

EDITORIAL

AS SEED TESTING ORGANIZATIONS, we spend a lot of effort in support of the AOSA Rules for Testing Seeds. In fact, most of our activity revolves around making the Rules, improving upon them and promoting them. The purpose of the Rules is to standardize the methods so that results from seed testing performed on the same seed lot at various laboratories may be compared. This is critical for the labeling and movement of seeds. The greater seed industry depends upon this consistency to be in place. Since the vast majority of seed moves without issue, the importance of using the Rules may be unnoticed by many in and out of agriculture.

The methods codified in the Rules were not arrived at arbitrarily. They were not happened upon lackadaisically. Rules that are arbitrary or unintentional lack credibility even if they might be correct. A pattern of well-planned investigation and research lends the Rules a strong foundation against which the rains of adversity have little effect. The AOSA Rules for Testing Seeds are purposefully researched and tested until they are shown to produce results that are precise, accurate and repeatable. Behind every Rule and every Rule Change Proposal is a huge amount of work. Each test might have been repeated hundreds or even thousands of times within a single laboratory to verify outcomes. These exercises are repeated across multiple varieties or selections of each species. Once it is proven within a lab, the protocols and samples are sent to other laboratories to validate the test. Each of those laboratories performs the tests as well and demonstrates whether the tests may be performed. Data are gathered and analyzed for variability. If the results are accurate and precise, the Rule may be submitted for consideration by the associations. Over the years, as more and more research has been done, the technical aspects of the Rules have increased. This is evidenced by the addition of tolerance tables, more specific requirements for dormancy breaking, amplification of Rules around new species, etc.

Our point is that there is a tremendous amount of research carried out in laboratories in both organizations and even outside the organizations that supports development of the Rules. While the AOSA Rules for Testing Seeds is a good representation of the sum of all the research that has taken place over the years, it is not very good at showcasing new research. To showcase current and ongoing research is the role of the Seed Technology journal. The Journal reviews and publishes scholarly works submitted by researchers that work in the fields of botany, seed physiology, taxonomy, pathology, genetics, molecular biology, biochemistry, statistics and others, that may not affect the Rules today, but could have an impact on them in the future. The Journal is the mouthpiece of those that do research in seeds. It is the vehicle for scientific exchange between all these disciplines, resulting in the finest and best the world can offer in the form of Rules. It ensures that the Rules never become stagnant. They remain a living canon, dynamic yet founded upon precepts developed through science. It is impossible to have reasonable and sound Rules without research. The Journal is the repository of the research upon which the Rules rest.

We encourage you to support the Journal and the science behind it. Please donate to the Journal, promote its usage and encourage others to do so as well. We thank you in advance for that support.

David Stimpson, President
Society of Commercial Seed Technologists

Randy Crowl, President
Association of Official Seed Analysts