

Third Party Participation in Seed Quality Assurance

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Introduction

- Designated authority may authorize persons who are under its direct and exclusive authority.
- Laboratories may also be authorized to carry out seed analysis as required under the seed regulations.

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Requirements for designated authority

documented procedures, which describe the way in which it applies its authorization criteria.

- details of the procedures for assessing applicants for authorization;
- details of the procedures for auditing authorized personnel or laboratory;
- details of the appeals procedures;
- details of the procedures for withdrawal and cancellation of authorization
- A published description of the authorization system is advisable
- required facilities in terms of technical expertise and equipment to undertake the authorization.

General requirement for applicant

- Demonstrate capacity on infrastructure
- Demonstrate capacity on staffing
- Assure on independence
- Assure on confidentiality

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Knowledge and skills required

- Applicants should have the following knowledge and skills:
- **Knowledge of:**
- the seed schemes;
- the methods of field inspection and field standards for the crop species for which authorization is sought.
- The varietal characteristics of the varieties to be inspected
- **Skills in:**
- use of varietal characteristics to confirm varietal identity of seed crops;
- detection, characterization and quantification of varietal impurities in seed crops

Training

- Applicants for authorization should and need only undergo training appropriate to the aspects, which they would be authorized to undertake.

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Examinations

- Applicants should satisfy the Designated Authority of their competence to become authorized in examinations. The following two types of examination can be used:
- a written examination to test knowledge of principles and procedures
- a practical examination to test field inspection skills, sampling skills and testing

Knowledge & skill maintenance

- Authorized personnel need to maintain their knowledge and skills by:
- Undertaking regular inspection of crops sampling and testing,
- Participating in periodic retraining and,
- Keeping up to date copies of certification scheme rules and crop inspection procedures sampling, and testing procedures and being familiar with any changes

Monitoring and audit procedures

- **Check inspections**
- **Check sampling**
- **Inter-lab test**
- **Inspection Audits**
- **Sampling audits**
- **Testing audits**
- **Re-examination**
- **Documentation**
- **Laboratory tests and pre- and post control plots**

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Monitoring and audit procedures

- Additional requirements and methods for monitoring to reduce the risks of non-compliance may be introduced.
 - Audits will examine adherence to the appropriate sampling and testing procedures and methods and include checks on documentation, as well as the examination of company records on label and seal.
- A proportion of seed lots sampled by the accredited seed samplers or tested by authorized seed laboratories must be check sampled by official seed samplers and check tested in an official laboratory respectively.
- This proportion will be at least 10%.

SCOPE OF AUTHORIZATION

- Authorized seed inspectors and samplers and testing employed by a company will only be allowed to inspect and sample seeds belonging to the particular company.
- Unless there is an agreement between companies for extending service to other.

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Withdrawal of authorization

The following are examples where authorization may be suspended or withdrawn:

- if false or misleading information has been provided in the application for authorization
- if false or misleading information has been provided in a report
- if there is evidence from surveillance activities that the inspector does not meet the required standard of competence.

Other action

- In some cases, the Designated Authority may require authorized inspectors to undergo corrective training and re-examination

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Appeals

- The Designated Authority will operate an appeals procedure to enable a review of decision not to license, suspend, or to withdraw authorization.
- The appeal process should not have costs or procedures, which discriminate against any person, company or entity.

Specific for lab

- laboratory in premises and with equipment officially considered to be satisfactory for the purpose of seed testing and scope
- laboratory shall have a seed analyst-in-charge who has direct responsibility for the technical operations
- necessary qualifications for technical management of a seed testing laboratory

Cont,d

- laboratory shall carry out seed testing in accordance with current regulations
- The laboratory shall be: an independent laboratory or
- A laboratory belonging to a seed company
- laboratory's performance of seed testing shall be subject to proper supervision

Con,d

- A proportion of the seed lots entered for the official certification under the authorization shall be check-tested by official seed testing
- comparing the results of seed samples tested officially with those of the same seed lot tested under official supervision

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END

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