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To: All Licensed Seed Processors & Packers

July 2021

PROVISION OF TRAINING TO UPGRADE CURRENT LICENSED SAMPLERS TO ISTA SAMPLERS

All certified seed, including pre-basic and basic, now needs to be OECD certified and accompanied by an ISTA Orange International Certificate (OIC) to be exported outwith Great Britain (depending on the importing country requirements).

An OIC can only be issued by an ISTA Accredited Laboratory, with the sample taken by a sampler under the control/authority of the laboratory. SASA's Official Seed Testing Station is the ISTA Accredited Laboratory in Scotland. ISTA Samplers are currently located at both SASA and in RPID Area Offices and will normally be able to respond to requests for sampling within 1 working day*. However, in order to provide maximum flexibility for companies who intend to export seed outside of Great Britain, if there is demand, SASA will be offering ISTA sampler training to current Licensed Seed Samplers later this year.

Note that the ISTA sampler training is only available to Seed Samplers who hold a Seed Sampler's Licence with the Sampling function enabled. Seed Samplers who hold a licence without the sampling function enabled (formerly known as Restricted Status Seed Samplers) cannot be offered training to upgrade their licences. They would be required to undertake the full sampler course – normally run in November each year.

The current cost to have an official sample drawn is £56.75, one sample is sufficient to cover both the phytosanitary certificate and the OIC, and as stated below, plant health rules require that only an official sampler may draw a phytosanitary sample.

The requirements to become an ISTA Seed Sampler are:

1. Candidates must already be a Licensed Seed Sampler
2. Samplers must attend an additional training course and successfully complete a theory and practical examinations (course content shown below).
3. Samplers must bring sampling spears and dividers to the course. These will be checked and calibrated by OSTS and a label applied validating it 'fit for use/purpose' for a 12 month period, until the next ISTA sampler audit.

   Only this equipment can be used for ISTA Sampling. If candidates do not bring the equipment, they will not be able to gain their ISTA sampling certificate.
4. Ongoing monitoring and auditing of samplers will be required by the OSTS to ensure the OSTS meets the accreditation requirements of ISTA. This will be required annually and will require attendance at SASA to take samples for monitoring purposes, sampling equipment also must be checked and calibrated annually.

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5. Samplers must take manual samples only and the use of automatic sampler is not permitted for ISTA Sampling.
6. After sampling, the sample must be sent to the OSTS for testing.

The ISTA Sampling Course Content:

- ISTA sampling principles – accreditation, training and auditing
- ISTA sampling requirements - ISTA rules, equipment, sampling intensity
- Completing documentation - sampling and testing forms
- ISTA seed lot requirements and submitted sample weights
- OECD certification
- Written and practical examination
- Use and calibration of divider

Note: This training and any OSTS approval does not permit successful candidates to sample to allow the issue of a phytosanitary export certificate. This activity can only be performed by Official Samplers.

Costs: Please contact seeds@sasa.gov.scot for full details of costs of training, annual monitoring and renewal.

In order to gauge interest in SASA holding an ISTA Sampler Upgrade course in 2021 would interested companies or individuals please contact Bob Sunter at seeds@sasa.gov.scot

OECD Labels

Please note that Scottish Government are currently considering proposals which would enable Scottish Licensed Professional Seed Operators to print labels on their own premises. Further details will be provided as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

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