

# CALIFORNIA CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION



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## About Us

The purpose of the California Crop Improvement Association (CCIA) is to provide seed certification service, a voluntary quality assurance program for the maintenance and increase of agronomic and vegetable crop seed. Each variety that is entered into this program has been evaluated for its unique characteristics such as pest resistance, adaptability, uniformity, quality, and yield. Seed production is closely monitored by CCIA to prevent out-crossing, weed, other crop and disease contamination that may negatively affect seed quality.

CCIA is a non-profit corporation, managed by an executive director who reports to an elected and representational [Board of Directors](#), on matters of policy and finance. Eight members of the Board are certified seed growers. The remaining members are composed of representatives from the UC Davis College of Agriculture, UC Cooperative Extension, CA Department of Food and Agriculture, CA Farm Bureau, CA Ag Commissioners Association, CA Seed Association, UC Davis Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis Seed Biotechnology Center, UC Davis Foundation Seed Program, and two Directors at Large which are also certified seed growers.

California Certified Seed is produced under strict standards established by the CCIA Board of Directors and the [Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies](#) (AOSCA). Seed certification is conducted with the supervision of the [California Agricultural Experiment Station](#), the [California Department of Food and Agriculture](#), [Cooperative Extension](#) and [County Agricultural Commissioners](#).

The California Crop Improvement Association is the official seed certifying agency in California as recognized by California Seed Law. In addition, when the United States became a participant in the international seed certification scheme administered by the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development](#) (OECD), CCIA became the designated authority to conduct the OECD program in California. The OECD is responsible for administering the seed certification program in 24 member countries and 16 non-member countries that participate in the scheme. All cereal, herbage and oil, and maize and sorghum seed exported to European Union countries must be produced under OECD guidelines.

Field inspections are coordinated during periods when distinct crop morphological characteristics, diseases and other important criteria are most noticeable. Field inspectors also look for weeds producing seed that may be virtually indistinguishable in appearance from crop seed.

Certification genetic purity standards are well-defined because when purity is compromised, insect and disease resistance, crop quality and uniformity can be reduced.

An additional seed quality characteristic that is monitored in certification is germination, with minimum requirements for certified seed ranging from 80-90% depending on crop species. Seed movement is monitored by CCIA from field harvest, through the condition plant, and in the bag. Seed samples are taken at the time of conditioning and are closely examined in the seed laboratory. Seed must meet minimum germination and purity standards. Purity is tested not only for inert, weed and other crop seed, but also for its true-to-type nature. Seed morphological characteristics are noted in variety description files and seed appearance is checked against what the breeder has described. Samples can be rejected if "off-type" seeds are found at a percentage that is greater than standards permit, as is occasionally the case with beans, cereals and sunflowers.

California Crop Improvement works closely as a partner in the seed industry and the seed grower to assist in the production of high quality, certified seed. The mission of CCIA is to engage in any activity that promotes the production, distribution and use of superior quality seed. Crop varieties today have

- Certificate Programs** » Seed Certification
- » Potato Certification
- » Disease Inspected
- » Identity Preserved
- Alfalfa Seed Stewardship
- » OECD Seed Scheme
- Members Only** » Crop Isolation Mapping
- » Apply for Certification
- » Update Company Profile
- Agriculture Comm.** » Review Applications
- » Access Administration
- Staff Only** » Administration

tremendously complex genotypes and advancements in genetics are occurring at rates unimagined just a few years ago. Because the assurance of genetic purity and quality contributes great value to seed, certified seed sells for a higher price than "common" seed, often returning greater profits to the grower and conditioner. Use of superior quality certified seed assures that the full genetic potential of a variety is uncompromised and available for the production of the highest quality crop yields.

#### **Additional history of seed certification in California**

**MEMBERSHIP:** Any person who grows certified seed in California, or any person who has an interest in seed certification may apply for regular membership in the Association. Regular members are allowed to vote for their district representative on the CCIA Board of Directors and to serve as district directors or directors-at-large on the Board. Regular members are also entitled to vote on any future changes to the articles of incorporation and on significant changes to the bylaws. The membership year runs concurrently with the seed application year from October 1 to September 30; membership is renewed annually. There is no fee for membership. You are not required to be a member of CCIA in order to participate as an applicant and/or grower of certified seed. After submitting the membership form you will receive the CCIA newsletter "Seed Notes" several times a year and will be contacted when director elections are held. [Membership Form](#).

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