

California Crop Improvement Association

Frank G. Parsons Seed Certification Center
University of California
One Shields Avenue
Davis, California 95616-8541

Phone: (530) 752-0544
FAX: (530) 752-4735
ccia.ucdavis.edu

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Subject: Variety amendment acceptance

To: Breeding Companies and Seed Production Companies

California Crop Improvement Association (CCIA) is in the process of reviewing its standard operational procedures in order to bring them up to date and into conformity with the policies and procedures followed by the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA). This review has identified our procedures for approving amendments to variety descriptions as an area requiring attention. Amendments to variety descriptions, including variant tolerance, have in the past been approved without formal review or consideration by the original certification authority.

Effective immediately, CCIA will require that the certification agency or review board that originally approved the variety accept the amendment before CCIA will recognize the amendment. If the variety was approved through CCIA's Certification Technical Committee (CTC), the amendment and supporting experimental data must be submitted to CCIA/CTC for review. The CTC will determine if the changes are substantiated and make a recommendation to the CCIA Board of Directors that the amendment be accepted. For example, variant tolerance amendments must provide credible data to support the request changing the frequency of variants from what was reported in the original variety described.

This change will bring CCIA into conformity with the procedures of AOSCA, which state, "Characteristics subsequently identified in the variety which were unknown or unobserved at the time of variety release may be later described and designated as variants by the breeder if shown to be present in the variety as released." A variant, as defined by AOSCA, is:

Any seed or plant which (a) is distinct within the variety but occurs naturally in the variety, (b) is stable and predictable with a degree of reliability comparable to other varieties of the same kind, within recognized tolerances, when the variety is reproduced or reconstituted, and (c) was originally a part of the variety as released. A variant is not an off-type.

Amendments submitted and approved prior to October 1, 2008 will not be impacted by this change in policy. All amendments requested since October 2008 (the beginning of our 2009 crop year) will receive review prior to acceptance. Since this is a new policy, CCIA will conditionally allow the variant tolerance amendments that were approved by CCIA between October 2008 and January 1, 2009 for certified production to be harvested in 2009 crop year. However, if the amendments submitted between October 2008 and January 1, 2009 are not approved by the CTC, they will not be recognized for seed produced after the 2009 crop year.

Sincerely,



Larry Teuber, Executive Director