

Applications due October 1 for seed conditioning and bulk retail facility permits.



North Dakota State Seed Department

State University Station
P.O. Box 5257
Fargo, ND 58105-5257

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage

PAID

Fargo, ND
Permit No. 229

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NDSSD Calendar

- Sept. 15** Research fees due
- Sept. 14-16** .. Big Iron Farm Show, West Fargo
- Oct. 1** Unconditioned Carryover Seed Report due
- Oct. 1** Applications due for approved seed conditioners and bulk retailers
- Nov. 30-**
- Dec. 1** ND Ag Association Northern Ag Expo, Fargodome
- Dec. 8** SW District Crop Improvement Association, Mandan
- Dec. 9** NW District Crop Improvement Association, Minot
- Dec. 10** NE District Crop Improvement Association, Lakota
- Dec. 13** SE District Crop Improvement Association, Casselton