



IMPROVING AGRICULTURE THROUGH FOSTERING INNOVATION
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Canadian farmers must have viable, successful operations and sustain their international competitiveness. The Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA) seeks to achieve those goals. As seed producers, our member companies are well aware of the risks associated with the vagaries of weather, international markets, and other factors affecting production and grain prices. Seed businesses wrestle with the same risk management concerns as their customers. The seed sector is also a key driver for rural development, locating processing and retail facilities throughout the Canadian countryside.

Seed companies recognize the diminishing returns available to commodity growers and are working with the value chain to develop more and more value adding options for producers. As well, improvements in crops through the addition of specialty traits, improved yield, disease resistance, and crop management techniques is essential to sustaining Canada's role in global agriculture.

Certified seed is the foundation of traceability mechanisms and creates added value for producers and processors. With increasing requirements for food safety, traceability, and value added products, certified seed standards are more critical than ever before.

CSTA believes in the following principles:

- plant breeding has brought tremendous benefit to Canadian agriculture and is key to the future competitiveness of Canadian agriculture
- providing human and financial resources for science and innovation is essential
- plant breeding in Canada benefits from both private and public sector research
- Canada needs both private and public sector involvement in agricultural innovation because, the challenge to remain competitive is too large for any one organization to take on alone
- collaborative and co-operative approaches are needed to create synergies and efficiencies
- agriculture is part of the solution for improvements in health care, the environment, and the energy sector
- an environment conducive to fostering innovation and investment is needed
- intellectual property rights are a global mechanism to reward and encourage innovation in all sectors
- agriculture needs access to a wide range of intellectual property tools to attract investment
- the costs of developing new products should be shared across the value chain according to the benefit provided to each link in that chain (i.e.: agronomic improvements flow to farmers, processing traits flow to end-users)

- supporting the certified seed system is an important responsibility for the seed sector, farmers, and the government itself which developed the standards for seed

CSTA believes Canada needs access to the intellectual property tools available in other markets to sustain agricultural innovation in our country. The aim of intellectual property rights is to encourage investment in R&D by protecting inventors from the copying and sale of their new plant varieties by others. CSTA promotes the availability and use of all relevant tools to protect intellectual property in seeds, and that the implementation of these tools should protect holders to the highest degree. Each inventor can then decide which tools are appropriate based on the intended use and value of the new variety.

These tools must be based on respect for both intellectual property and the role of science and plant breeding in agriculture, and should include:

- Plant Breeders' Rights compliant with UPOV 1991
- patenting of plants
- trademark protection for variety-specific grains
- streamlined regulatory systems to improve the creation of value chains and identity preservation, ensuring consistency between the Grains and Seeds Act and a science-based regulatory environment
- use of contract law (such as technology and bag licenses)
- working with value chain royalties that extend past the farm level purchasers of seed to share the costs of development

CSTA also believes that the entire agriculture sector benefits from having incentives to support innovation. Seed companies enforce intellectual property protection because they have to. At the same time, programs are continually being developed to provide farmers good reasons to use certified seed and support innovation. Many companies already offer risk management tools to farmers, agronomy support, and stand behind the quality of their product. To supplement the efforts of the seed industry, CSTA would like to see public policies that encourage the quality and traceability of Canadian grains. The use of certified seed supports innovation, gets crops off to the best possible start, and preserves the identity of varieties. These systems will increase returns to producers by retaining and building markets for Canadian agri-food products. To this end, CSTA encourages:

- reduced crop insurance premiums for users of certified seed
- a tax incentive to farmers for use of certified seed

The seed industry strives to be a key player in the success of farmers and the entire agri-food value chain. Right from the start, plant breeding creates more vigorous, higher yielding crops while delivering traits that mean healthier food and more renewable resources. CSTA believes fostering that kind of innovation is in everyone's interest.

The scope of plant breeding as referenced in this document is meant to include varietal, trait, and adaptation research.