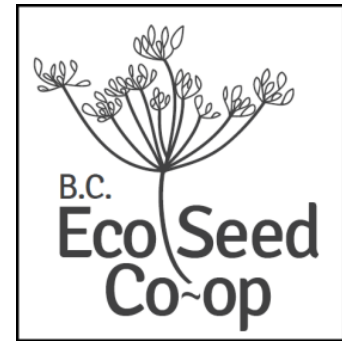


QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

Overview

BCESC members are knowledgeable seed producers committed to assuring and improving the quality of seed by careful record keeping, trialing, following testing procedures, and on going education and skill building. Our Quality Assurance Program is there to support the integrity of our seed from our fields to your fields.



Fostering Higher Quality

All seed grown by members for sale through the co-op is carefully maintained with high standards from germination to storage. Beyond maintaining crop agronomic characteristics and traits, some BCESC member fosters seed crops, working with the plant population to significantly improve crop performance. Selected members also trial a certain amount of seed crops per year, supplied by other members (*Trial Protocol and Report Template currently under development*). The BCESC commits to offer seed equal or higher quality grade as per Canada No.1 seed standard.

Education and training

All members continually improve their seed production knowledge and skills. We share new knowledge and help co-create opportunities for us all to benefit on our learning journey.

Crop Production

Seed crop submitted to BCESC is accompanied with sufficient information to establish and protect BCESC 's reputation for integrity and quality. A crop record template is provided to each member. Information to be recorded includes: isolation distances, population sizes, selection criteria, and other essential elements to evaluate seed crop quality. The BCESC adopted references guideline to judge of the adequacy of the isolation distances and population size of seed crops. These references are provided to all members for consultation. The BCESC reserves the right to diverge from the adopted references to acknowledge the reality and experience of our producers.

Testing Protocols

All seed sold through the co-op is tested as follows prior to its release for sale:

1. Germination rate: Performed by a selected laboratory with standardized protocol allowing accurate and consistent results or performed by producer member following the adopted protocol.
2. Purity testing (% unwanted seed and other undesirable material in the seed lot): Performed upon receipt at a centralized location. Members will be notified if their seed lot purity is deemed too low and will be offered support from the coop to remediate the situation.
3. Pathology monitoring and testing: Only when needed, based on production observation report or concerns raised from seed lot observation.
4. Seed vigor testing: Currently under investigation as to determinate under which circumstance this would be applied and following which protocol.

Quality Assurance Program exception

Ultimately seed traded amongst members and seed marketed for sale will meet the same standards. Until then, seed traded internally between members that do not meet the co-op's Quality Assurance Program is accompanied with transparent records clearly stating what the non-compliances are and the rationale for any non-compliance. Any such seed is clearly labeled "NOT releasable for sale".