



## School of Integrative Plant Science

# Plant Breeding and Genetics Section

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## New York Seed Improvement Project (NYSIP)

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The New York Seed Improvement Project (NYSIP) operates within Cornell's Plant Breeding extension program and consists of two divisions:

### Foundation Division

The goal of this division is to develop foundation seed stocks from breeder seed as the base for further production. Plant breeders normally produce only small amounts (i.e., ounces or pounds) of new varieties of seed. The Foundation Division of NYSIP develops breeder seed at larger quantities (i.e., bushels or tons) required as planting stocks for Certified seed growers.

### Certification Division

Certified seed is recognized in national and state legislation as seed meeting high standards for genetic purity and quality. In New York, seed certification responsibilities are delegated to Cornell by the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. At Cornell, these responsibilities are assigned to the NY Seed Improvement Project (NYSIP) within the Departments of Plant Breeding and Genetics and Biometry. Trained inspectors from the project inspect seed fields to make sure they meet the high standards required for Certified seed. Harvested seed lots must pass high quality standards. Certified seed, labeled with its distinctive blue tag, provides a standard for seed quality for NY farmers.

### CONTACT US

#### NY Seed Improvement Program

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**New York Seed Improvement Project**  
Member of The Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies

Date

X  
X  
X

Dear XX:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the production of New York Certified Seed. In response to your request for information, I am enclosing a copy of our Seed Certification Standards. The standards are the minimum requirements for the production of Certified seed in New York. I am also enclosing copies of our current Crop directories. The directories give brief descriptions of the certification process and classes of certified seed, the varieties currently being certified in New York, and list the growers producing them.

The process of becoming a Certified Seed Producer is as follows:

1. **Apply for Admission to the Certified Seed Program.** Per New York General Seed Certification standards (1 NYCRR Part 96), only growers or firms approved by the certifying agency are eligible to produce certified seed. Approval is based on the suitability of the land for seed production, ownership or access to acceptable seed production and/or processing equipment and the background, training, experience, and integrity of the grower. This requirement helps to ensure that prospective seed producers have the expertise and equipment that is necessary for the successful production of Certified Seed. It also helps to protect the integrity of our Certification program.
2. **Obtain Approved Planting Stocks.** Certified seed may only be produced using approved planting stocks. Typically, approved stocks consist of Foundation class seed. Foundation seed is expensive and is available in limited quantities through each state's Foundation Seed Agency(ies) or from other specific sources. When applicable, approved planting stocks (e.g., Registered class seed) may be obtained from other seed growers and entered for certification.
3. **Apply for Certification.** Our office sends application forms and fee schedules to Certified seed growers at appropriate times during the growing season. Upon receipt of the completed application(s), our office will arrange for field inspections appropriate to the crop(s) in question. The timing, number, and type of inspection conducted will be specific to each crop type and will be performed with the aim of ensuring that the crop is produced in accordance with New York Certified Seed standards specific to the crop type being produced. These standards are strictly enforced, and are primarily concerned with genetic purity, freedom from certain weed species, and/or phytosanitary issues.
  - ***Genetic purity*** is of paramount importance in Seed Certification, and concerns not only contamination with other varieties of the same crop, but also contamination with other crops and/or noxious weeds. The practical effect of this is that sanitation assumes a far

more important status than it does in commercial crop production. For example, we expect that growers producing Certified Seed of small grains will use a commercial vacuum cleaner to thoroughly clean grain drills, combines, trucks, conveying equipment and storage bins. Growers may be required to rogue fields for off-types, varietal contamination, and/or noxious weeds, if required.

- In certain crops, *phytosanitary* (disease) concerns may require additional measures on the part of the seed producer. This is especially true for vegetatively propagated crops such as potatoes, where sanitation, roguing and rigid adherence to spray schedules (when applicable) assume a far more important status than they do in commercial tablestock or chip potato production.
4. **Apply for “Tags”**. In addition to the field inspection(s), most crops require additional inspection and/or testing before certification can be completed. For example, true-seeded crops have minimum germination and purity requirements that must be demonstrated by testing in an approved laboratory. Potatoes, on the other hand, are required to undergo a winter grow-out and must pass a shipping point (grade) inspection before certification is complete. Again, all of these requirements are detailed in our certification handbook. When all of the inspections and testing have been successfully completed, the seed crop is eligible to be sold as Certified seed, and is eligible to bear the “Blue tag” that is the universally recognized symbol of Certified seed. The grower then makes application for and will be supplied with tags, self-adhesive labels, or other indicia of official certification.

That, in a nutshell, is the certification process. If, after reviewing this letter and the enclosed information, you decide that you wish to become a Certified Seed Producer, please return a completed application to our office.

Prospective seed producers are encouraged to contact members of the New York Seed Improvement Cooperative, Inc (NYSIC). NYSIC serves in an advisory capacity to the Certification Program, and most of the seed producers listed in our Crop Directories are members of NYSIC. These producers can be an invaluable source of information to the new seed producer. When the opportunity exists, growers lacking experience in the production of Certified seed are also strongly encouraged to work with existing Certified seed growers prior to application for status as a Certified Seed Producer, e.g., as contract growers. The decision to contact NYSIC members, of course, is up to you. If it will be helpful to you, I will be willing to assist you in making contact with some Certified seed growers who are currently producing the crop(s) that you are interested in.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Phil Atkins

Encl. Certification Standards  
Application

*New York Seed Improvement Project*

**SEED PRODUCER/PROCESSOR APPLICATION**

Please complete the attached page and return to: New York Seed Improvement Project, 103C Leland Lab, Ithaca, NY 14853

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Farm/Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Telephone/Fax/Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Type of Operation:       Producer       Processor       Producer/Processor

6. Location of farm/business: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Years of experience in seed production and/or processing \_\_\_\_\_

8. List the kinds of seed to be produced and/or processed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Which classes of certified seed do you intend to produce and/or process?

Foundation       Registered       Certified

10. Names and addresses (with zip codes) of THREE REFERENCES who are familiar with your farm or seed firm and business operations:

\_\_\_\_\_

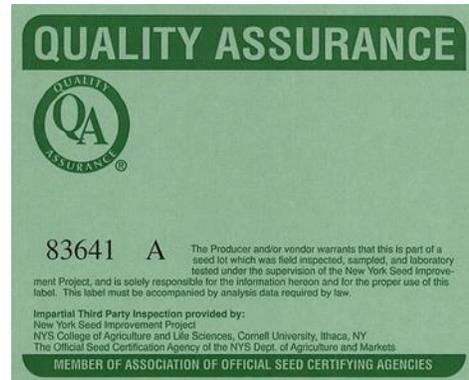
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby make application to produce and/or process certified seed in New York. It is understood that my membership is subject to approval by Certification Agency. I also understand that an inspection of your facilities may be required as part of this application. If accepted as a Certified Seed Producer and/or Processor, I agree to abide by the Federal and State Seed Laws and Certification procedures established by the New York College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University.

SIGNATURE & DATE \_\_\_\_\_

*New York Seed Improvement Project*  
**QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA)**  
**PROGRAM**



**PURPOSE:**

The NYSIP Quality Assurance Program (*QA*) provides a uniform and unbiased quality control system and marketing tool for crop seeds merchandised as varieties, hybrids, brands or blends.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. To provide coordinated, professional, unbiased field inspections, laboratory testing and post control grow outs for quality control in seed production, conditioning and marketing.
2. To provide an unbiased record system for use in meeting state and federal seed law requirements; for use in assessing and collecting royalties or research fees; and to help solve potential problems with customers and seed suppliers.
3. To provide a retail or wholesale marketing image of sound quality assurance for selling seed products not using the Seed Certification program.
4. To provide seed buyers with assurance that a designated seed product has met genetic purity standards related to a known description across lots and years of production; to facilitate product identification and to provide a liaison between genetic suppliers and producers.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

1. Participation in the *QA* program will be limited to seed producers that have been approved by the New York Seed Improvement Project.
2. Product eligibility:
  - a) Public varieties currently marketed as Certified Seed are not eligible to be labeled under NYSIP's *QA* program unless authorization is granted by the originating institution.
  - b) A "Quality Assurance Program Eligibility Form" must be completed for products initially entering NYSIP's *QA* program. These will be kept on file by NYSIP. The eligibility form requires that the following be provided:
    - i) An agronomic description of the product sufficient to allow for accurate and reliable field and seed evaluations.

- c) A declaration of origin of the product, including an affirmation that the customer is authorized to produce this product.

### **NYSIP QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) PROTOCOLS**

1. Applications for Field Inspection will be submitted to NYSIP, identifying the fields to be inspected. Applications must include proof of planting stock, along with an agronomic description of the plant and seed. Products will be accepted as described.
2. QA field inspections will be performed using the same field sampling system and field standards as is used for certified seed of the same crop kind. Inspection for genetic purity is based upon the description included on the “Quality Assurance Program Eligibility Form” The customer may request that additional factors be included in the inspection.
3. Minimum seed purity and germination standards are the same as those for certified seed of the same crop kind. Samples may be submitted for analysis at an approved laboratory when sampled under an existing compliance agreement for sampling certified seed.
4. When required, samples submitted to NYSIP will be placed in post control grow out tests for genetic purity evaluation.
5. **QA** labels will be available from NYSIP for seed meeting the **QA** field and laboratory protocols for genetic purity. The application process is the same as for certified seed. The labels shall be green in color and have printed on them the **QA** logo (a registered trademark) the words **Quality Assurance**; and Member of Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies. The **QA** label will be imprinted with kind, variety, brand, blend or hybrid designation. The label will also contain a lot number and may contain a producer number or designation and the phrase “variety not stated” if applicable. Analysis information will be printed on the label upon request.
6. Non-exclusive products must be labeled under variety-not-stated provisions of state and federal seed laws and identified with brand designations.
7. Bulk seed movement and sale protocols shall be the same as for New York Certified Seed.

## **ROUNDUP READY INSPECTION PROCEDURES**

### **1. QUALITY ASSURANCE CRITERIA**

- a) All planting stocks must meet criteria established by Monsanto Company.
- b) All seed production fields must be treated with a minimum of 32 ounces of Roundup Ultra herbicide per acre.
- c) Fields must be inspected from 7 to 17 days following the Roundup herbicide application.
- d) A random check must be made of 10 counts per 100 acres or less.
- e) At least 100 plants shall be examined per check and the average reported.
- f) At least 98% of the crop plants in the field must express complete tolerance to the Roundup herbicide treatment.
- g) Mature inspections are required and will be made when the leaves are yellow and dropping and hilum, pod and pubescence colors may be verified.

### **2. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

- a) Applications for Field Inspection must be filed with NYSIP immediately following planting.
- b) The NYSIP Quality Assurance Eligibility Form, providing a description of the variety and proof of seed source must be filed prior to field inspection.

### **3. VERIFICATION OF HERBICIDE APPLICATION**

- a) NYSIP's Notification of Herbicide Application Form must be filed for each field prior to inspection for tolerance to Roundup herbicide.
- b) Required information includes: Applicant's name; Contract Grower; Variety or Brand; Acreage; Field number; Product & rate applied; Date applied; and Name of applicator.

### **4. MATURE INSPECTIONS**

- a) Mature inspections of Roundup tolerant soybeans will be conducted during the normal pre-harvest inspection season.
- b) NYSIP standards require soybean inspections at mature hilum, pubescence and pod color.
- c) Quality Assurance crops and seed must meet the same genetic and mechanical standards required of New York Certified Seed.