

## **Comments to Brazil Ordinance No. 59: Importation of Small Quantities of Seed**

Brazil Department Sanidad Vegetal

The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) offers the following comments to Brazil DSV proposed Ordinance No. 59: Criteria and procedures for the Importation of Regulated Articles for Scientific Research or Experimental Purposes:

### General Comments:

- The importation of seed for scientific or experimental purposes is usually done in small to very small quantities (hundreds to several thousand seeds) which poses challenges to meet traditional phytosanitary requirements such as destructive seed testing which often requires large numbers of seed for the test, leaving either no or too few seeds left for research and breeding. In addition many importations of small quantities will pose zero or extremely low phytosanitary risk because they are either never planted (processed and evaluated for protein and oil content, etc.) or are planted in enclosed environmental growth chambers or confined greenhouses and are never planted outdoors. Phytosanitary certificates should not be required for small seed quantities intended for this purpose; rather, special import permits can be issued which specify conditions for use of such seed for these purposes.
- Special import permits should be issued for importation of larger quantities of seed that are being imported for open air breeding and trial purposes. Specific requirements for maintaining such seed under conditions of post entry quarantine (PEQ) could be specified.
- Testing of samples taken from small lots when statistically valid samples are required (ISPM 31) may result in the destruction of an unacceptably large proportion of the lot. Where sampling is required, we propose that an official sample accompany the shipment rather than taking seed from the lot at the port of entry. For these situations, equivalent or alternative means of sampling should be considered such as a percentage (less than or equal to 10 percent, for example), reduced sample size, such as sample size maximized at the number of seeds sampled being ten times the number of mother plants from which the seeds have been harvested (e.g. 20,000 seeds have been harvested from 50 plants; the maximum sample is 500 seeds), or testing plant material from mother plants (e.g. plant tissue or immature seeds that are still attached to the plant). Such testing could be performed in the country of origin prior to shipment.
- We are concerned that the procedures as outlined in this normative instruction will significantly slow down the importation of breeding and trial seed thereby increasing the possibility that such seed may not enter the country in time to perform the necessary breeding and evaluations. Timeframes for review and processing need to be established and implemented to help facilitate entry of seed within timeframes needed to perform breeding and evaluations.

- Issuance of blanket permits to companies and research institutions for importation of seed for scientific and breeding purposes for periods of up to three years should be considered. Therefore, if an importer plans to send, for example, 100 lines of seed for breeding programs or field trials, this could be covered under one permit rather than having to obtain 100 separate permits.

## Specific Comments:

- Article 6, No. 4: A definition or clarification is needed for what seed species are on the PVIA list; is this a list of registered varieties that are exempted from these import requirements?
- Article 10 No. 2: Time frame is of concern. If not specified, research and breeding material could be held up indefinitely.
- Article 12: Needs a specified period of time for completion of necessary tasks.
- Article 14: Does this mean that the same material could be sent multiple times over the year?