



NEWS RELEASE

CSTA Welcomes Variety Registration Regulations

Ottawa, Wednesday June 4, 2014 – The Government has taken another substantial step in support of seed driven innovation, with changes to the variety registration process for forages and soybeans.

Regulations were published in the Canada Gazette Part II today, placing forages and oilseed type soybeans in Part III of the variety registration system. New varieties of these crops can now be registered without a recommendation based on merit testing from an officially recognized committee. Applications will be made directly to the Variety Registration office of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, which has an 8 week performance guarantee for complete applications.

“This is a very big step for plant breeders, the seed industry and for our farmer customers,” said Peter Entz, President of the Canadian Seed Trade Association. “A more responsive system of registration will help to ensure farmers have access to new and improved varieties much more quickly.”

Reductions in human and financial resources have put pressure on the registration system over the last few years. For many forage crop kinds, the ability for Recommending Committees to conduct trials has been limited and in some cases, committees have been unable to meet regularly to assess candidate varieties. Removing the requirement for a recommendation from an officially recognized committee based on years of merit testing and putting the decision solely in the hands of the CFIA Variety Registration Office will be much more efficient, but continue to ensure government approval of new varieties, providing assurances for farmers and for their markets. Industry will continue to publish results of post registration performance trials to ensure that farmers continue to get the most up-to-date information.

“This change in the registration process puts our farmers on a more even footing with their competitors in other countries who haven’t faced the time lags between the development of a new variety and its commercial release,” said Mr. Entz. “In particular, soybean producers in Canada were only getting access to new varieties up to 3 or 4 years after their U.S. counterparts. Now the delay will be substantially reduced. Quicker access to new earlier maturing soybean varieties will be good news to farmers who would like to grow soybeans in shorter growing season areas.”

CSTA is very excited about the prospect for new varieties of forages and soybeans to come to Canada from the United States and off shore. “We are confident that with a more timely and flexible variety registration system, international variety developers will be more interested in Canada,” said Mr. Entz. “This will complement the work that is being done by Canadian breeders, and farmers will be the beneficiaries.”

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