

Seed Tag and Labeling Review

NFS Technical Session
February 8, 2008

Participants Representing:

- Canadian Seed Trade Association
- Canadian Seed Growers Association
- Pioneer Hi-Bred
- Canadian Seed Institute
- Canadian Federation of Agriculture
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Purpose of the Session:

1. Define the issues
2. What industry requires
3. Explore options
 - Bar Codes
4. Define future steps

Define the Issues

1. Cardboard tags
 - Are often disregarded
 - Can be lost or damaged
 - Do not support modern information management systems
2. Traceability is growing in importance
3. Tag and labeling regulations are often confusing and overlap

Define the Issues

4. Clients often want more information on the official tag than is permitted in Regulation
 - Official tag – pedigree, traceability
 - Label – weight, seed treatment etc
 - Other – inventory control, promotion etc.
5. Inventory management of tags is haphazard

What the Industry Requires

1. Flexibility in delivery mechanism
2. Maintenance of the information from the blue tag (3rd party verification)
3. Maintain unique identifiers
4. Facilitate the provision of other (non-official) information
5. Address needs of large and small operations
6. Simplicity

Recommendations:

1. “Peel and Stick” labels – that can be affixed to invoices, bills of sale
 - Primarily to address the needs of bulk sales
2. Authorize Registered Seed Establishments to print the blue colour and information - from the blue tag – on the larger seed tag
 - To reduce paper burden
 - Make information more accessible
 - Increase compatibility with existing equipment
3. Further work on the potential of bar codes

Bar Codes - Longer term, separate project

Benefits

- Improved and more timely inventory management and traceability
- Quick and accurate information capture
- Reduces paper burden

Bar Codes - Longer term, separate project

Challenges and future work

- Industry standard for bar code?
- What information should be captured?
- What information management systems?
- Who will use bar codes?

Next Steps

- Recommendations to CFIA – March/April
- Feedback from CFIA – June
 - Can the changes be made?
 - What regulatory amendments would be required?
 - What are the time lines?
- CSTA and CSGA consult with members at Annual Meetings – July
- Establish a working group on bar codes