



COLORADO

Department of Agriculture

Written Testimony

HB20-1184 Sunset Colorado Seed Act

Program Overview:

The Colorado Seed Act prevents the distribution and use of poor quality seed through the regulation of labeling, labelers, and the sellers of seed for propagation. The program also prohibits the sale of and the accidental spread of noxious weeds. The program primarily serves agricultural/horticultural producers, gardeners and public and private land managers. There are approximately 1,300 licensees under the program.

The program regulates seed quality by:

- Verification of truth in labeling via seed sampling and testing in collaboration with the CSU Seed Lab.
 - The program samples seed warehouses and labeling facilities targeting commodities that are high risk for transmission of noxious weed seeds and ag industries such as industrial hemp where education and attention are necessary.
 - 250 seed samples are collected and analyzed by the CSU seed lab each year for a fee of \$ 50,000; non-compliant seed lots have decreased from 15% to less than 5% over the past 4 years.
- Inspection of label expiration dates at 400 retail distribution sites annually
- Investigating an average of 10 complaints and/or requests for arbitration annually to protect the producer as well as the integrity of the seed industry in Colorado.

Summary of the Bill:

The Bill allows for the continuation of the Seed Act which is important because seeds are the foundation of agriculture. Technology has modernized much of farming's day-to-day operations, but without a steady supply of high-quality seed, yields and crop quality would be greatly decreased, and negative economic impact would result. The regulatory structure of labeling remains in line with Federal and Uniform State Seed Language, and the arbitration provision and requirements for Seed beans planted within the State remain unchanged.

The bill also increases the cap on registration fees so that the program may collect sufficient fees to cover the entire program cost. In previous years, the fee cap resulted in insufficient revenue necessitating additional funding from the general fund. With this change the program will be fully funded by fees.

Department Position:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony. The Colorado Department of Agriculture asks for your support of HB20-1184 and urges a yes vote.