

IDENTITY-PRESERVATION

A POSITION PAPER OF THE CANADIAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION

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Grain shippers have used identity-preservation for decades, beginning with the early days of malt barley segregations. Since that time agriculture has evolved and furthered its abilities to create specialized products. From clear hilum soybeans, to low linolenic canola, and beyond, every crop has the ability to deliver the traits that customers need. And, this is just the beginning of the agriculture sector's ability to deliver value to end-users. The rising demand for traceability of agricultural products in the marketplace has also evolved into increased acceptance and use of proven methods to preserve integrity.

The members of the Canadian Seed Trade Association are at the forefront of these developments. As the breeders of new varieties, the seed industry has the ability to create specific oil profiles, more nutritional feed, specialized proteins, and unique consumer traits. These traits are then preserved through a meticulous system of seed production which creates certified seed.

The seed industry, grain producers, handlers, and end-users need to work together to preserve the integrity of our products. Ultimately, the entire commodity business must adapt in order to be successful in preserving value-added traits and enhancing traceability.

One of the first mechanisms to preserve value is to ensure producers are delivering crops which are derived from the proper genetics. The best way to achieve this is to confirm producers are using certified seed when delivering grain based on specific traits.

Pedigreed seed must meet high standards for mechanical purity. Pedigreed seed also provides an audit trail, guaranteeing varietal identity and purity. The rising demand for traceability of agricultural products makes pedigreed seed the ideal starting point for every identity-preserved system. From breeder to certified seed, it is possible to trace clear lines of production so that pedigreed seed maintains genetic integrity and improves quality right from the start.

Since seed is a biological product, even certified seed can not reach standards of 100 per cent purity. Use of anything with a less rigorous system of production would increase the opportunity for contamination or misrepresentation. Use of certified seed helps all parties in the grain handling system to meet the expectations of customers.

As the originators of the specialized traits that form the very basis of the identity-preserved system, the CSTA encourages producers, grain handlers, and processors to make use of certified seed to sustain integrity. Specifically, any crop delivered on specific traits or by variety name, should be delivered with appropriate documentation proving the grower has used certified seed. This is a critical first step to creating a system that can ensure the integrity of the traits for delivery.

The seed trade is eager to work with all members of the grains and oilseeds industry to develop further systems to ensure the integrity of identity-preservation, and with it, the integrity of the entire commodity system.