

ALFALFA STANDARDS

(As of February 2017)

The General Seed Certification Standards, as adopted by the Montana Seed Growers Association, are basic and together with the following specific standards constitute standards for certification of alfalfa (*Medicago stiva*) seed.

An application must be made for all spring seeded alfalfa in the establishment year (seedling year) and certification of fall seeded alfalfa must be applied for the following spring.

I. Land Requirements

- A. The land must be free of volunteer alfalfa plants, as determined by field inspection the year of seeding and establishment.
- B. Do not apply manure or other contaminating material to the land in preparation for planting of all certified classes or during the productive life of the stand.
- C. A crop of the same kind must not have been grown or planted on the land for four, three, and two years prior to stand establishment for producing the Foundation, Registered and Certified classes, respectively.

II. Isolation

Certified seed fields must maintain the following minimum isolation distances from fields of any other variety or fields of the same variety not meeting genetic purity requirements for certification.

Class	Fields of < 5 acres	Fields of > 5 acres	Certified fields of same variety
--- Isolation in Feet ---			
Foundation	1320	1320	330
Registered	660	330	165
Certified	330	165*	15

***Exception:** Isolation requirements for the certified class are based on the size of the certified field and the percentage of the field within 165 feet of another variety of alfalfa. If 10 percent of the field is within the isolation zone, that part of the field must not be harvested as certified seed. The isolation zone is that area calculated by multiplying the length of the common border(s) with other varieties of alfalfa by the average width of the certified alfalfa field falling within the 165 foot isolation distance requirements. In those cases where a portion of the field meets isolation requirements, a clear line of demarcation shall be established between the certified and non-certified portion of the field.

III. Field Standards - General

- A. A portion of a field may be certified if the area to be certified is clearly defined. Portions of a field not meeting certification isolation requirements must not be harvested as any class of certified seed.
- B. Fields rejected for certification for reasons other than genetic purity may be eligible for recertification and inspection the following year provided the cause of rejection is removed.
- C. Volunteer plants in alfalfa will be cause for rejection or reclassification of the generation produced.

IV. Field Standards - Specific

Ratio of Plants - Maximum Other Crop & Varieties Permitted			
Factor	Fdn	Reg	Cert
*Other varieties	1:1.000	1:400	1:100
Red Clover	None	None	1:200
Sweetclover	None	5 plants/acre	10 plants/acre

*Other varieties will be considered to include off-type plants and plants that can be differentiated from the variety that is being inspected.

V. Length of Stand

- A. Limitation on the age of stand and certified seed classes though which a given variety may be multiplied both inside and outside its region of adaptation shall be specified by the originator or his designee. Certified seed production outside the region of adaptation shall not exceed 6 years if not otherwise specified by the originator, or his designee.

VI. Field Inspection

- A. Inspections must be made on seedlings (new planting before August 1) and each year that a seed crop is to be produced. Applications must be submitted prior to May 25 of each year.
- B. It is the grower's responsibility to ensure that crops have been inspected prior to harvest. Crops cut, swathed or harvested prior to being field inspected are not eligible for certification.

VII. Eligibility

- A. Only Foundation and Certified classes are produced in Montana, unless requested by a plant breeder.
 - 1. Breeder seed must be planted for foundation seed production unless otherwise specified by seed contractor/owner.
 - 2. Foundation seed must be planted for the production of certified seed.
 - 3. The certified class is not eligible for planting for re-certification.
- B. Public varieties - Foundation seed for all varieties will be allocated by the Foundation Seed Stocks Committee, Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology Department, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT. Contact the Foundation Seed Program Manager (406) 994-5687 or a request form can be found at <http://plantsciences.montana.edu/foundationseed/>.

VIII. Preparation of Seed for Final Certification

- A. Cleaning
 - 1. Clean all seed at an approved plant authorized by the MSGA. A list of authorized cleaning plants is available through the MSGA office, or website www.mtseedgrowers.org.
 - 2. Seed delivered to the cleaning plant by grower must be identified by variety and certification number. A copy of the grower's Application for Certification or field inspection form will suffice.
- B. Seed Sample for Grade Determination
 - 1. Submit a cleaned, ½ pound seed sample labeled with grower name, cleaning plant name, certification number, and lot number to the Montana Seed Growers Association office for "Certified Grade Determination".
 - 2. Use official MSGA seed sample bags obtained by calling the MSGA office.
 - 3. If multiple lots from the same fields are harvested and cleaned separately, a sample for purity and germination must be submitted for each clean lot.
- C. Tag orders should be noted on the "Conditioner's Report". Tags will be issued upon receipt of production fees or at the discretion of MSGA.

IX. Seed Standards

Factor		Fdn %	Reg %	Cert %
Pure Seed	min.	99.50	99.50	99.50
Inert Matter	max.	0.50	0.50	0.50
Total Weed Seed	max.	0.10	0.20	0.30
Noxious Weed Seed ^{1/}				
Prohibited	max.	None*	None*	None*
Restricted ^{1/}	max.	None*	9/1b**	18/1b**
Other Crop Seed	max.	0.10	0.10	0.10
Other Varieties	max.	0.10	0.25	1.00
Sweetclover	max.	9/lb	45/lb	90/lb
Total Germination	min.	80.00	80.00	90.00
(Germination plus hard/dormant seeds)				

^{1/} Curly Dock and Buckhorn plantain only (See General Standards for noxious weed seed list).

* None - means none found during the normal inspection procedures.
None is not a guarantee to mean the lot inspected is free of the factor.

** Singly or combined.