

# Organic Agriculture Protection Fund

... Box 1, Lisieux, Saskatchewan, S0H 2R0 ...

## **Media Backgrounder -- Overview of the pedigreed seed system**

Farmers depend on seed growers to provide them with clean seed of a recognized variety grown to certain pedigree. Most of the following are excerpts that can be found at the CSGA website: [www.seedgrowers.ca](http://www.seedgrowers.ca) The Canadian Seed Growers Association (CSGA) is the sole seed pedigreering agency for most agricultural crops in Canada's seed system. It is recognized and respected around the globe because it ensures mechanical purity and provides an audit trail that guarantees varietal identity and genetic purity.

The objectives of the CSGA include "To ensure, and certify to, the varietal purity of seed produced by its members and to maintain the pedigree thereof." The CSGA mission is to advance the seed industry by: promoting the benefits of pedigreed seed throughout the seed industry and to end-users; advocating the use of the seed certification system as an integral part of identity preserved and quality assurance programs; and to provide seed crop certification by: Developing genetic purity standards and regulations for pedigreed seed crop production; Maintaining an accountable and verifiable seed certification system; and Certifying the varietal purity of pedigreed seed crops.

**Glossary**(from the Regulations and Procedures for Pedigreed Crop Production" known as 'Circular 6'):

**Canola**: Cultivars of Rapeseed which are classed as Canola type because of the characteristic of low erucic acid and low glucosinolate content in the seed.

**Class** (of seed): Names given to the generations of Pedigreed seed as Breeder Seed, Select Seed, Foundation Seed, Registered Seed and Certified Seed approved by a recognized crop certification agency. (note: for canola there is no Registered pedigree)

**Germplasm**: Refers to plant materials that serve as a basis of crop improvement or a reservoir of genes for research. The total hereditary makeup of organisms.

**Breeder Seed**: Seed recognized by the CSGA as being seed of a variety (cultivar) that has been produced by a recognized plant breeder or a plant breeder responsible for the maintenance of the variety under conditions which have ensured that the specific traits of the variety have been maintained. It is the source for the initial and recurring increases of seed for the Pedigreed classes.

**Foundation Seed**: The approved progeny of Breeder or Select Seed produced by seed growers authorized by the Association for the production of seed of this class, and which has been so managed to maintain its specific genetic identity and purity. The seed is graded by a person authorized by Ag Canada. Foundation is the highest class of seed of commerce.

**Certified Seed**: The approved progeny of Breeder, Select, Foundation or Registered Seed produced by seed growers and so managed to maintain genetic identity and purity at a high level. It is the class of seed recommended to be used for commercial crop production. The seed is graded by Agriculture Canada or by Authorized Establishments under the Canada Seeds Act and Regulations.

**Cross-pollinate**: Fertilization by pollen from another plant. Cross fertilization.

**Genetic purity**: Trueness to type or variety, usually referring to seed.

**Isolation Requirements**: Regulatory: the distance required to isolate Pedigreed seed crops from other crops which may be a source of pollen or seed contamination. Used to maintain genetic purity of crops by isolation from other pollen sources.

**Open pollinated**: Seed produced as a result of natural pollination as opposed to hybrid seed produced as a result of a controlled pollination.

**Outcross**: The plant resulting from pollen of a different variety of the same species.

**Pedigreed crop**: A crop for which the CSGA, based on a crop inspection report, has issued a Crop Certificate which indicates that the crop has been granted Breeder, Select, Foundation, Registered or Certified crop status.

**Variety** (cultivar): Denotes an assemblage of cultivated individual plants which is distinguished by any characters (morphological, physiological, cytological, chemical or other) significant for the purpose of agriculture and retains its distinguishing features with reproduced sexually or asexually. Is uniform, stable and reproducible.