

Certification Deadlines

Continued

between Butler and Church. When the applications are complete, they should be returned in person or by mail to the Extension office. Tags, bulk sales certificates, or invoices from the seed planted are to be submitted with each application. The invoice must include variety, pounds sold, class of certified seed, certification number, and lot number. Applications submitted after the deadline may be accepted, but late application fees will be billed by the CCIA. So, it does pay to submit the applications on time.

Applications will not be accepted when a crop has matured beyond the point where an accurate field inspection can be made. The acceptance of applications after the deadline date is always contingent on whether field inspection can still be scheduled. It is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure the field has been inspected before it is harvested.

Certification Standards

The field, or any portion of the field, to be certified must always have a definite boundary such as a fence, ditch, levee, road, or barren strip. Stakes alone will not be recognized as an adequate boundary unless they are steel fence posts or heavy wooden posts placed at 200-foot intervals and tall enough to be seen above the crop.

Fields must be free from prohibited noxious weeds, and sweet clover may not exceed 10 plants per acre. Restricted noxious weeds must be controlled, and any such infestation (including common weeds that are difficult to separate, such as dodder and johnsongrass) will be described on the field inspection report. Every field should be rogued to remove any plants of another crop or variety. Some of the other noxious weeds

that must be controlled are Russian knapweed, white horsenettle, alkali mallow, johnsongrass, and field bindweed. With respect to dodder, a field will be inspected and passed, but only if there is a control program for dodder established.

Isolation requirements for certified seed production are based on the size of the certified field and the percentage of the field within 165 feet of another variety of alfalfa (see the enclosed worksheet for calculating isolation acreage). If 10 percent or less of the certified field is within the 165 foot isolation zone, no isolation is required. If more than 10 percent of the field is within the isolation zone, that part of the field must not be harvested as certified seed. This requirement is based on the assumption that seed from the entire field will be mechanically mixed during harvest and cleaning operations, and in this process will dilute the small percentage of off-type seed which may be produced in the area closest to adjacent fields of different varieties.

The isolation strip may be bare ground, planted to another crop, or it may contain alfalfa of the same variety (planted with seed eligible to produce certified seed). If alfalfa is planted in the isolation area, it may be cut for hay or be harvested as **uncertified** seed, but there must be a definite boundary separating the area. The boundary may consist of a disked strip (one or two rows out), a ditch, steel posts every 100 feet, or something equally obvious. This does **NOT** include a few stakes or a mowed strip. **The boundary must be es-**

tablished prior to field inspection, or reinspection will be necessary and a fee charged for the service.

Any scattered alfalfa plants growing along roadsides or waste areas within 165 feet of the field must also be removed. These plants will be considered as an isolation problem if they are a substantial source of pollen because it must be assumed that they are volunteers or another variety.

As of 1988, certified alfalfa seed production is limited to stands not exceeding six years of age. Replanting to thicken a stand or to fill in skips is now permitted in row plantings. Replanted areas must be noted on the renewal application and a foundation seed tag from the planting stock must accompany the renewal application.

Field Inspection

Fields will be inspected during the full bloom stage (usually the first week of July). It generally takes two weeks to complete field inspections in the county. Fields may be refused certification due to poor growth, poor stand, disease, insect damage, and any other condition which prevents accurate inspection or creates doubt as to the identity of the variety. If the cause for rejection can be corrected, the applicant may make corrections and request reinspection, for which a fee is charged. If you would like to accompany the inspector during the inspection of your fields, please inform the CCIA office or your local farm advisor.

Isolation must be established before the field will pass inspection for certification. Save the inspectors a second trip to your field and save yourself reinspection fees by having the isolation area marked before the first week in July!