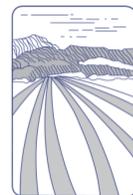




February 20, 2019



To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to inform you of changes to guidelines for the reporting of soil in seed lots based on updated guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Plant Protection and Quarantine program (USDA APHIS PPQ). USDA APHIS PPQ has recently clarified their policies related to inspection methods concerning soil. Based on this clarification, any other guidelines, prior practices or standards not directly conforming with the USDA Export Program Manual are no longer allowed. This means that the guidelines that the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) developed in 2013, in collaboration with USDA APHIS PPQ, the Washington State Department of Agriculture and the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, are no longer in effect.

Effective March 4, 2019, submitted samples from seed lots destined for counties that prohibit soil or are “silent” on soil will no longer pass the ODA Pest and Disease (P&D) or P&D plus soil inspections if any soil is found during visual inspection. This is in accordance with the USDA Export Program Manual. If a country specifies a soil tolerance, samples will be held to that standard. These standards apply to any organization that offers visual phytosanitary inspections for seed, not just the ODA Plant Health Laboratory.

Due to these updates from USDA APHIS PPQ, the ODA will only offer the P&D plus soil inspection service. We will no longer offer P&D only inspections. Any request for a P&D on or after March 4, 2019 will be treated as a P&D plus soil and will be invoiced accordingly. In addition, due to updated guidance from USDA, we will no longer offer updates for samples.

The ODA would like to clarify that any service we offer related to soil is a visual inspection. While it may be referred to colloquially as a “soil test,” we do not do any analysis to determine if soil is present in a sample. We only do a visual inspection. Soil percentage may be reported if requested by a customer or required by an importing country.

To comply with the USDA APHIS PPQ guidance, the ODA will no longer be able to issue phytosanitary certificates for seed lots going to countries that prohibit soil or are “silent” on soil without an inspection report indicating that no soil was found. For countries that specify a soil tolerance, an inspection report indicating that the lot falls below the accepted tolerance will be required.

If you have any questions, please contact Elizabeth Savory (esavory@oda.state.or.us) at (503) 986-4570.

