

COWPEA

Vigna unguiculata

Seed Certification Standards in California

GENERAL STANDARDS -- The standards on this sheet are in part condensed and apply to cowpeas. For greater detail and additional provisions, see the General Standards.

PLANTING STOCK -- In most varieties Breeder seed must be planted to produce Foundation seed, Foundation seed must be planted to produce Registered seed, and Registered seed must be planted to produce Certified seed. In varieties where there is no Registered class, Foundation seed must be planted to produce Certified seed.

APPLICATION -- Applications should be submitted electronically on CCIA's website (<http://ccia.ucdavis.edu>) no later than three (3) weeks after planting. New applicants should contact the CCIA office for instructions.

FIELD ELIGIBILITY -- The land must not have grown cowpeas as the previous crop unless they were the same variety planted for certification and met the field inspection requirements for varietal purity.

ISOLATION -- Varieties need not be isolated, but all fields or portions of fields intended for certification must have a definite boundary such as a fence, ditch, roadway, levee, or barren strip at least ten (10) feet wide.

FIELD INSPECTION -- Each field intended for certification must be inspected prior to harvest. At least one inspection shall be made preferably during the mid-bloom stage and, in some cases, earlier and later inspections may be made.

Off-Types -- Every field should be rogued to remove any plants of another crop or variety. Varieties cannot always be differentiated at field inspection. When differences can be distinguished, the maximum mixture of other varieties, distinct off-types, and inseparable other crops permitted is as follows:

Foundation	Registered	Certified
1:10,000	1:2,000	1:1,000

Weeds -- Fields must be free of any prohibited noxious weeds. Restricted noxious weeds, and common weeds difficult to separate must be controlled. Prohibited and Restricted noxious weeds are listed in the California Seed Law/CA Code of Regulations/Sections 3854 and 3855.

Diseases -- Fields for certification must be free from bacterial blights and anthracnose.

Fields may be refused certification due to unsatisfactory appearance caused by weeds, poor growth, poor stand, disease, insect damage, and any other condition which prevents accurate inspection or creates doubt as to identity of the variety.

A field inspection report will be sent to the applicant. If the field is approved, a certification number will be assigned. This number must be on all containers of seed before they leave the field. It is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure his field has been inspected before it is harvested.

HARVESTING -- Harvesting is subject to the supervision of the County Agricultural Commissioner who must be contacted prior to harvest. Any seed moved out of the county for conditioning must be accompanied by an Intercounty Permit or Interstate Transfer issued by the Commissioner.

CONDITIONING AND SAMPLING -- Conditioning of seed for certification may be done only in facilities approved for this purpose by the California Crop Improvement Association. It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine if the plant is eligible before delivering seed for conditioning. Conditioning, sampling, reconditioning, and blending must be supervised by the County Agricultural Commissioner. Conditioning equipment must be free from contaminating seed to the satisfaction of the supervising inspector.

SEED INSPECTION - All seed must be sampled and tested after conditioning and the seed lot must meet or exceed seed certification standards for that crop. A seed lab using the Association of Official Seed Analyst "Rules for Testing" must test the sample. A Registered Seed Technologist must sign each lab analysis. In addition to AOSA rules, specific seed testing may be required to meet CCIA seed certification standards.

The conditioner is required to submit a 1,000 gram sample to the laboratory for analysis. In some instances, varietal identity cannot be determined by visual seed inspections. Seed must be well screened and graded, bright in color, of good appearance and meet the following standards:

Pure Seed	99.00% (Minimum)
Inert Matter	1.00% (Maximum)
Foreign Material	0.50% (Maximum)
Splits and Cracks	1.00% (Maximum)
Badly Discolored	0.50% (Maximum)
Chewing Insect Damage	0.50% (Maximum)
Other Crop Seed	
Foundation	None
Registered	0.05% (Maximum)
Certified	0.10% (Maximum)
Other Varieties*	
Foundation	None

Registered, Certified	1 seed per 2 pounds (Maximum)
Weed Seed	None
Germination and Hard Seed	85.00% (Minimum)
The total of all impurities shall not exceed 2%.	

RETAINED SAMPLES – The conditioner must also retain in storage a 1,000 gram sample of each lot certified. These shall be maintained for one year and be made available for any CCIA audits and reference testing.

FINAL CERTIFICATION AND TAGGING -- If the seed sample meets all standards a seed inspection report is issued. Before certification is complete, however, each container must have an official tag or label attached. Certified seed may be sold to a grower in bulk without tagging if a properly filled out Bulk Sale Certificate accompanies the shipment. The tags and Bulk Sale Certificates are issued by the California Crop Improvement Association to the County Agricultural Commissioner who supervises their attachment.

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