

Canadian Seed Growers' Association

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Writing this letter is bittersweet as my tenure as President comes to a close. Working alongside you these past two years has been an honour and a privilege.*

It's no secret that seed growers and seed stakeholders play a vital role in the Canadian agriculture sector by producing high-quality seed, fostering innovation, supporting farmers, driving economic growth, promoting sustainability, and contributing to innovation.

Each of you brings a unique perspective, expertise, and experience to our collective journey, enriching our association with diversity and vitality. Whether you are a seasoned seed veteran with decades of experience or a new grower eager to make your mark, your efforts are key to ensuring our sector's continued success and resilience in the face of evolving challenges, regulatory changes, and a wealth of opportunities.

The past year has seen many exciting things happen for the Association. We joined together for our first in-person AGM in three years in beautiful St. John's, Newfoundland. We launched our successful #ChooseCertifiedSeed campaign and the CSGA Health program. We completed Phase One of our digital seed tags project, made major updates to the Canadian Breeder Seed Requirements manual, and began issuing digital badges to those with CSGA designations to help you market your skills.

Of course, we continued our leading journey within the Seed Regulatory Modernization review, promoting and educating on our vision of CSGA serving as the national designated authority to manage all functions of seed certification on behalf of government under the Canadian Food Inspection Agency oversight.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to each of you for your unwavering support and dedication to our shared mission. Together, we have achieved remarkable progress, and I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for CSGA and the Canadian seed sector.

As I pass the presidential gavel on to Glenn Logan, I know that our Association will continue to thrive and flourish under his guidance. Glenn's experience, vision, and passion for seed will continue to propel us forward and build upon our strong foundation and our bright future.

Sincerely,

**Dale Connell**  
President



\* Audited Financial Statements for 2023–2024 and Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting are available online at [seedgrowers.ca](https://seedgrowers.ca).

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Throughout the year, we've worked hard to deliver on our priorities as Canada's national seed crop certification authority and participate in key government initiatives to support our vision for a modern seed sector.

I am proud to share some of our exciting updates and initiatives that reflect our commitment to innovation and delivering a trusted and efficient seed crop certification program.

We started the fiscal year with the fantastic news of being approved for funding under Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) AgriAssurance Program. The project was funded under the National Industry Association (NIA) Component, which supports national-level projects to help the sector develop and adopt systems, standards, and tools to support Canadian agricultural and agri-food products.

Under the AAFC project, CSGA was able to accelerate its digitalization efforts, enable new value-added opportunities, modernize CSGA's Breeder seed regulations, and promote the value of Certified seed.

We also launched our digital seed tags pilot project for Breeder and Select seed early in the year. As outlined in our Seed Regulatory Modernization (SRM) policy recommendation of a Digital Single Window, digitizing all seed certification services can expedite data access, provide value-added traceability opportunities for the seed sector and its customers, and improve monitoring and regulatory oversight of the sector.

It was an incredibly busy year for CSGA within Seed Regulatory Modernization (SRM). We have reached the first major milestone in the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) SRM consultation process with the release of a pre-consultation survey and a first look at the various Task Team recommendations for potential changes to the seed system. We were pleased to see a strong alignment between the Task Team recommendations and our vision for a modern seed system.

The Association provided a fulsome Q&A Framing Document outlining our survey answers and rationale for key stakeholders to use as a guide for their survey participation.

The feedback in the CFIA's published "What We Heard" report following the pre-consultation survey encouraged us. It included strong support for maintaining a national variety registration system and CSGA's role as Canada's national seed crop certification authority.

While SRM has consumed much of our thoughts, we have not slowed down in our mission as Canada's national seed crop certification authority to prioritize incorporating new technologies and creating and implementing internationally harmonized, science-based standards.

CSGA takes pride in its standards development process. We're always striving to keep it modern, inclusive, and adaptable to the sector's evolving needs. Our approach is efficient and welcomes broad participation from stakeholders. Our public consultation process allows more voices and opinions to be included in the development of seed standards.

CSGA was hired as a project advisor on the OECD Seed Schemes digitalization project, which looks to future-proof this international framework through digitalization. This greatly complements the work we've done in the sector related to modernization.

As outlined throughout the year in Seed Scoop's "CSGA In Action," the CSGA team has literally been all over the world promoting awareness of the Association's programs and services, educating on key policy issues and sharing our expertise and vision for a next-generation seed system.

Of course, our Annual General Meeting 2023 was back in person after three years of virtual meetings. The presentations and panel discussions were top-notch. Thank you again to everyone who joined us in St. John's, Newfoundland.

I sincerely thank our exceptional staff, dedicated board and committee members, and grassroots membership. Your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts have been the cornerstone of our success throughout this year.

I look forward to 2024 and beyond. With our strong vision and commitment to it, we are leading the sector towards a brighter future.

**Doug Miller**  
Executive Director



## ABOUT CSGA

### WHAT WE DO

Founded in 1904, the Canadian Seed Growers' Association (CSGA) is Canada's national seed crop certification authority, delegated under the federal Seeds Act and Seeds Regulations to deliver Canada's seed crop certification system. CSGA develops and manages certification standards and procedures to ensure the varietal purity and genetic identity of pedigreed seed crops and Breeder and Select status seed for all agricultural field crops, except potatoes.

CSGA is a not-for-profit organization governed by a Board of seed grower Directors, provincial government Advisors, academic advisors, and other sector experts. We work closely with our branches across Canada and the Canadian government to fulfill our pedigreed seed certification mandate.



CSGA **delivers a national seed crop certification mandate**, certifying over 1.2 million acres or more than 70 different crop kinds annually.



Through seed crop certification, CSGA **provides reliable assurance of seed quality and genetic identity**. Certified seed provides Canadian farmers, value chains and food manufacturers with assured seed quality and genetic identity they can trust.



CSGA **works closely with the sector to ensure standards are updated, internationally harmonized, and incorporate new technology**. We foster trust, traceability, and transparency through the seed crop certification process—from the production of initial Breeder seed through the pedigreed generations to Certified seed.



As Canada's largest seed organization, we **represent 2,400 Canadian seed-growing enterprises**, ranging in size from small family seed farms to large seed companies.



CSGA **supports seed technology innovation and procedures and policies** that support the Canadian seed certification system domestically and abroad. As a country that relies heavily on global trade, we represent and support Canada's interests at the Association of Official Seed Certification Agencies (AOSCA) and support the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) at the OECD Seed Schemes.



CSGA **provides professional development services** to increase the sector's knowledge and skill set, accredit seed growers, and provide professional recognition for plant breeders. These services help ensure the Canadian seed sector is equipped with the people, skills and knowledge required for a next-generation seed system.



CSGA **promotes Canada's seed certification system and the importance of our seed sector**—while upholding our organization's core values of integrity, accountability, transparency, collaboration, and respect.

## WHY WE DO IT

The entire Canadian agriculture sector relies on Certified seed. As an organization, we partner with the government to provide a public good for all Canadians. It is all about ensuring Canada's food is safe, and our agriculture supply chain is secure.

Canadian farmers have the utmost confidence in the seed they purchase and plant because seed growers produce varieties of high-quality, identity-assured seed essential to a sustainable agri-food sector. They are the heart of the Canadian seed sector.

Seed quality and diversity directly affect food production and, ultimately, food security. Clean, pure seed is the foundation of Canada's reputation as a trusted supplier of consistent, high-quality agricultural products.

## Our Foundation is Public Trust. You Can't Buy It - It's Earned.

Together, we're driving progress and creating a brighter future for Canada's seed and agri-food sectors and agriculture.

## Our Core Principles

### OUR MISSION

Represent and support our members, advance the seed sector and with our partners, deliver and promote a flexible, responsive, and cost-effective seed certification system in Canada.

### OUR VISION

CSGA is an innovative, science-based organization committed to supporting a competitive Canadian agriculture sector as a respected global leader in seed quality assurance and genetic traceability.

### OUR VALUES

Responsibility, Integrity, Accountability, Transparency, Collaboration, and Respect.

# WHY SEED MATTERS

Seed matters because it is essential to agriculture and the global food system. Seed is the starting point for the vast majority of the world's crops, and it plays a critical role in ensuring food production, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, agricultural sustainability, and economic development.

As the first link in our agri-food chain, the vital role of Canadian seed growers and businesses cannot be underestimated. Seed quality, varietal purity, genetic identity assurance, and seed innovation hugely impact the Canadian economy.

CSGA deeply values the years of service and dedication of our members. They contribute to the betterment of the Canadian seed sector, Canadian agriculture, and their local communities.

### The Economic Impact of Canadian Seed\*

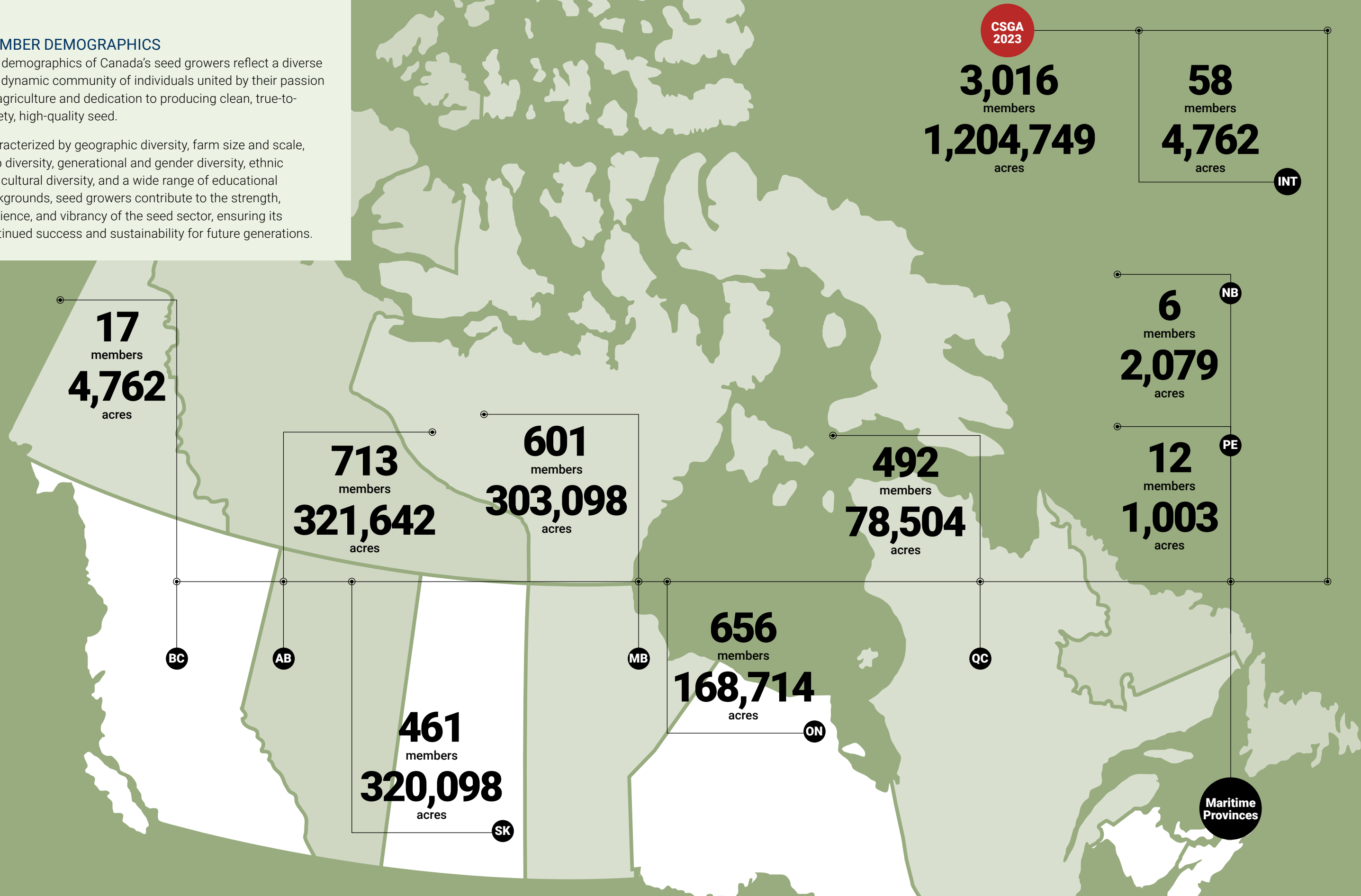


\* 2018  
\*\* 2022  
\*\*\* 2020-2021

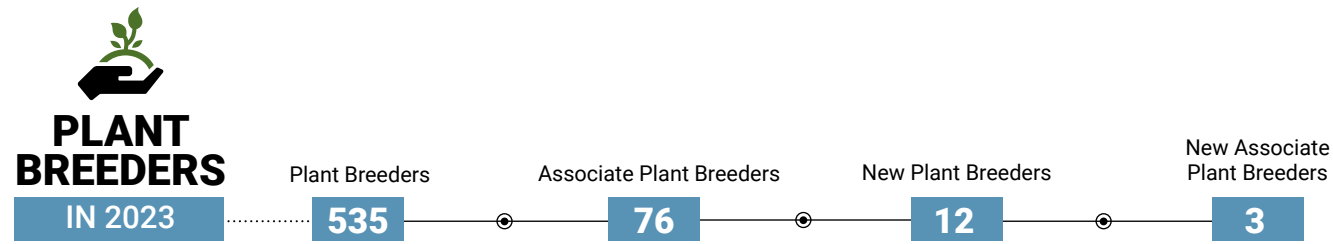
## MEMBER DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographics of Canada's seed growers reflect a diverse and dynamic community of individuals united by their passion for agriculture and dedication to producing clean, true-to-variety, high-quality seed.

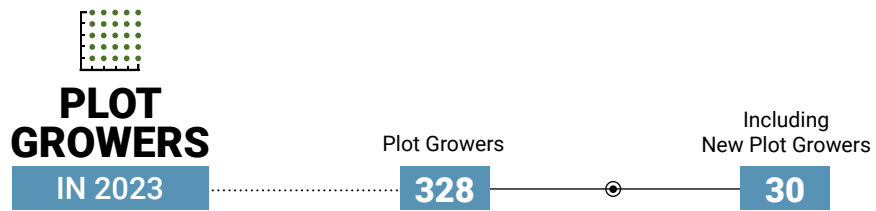
Characterized by geographic diversity, farm size and scale, crop diversity, generational and gender diversity, ethnic and cultural diversity, and a wide range of educational backgrounds, seed growers contribute to the strength, resilience, and vibrancy of the seed sector, ensuring its continued success and sustainability for future generations.



### CSGA-Recognized Plant Breeders in 2023



### CSGA-Accredited Plot Growers in 2023



### INSIGHT ON ACREAGE TRENDS

In 2023, CSGA certified 1,204,749 acres of seed in 12,514 fields and 2,552 plots. The CSGA Seed Crop Certification Acreage and Membership Report provides a detailed breakdown of CSGA-certified seed crop production levels and membership numbers for the last seven years.

Overall, pedigreed acres demonstrate a slight decline from year to year, but they have fluctuated around 1.26 million acres over the past 30 years.

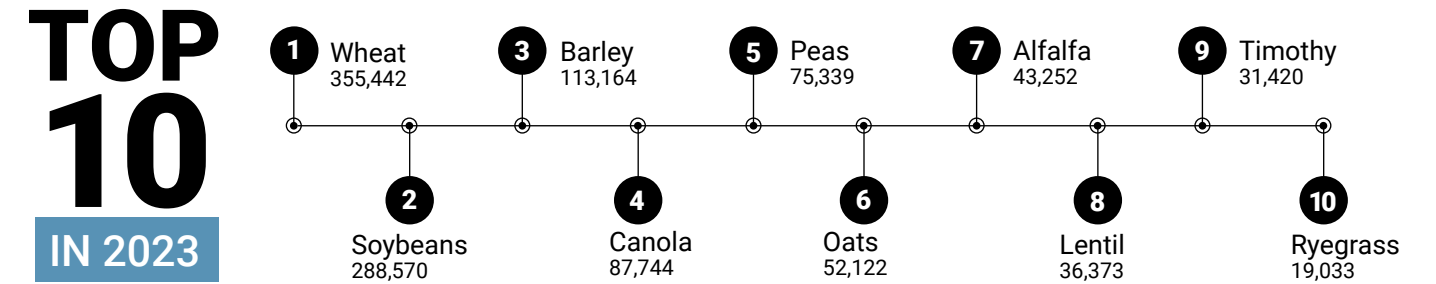
### Annual Plot Totals (2023–2021)

PLOT TYPE	2023	2022	2021	CHANGE (+/-)*
Breeder	829	830	772	-1
Foundation	74	56	54	18
Probation	63	50	109	13
Select	1,586	1,453	1,600	133
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,552</b>	<b>2,389</b>	<b>2,535</b>	<b>163</b>

\* Change between 2023 and 2022

### CROP STATISTICS

### Top Ten Pedigreed Crops by Total Acreage in 2023



### Increased Acreage from 2022

Chickpea +94% to <b>8,441</b>	Buckwheat +65% to <b>1,840</b>
Lentil +35% to <b>36,737</b>	Ryegrass +28% to <b>19,033</b>
Timothy +24% to <b>31,420</b>	

### Decreased Acreage from 2022

Flax -58% to <b>12,036</b>	Oats -46% to <b>52,122</b>
Rye -37% to <b>4,462</b>	Hybrid Corn -29% to <b>13,296</b>
Hemp -26% to <b>2,821</b>	



# 2023 IN REVIEW

*CSGA and its stakeholders prioritize excellence in the quality and genetic purity of Canada's certified seed. This commitment assures farmers that their crops will perform as expected, fosters innovation, and ensures the integrity of Canada's seed supply. CSGA continues to play a vital role in supporting the Canadian seed sector and contributing to the growth and sustainability of agriculture in Canada.*

This year has seen the successful launch of #ChooseCertifiedSeed, CSGA Health, completion of Phase One of the digital seed tags project, and continued promotion and education on our vision for a resilient, innovative, efficient and transparent seed system that serves Canadians through Seed Regulatory Modernization.

We've highlighted the accomplishments of each of our departments in the subsequent pages, providing insight into CSGA's operations, best practices, contributions of employees and cross-functional collaboration.

## CERTIFICATION

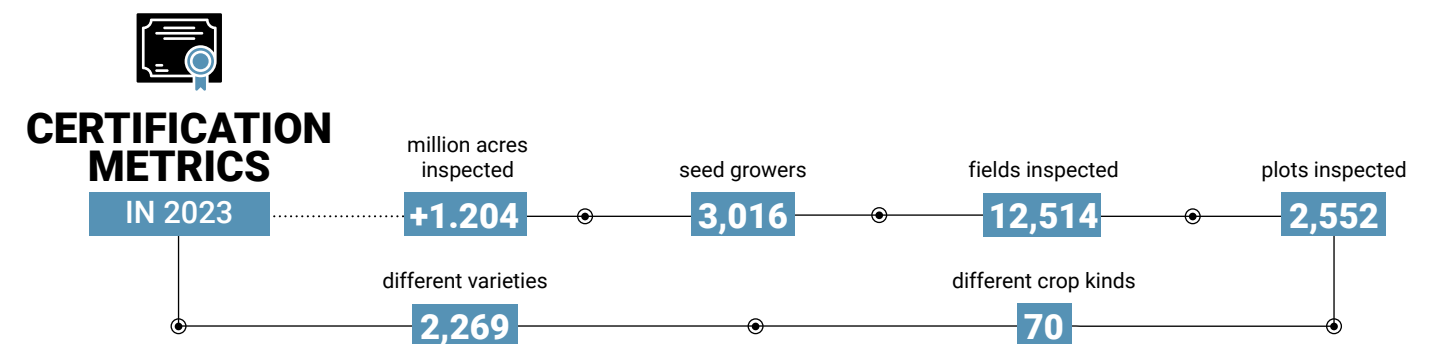
Certified seed empowers our Canadian farmers with the trust and confidence they need to grow healthy and productive crops. They can trust the varietal purity of Certified seed because it has been produced within a national certification program and regulatory framework designed to protect the genetic integrity of the seed. Farmers can trust in the traceability of Certified seed all the way back to the original Breeder seed, thanks to CSGA's quality assurance systems.

Canada's seed growers and seed certification system are the foundation of the Canadian seed sector, essential to a sustainable and innovative Canadian agri-food sector. CSGA is Canada's national seed crop certification authority and has partnered with the Government of Canada since 1904 to administer Canada's national seed certification program. CSGA's authority is enabled via the *Seeds Act* and *Seed Regulations*.

We work closely with the CFIA to manage and improve seed crop certification procedures and standards, and to annually review and update our SeedCert platform.

**The size and scope of our certification efforts make CSGA one of the world's largest and most modern seed crop certification bodies. We accomplish this because of our digital-first mindset, which continues to evolve to meet the needs of variety developers, breeders, seed growers and distributors.**

Each year, the number of applications and documentation CSGA processes varies based on weather conditions, market demands, and regulatory changes. In 2023, CSGA processed applications and documentation for 1.2 million acres of 70 different crop kinds of more than 2,200 varieties produced by Canadian seed growers!



## 2023 Inspected Acreage by Province

CROP KIND	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	INT
ALFALFA						8,861	16,426	17,965		
BARLEY	694		542	6,238	2,383	13,553	40,339	48,991	424	
BEAN					2,024	1,447	300	180		
BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL						1,971	230			
BROMEGRASS						495	2,042	2,742	349	
BUCKWHEAT				1,057		783				
CANARY SEED						35	1,623	275		
CANOLA					163		2,778	80,562		4,242
CHICKPEA							6,551	1,890		
CLOVER						495	2,207	447		
FABABEAN						234	3,696	4,633		
FESCUE						7,397	6,904	2,412	274	
FLAX					25	2,723	6,848	2,440		
HEMP				337	184	528	392	1,378	2	
HYBRID CORN					13,296					
LENTIL							28,622	7,751		
MUSTARD							660	3,266		520
OATS			1,049	11,340	2,956	14,531	15,767	5,941	538	
PEAS	80		34	592		11,234	34,671	28,453	276	
RYE			22	511	35	1,332	122	2,441		
RYEGRASS						13,553	1,815	3,585	80	
SOYBEANS			73	43,649	127,076	116,733	1,039			
TIMOTHY						8,630	5,553	16,292	945	
TRITICALE				163	259	285	1,258	3,449		
WHEAT	229		359	14,618	20,245	98,447	137,139	83,490	915	
WHEATGRASS						406	2,996	2,316	235	
MINOR CROP					69	236	120	746		
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,079</b>	<b>78,504</b>	<b>168,714</b>	<b>303,909</b>	<b>320,098</b>	<b>321,642</b>	<b>4,038</b>	<b>4,762</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>1,358</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,231</b>	<b>80,465</b>	<b>168,385</b>	<b>301,898</b>	<b>340,423</b>	<b>347,651</b>	<b>4,940</b>	<b>485</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>1,719</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,565</b>	<b>81,671</b>	<b>163,686</b>	<b>319,491</b>	<b>341,360</b>	<b>335,669</b>	<b>5,561</b>	<b>1,148</b>
<b>*(-/+)</b> Change	<b>-355</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-152</b>	<b>-1,961</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>2,011</b>	<b>-20,325</b>	<b>-26,009</b>	<b>-902</b>	<b>4,277</b>

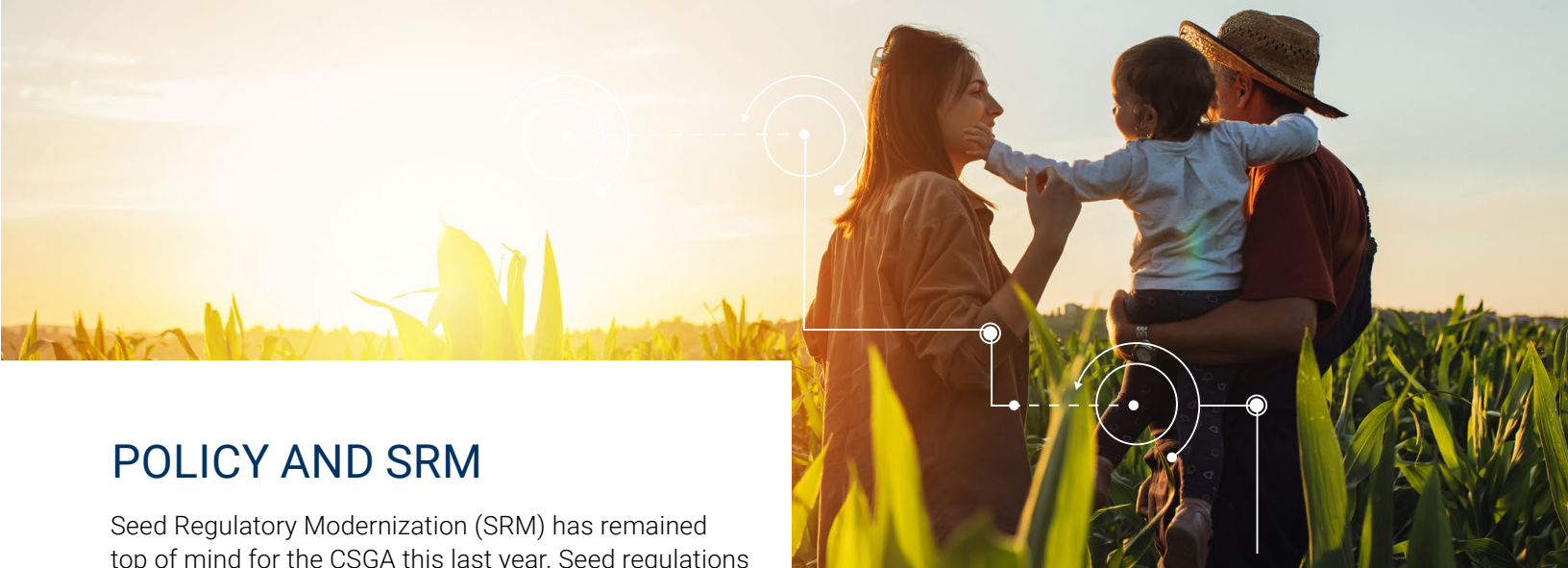
\* Change between 2023 and 2022

## 2023 Inspected Acreage by Year

CROP KIND	2023	2022	2021	CHANGE (+/-)*
ALFALFA	43,252	47,665	41,002	-4,413
BARLEY	113,164	122,003	135,444	-8,838
BEAN	3,951	3,706	4,578	246
BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL	2,201	2,577	2,391	-376
BROMEGRASS	5,628	6,648	6,290	-1,020
BUCKWHEAT	1,840	1,115	1,382	725
CANARY SEED	1,933	2,365	2,856	-433
CANOLA	87,744	79,123	64,981	8,621
CHICKPEA	8,441	4,345	4,473	4,095
CLOVER	3,149	3,714	4,093	-565
FABABEAN	8,563	7,253	14,859	1,309
FESCUE	16,987	18,407	18,375	-1,420
FLAX	12,036	28,671	31,649	-16,635
HEMP	2,821	3,853	5,559	-1,014
HYBRID CORN	13,296	18,835	16,258	-5,539
LENTIL	36,373	27,024	35,403	9,349
MUSTARD	4,446	4,387	1,942	59
OATS	52,122	95,908	78,794	-43,786
PEAS	75,339	92,967	96,372	-17,628
RYE	4,462	7,099	6,794	-2,637
RYEGRASS	19,033	14,905	17,158	4,128
SOYBEANS	288,570	266,218	266,335	22,352
TIMOTHY	31,420	25,393	29,857	6,027
TRITICALE	5,414	5,787	2,269	-373
WHEAT	355,442	350,905	358,311	4,537
WHEATGRASS	5,953	5,743	4,856	210
MINOR CROP	1,170	1,238	1,591	-68
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,204,749</b>			
<b>2022</b>		<b>1,247,836</b>		<b>-43,088</b>
<b>2021</b>			<b>1,253,873</b>	<b>-6,036</b>

\* Change between 2023 and 2022





## POLICY AND SRM

Seed Regulatory Modernization (SRM) has remained top of mind for the CSGA this last year. Seed regulations and policy play a critical role in ensuring the safety, quality, and sustainability of our agricultural systems, and the recommendations developed through SRM will impact the seed sector and the entire agricultural value chain for decades to come.

Leading up to this process, we have worked with stakeholders to develop a vision for a resilient, innovative, efficient, and transparent seed system that serves Canadians – creating an even brighter future for Canada’s seed sector. Like our seed crop standards, this vision and our recommendations as part of SRM were developed by the seed sector for the seed sector.

Central to our vision is the belief that the future of our seed sector is a sector-led, government-enabled seed certification system with CSGA as the main administrator through a digital single window to manage all seed certification functions on behalf of government.

We were very pleased to see strong alignment between the SRM Task Team recommendations and CSGA’s vision for a next-generation seed system. However, we must keep working together to ensure that the seed sector and Canadian agriculture will continue to thrive. This year, the focus of SRM was gathering feedback on Task Team recommendations through a series of surveys.

Following CSGA’s belief in fostering collaboration and ensuring diverse perspectives to shape the future of a next-generation seed certification system, we continued to engage with the sector. We encouraged everyone to respond to the various SRM surveys. Thank you to everyone who has participated in the process.

As the SRM process continues, our priorities remain efficiency, transparency, and trust—enhancing our governance and strengthening connections along the value chains.

## CSGA’s Four Key SRM Policy Recommendations

**Main Administrator:** The future of our seed sector is a sector-led, government-enabled seed certification system with CSGA as the main administrator through a digital single window managing all seed certification functions on behalf of government.

**Digital Single Window:** Digital single window access to seed certification services is the most efficient and effective tool to positively impact the seed value chain. It would eliminate duplicate and fragmented workflows, allowing users to access information in one place.

**Variety Certification Eligibility – Form 300:** We propose a new Variety Certification Eligibility Listing, which would be a CFIA administrative process outside of the existing Variety Registration system. We must eliminate redundancies in our parallel process by getting back to basics – ensuring the formal recognition of the identity of a variety by one authority.

**Standards, Governance and Partnerships:** We have developed a plan to further expand stakeholder consultation and engagement by creating a Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee and increasing external representatives on CSGA committees.

## STANDARDS

As Canada’s national seed certification authority and a founding member of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA), standards setting is one of CSGA’s core functions. Over the past year, CSGA has continued modernizing our standards development process to provide additional transparency and demonstrate its commitment to an open and inclusive process. Enhancements built upon an existing framework ensure that modern technologies are incorporated into science-based standards that are internationally harmonized, fit-for-purpose, and meet the sector’s needs.

In November, the Board of Directors adopted a ‘Standards Development, Maintenance and Oversight Policy’ setting out the principles and the processes required for efficiency, efficacy and objectivity that assure conformance to the ISO 9001:2015 quality management system standard. The policy describes the principles that CSGA adheres to in fulfilling its mandate, including sector involvement and consultation and the responsibilities of the parties involved.

CSGA developed a webpage dedicated to standards and consultations for enhanced stakeholder engagement and transparency regarding our process. The public consultation process allows more voices and opinions to be included in developing standards. CSGA also participates in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s (AAFC) ‘Sector Engagement Table (SET)’ focused on ‘Agile Regulations’ and gave a presentation entitled Seed Certification in Canada: An Agile, Public-Private Partnership, which was well-received.

Our standards are cooperatively developed by our Regulatory Services Committee (RSC), eight crop-specific working groups, ad hoc working groups when a broader approach is required, and stakeholder consultation. In 2023, CSGA opened a public ‘Call for Expressions of Interest’ and created a competency matrix, an online application form, and revised Terms of Reference for the committee to enhance its structure to ensure diverse, engaged representation on the committee from all key seed sector stakeholders.

### Breeder Seed Regulations

CSGA is committed to ensuring the benefits of plant breeding innovations are realized through quality Breeder seed for the benefit of Canadian agriculture. Following a public consultation, the Association completed a review of the certification requirements for plant breeders and Breeder seed, which resulted in an updated, completely reformatted document with a new name called the *Canadian Breeder Seed Requirements*, which came into effect on July 1, 2023.

### Canadian Regulations and Procedures for Pedigreed Seed Crop Production (Circular 6)

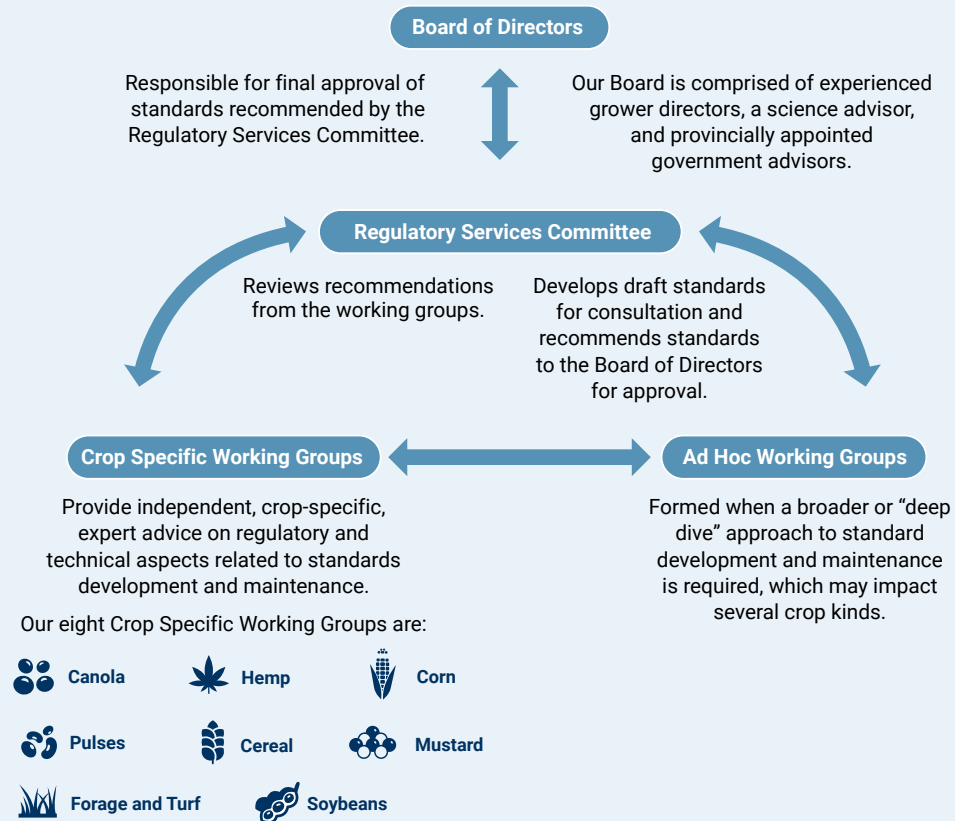
With the support of the Forage and Turf Working Group (FTWG) and the RSC, CSGA completed a review of the certification requirements and standards related to the mechanical purity of forage and turf species. Following up on the initial consultation held in the fall of 2022, CSGA held another consultation in the fall of 2023.

A more specific proposal using a scientific approach consistent with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Seed Schemes was developed. This included categorizing potential contaminants and maintaining standards where two crop kinds may cross-pollinate or where the seeds are considered difficult-to-distinguish from one another.

This resulted in significant changes to the requirements in Sections 6 & 7 of the February 1, 2024 version of the *Canadian Regulations and Procedures for Pedigreed Seed Crop Production* (Circular 6), which will improve certification efficiency as well as the competitiveness of Canada’s forage and turf seed sector.

## CSGA FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING STANDARDS

CSGA's robust standards development process ensures that Canadian pedigreed seed production requirements and standards are science-based, stakeholder consulted, trusted, transparent, and internationally competitive.



### Who They Are

Our Regulatory Services Committee and Crop Specific Working Groups are comprised of technical experts, including seed growers, seed companies, variety developers, plant breeders, seed analysts, seed crop inspectors, the CFIA, and provincial government representatives.

## CLIENT SERVICES, COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

At CSGA, we strive to build strong relationships with our members and stakeholders.

- Our **client services** staff are available to answer questions, resolve issues, and provide guidance on CSGA's processes. They aim for superior customer satisfaction and building trust with clients.
- For the **communications team**, timely and effective communication is key to ensuring members and stakeholders are updated on the Association's business, service offerings, and sector news in both official languages.
- By providing value, communicating regularly and actively seeking feedback and involvement, CSGA is proud of its strong **member engagement**, sense of community and purpose.

### Our Communications:

- position CSGA as a leader in the Canadian seed sector and as Canada's seed crop certification authority
- demonstrate our willingness to grow and improve our business offerings
- build trust and confidence amongst our members and stakeholders

### Our Communication Channels

**Seed Scoop:** Our regular English and French e-newsletters cover Association activities, issues, technical updates, educational information, and service reminders.

**Letter from The Executive Director:** These regular updates from CSGA's Executive Director keep key stakeholders updated on relevant information regarding the Association, seed crop certification, Seed Regulatory Modernization, and the issues that significantly impact their businesses and our seed sector.

**CSGA website:** Updated regularly, our website is the top resource for CSGA information on Certified seed crop certification and standards and CSGA services.

**Social Media:** Our social channels allow us to highlight current activities, events, important dates, education material and other updates. Developing relationships with the agricultural community, focused on seed growers, seed businesses and seed associations, providing helpful content, and having meaningful engagement allows us to contribute to the sense of community.

**Twitter:** Our main social media channel highlights current CSGA activities, events, and other helpful content to develop relationships and encourage meaningful engagement.

**LinkedIn:** Our LinkedIn page allows us to communicate in a professional setting and endorse the Association as a thought leader on public policy or industry topics.

**YouTube:** Our video platform to view seed grower training videos and Certified seed promotional videos.

## Connect With Us!

**National Pedigreed Seed Locator:** Our online searchable database tool for all seed crops annually certified by the CSGA, including members' previous year carryover seed data.

**Partner publications:** Collaborating with relevant publishers allows us to increase the visibility and recognition of seed certification, CSGA and its services across the country and abroad.

CSGA also offers the **Agri-Toolkit** in partnership with the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC). The kit provides members with free access to an online resource that provides information, tools, and resources related to effective HR management practices within Canadian agricultural businesses. Additionally, an **Agri-Retailer Program** training program is offered in partnership with the Canadian Association of Agri-Retailers (CAAR). CSGA also offers secondary and post-secondary seed education packages.



## Highlights of Our Key 2023 Projects

**#ChooseCertifiedSeed - Empowering Farmers Through the Value of Certified Seed** In October 2023, CSGA launched its #ChooseCertifiedSeed campaign, highlighting the importance of Canadian Certified seed and why it matters. The campaign aimed to inspire farmers, food processors, and consumers to choose Certified seed for quality results.



The campaign is grounded in a website that serves as a treasure trove of information divided into sections that delve into the nuances of certified seed – its value, quality, identity assurance, traceability, and trustworthiness.

Featuring heartfelt and compelling videos from Canadian seed growers and stakeholders, their perspectives, genuine experiences, and passion form the essence of the campaign, amplifying the message to farmers to choose Certified seed.



Using a paid and organic social media blitz, the campaign was **seen by almost one million people**, generating over 8,200 visits to the microsite and hundreds of engagements.



The paid portion of the campaign included Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. While organic content was generated over X (Twitter), LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. CSGA also completed a RealAg Spotlight interview and promoted additional digital ads.

**CSGA Health - Supporting Our Seed Sector's Health and Wellbeing** As outlined in the CSGA 2.0 Business Plan, CSGA aims to uphold its leadership role in advancing the Canadian seed sector and providing new and innovative service offerings.

In December 2023, we introduced CSGA Health—affordable health and dental insurance for everyone involved in the Canadian seed sector.



Leveraging CSGA's collective strength of its 2,400 Canadian seed-growing enterprises unlocks affordable group rates with additional benefits for all involved in the Canadian seed sector.

**Display Your CSGA Designation Digital Badges** To help seed growers market their seed production knowledge and experience, CSGA began issuing digital badges to those with CSGA designations, including current Accredited Plot Growers, Recognized Plant Breeders, Recognized Associate Plant Breeders, and new Accredited Seed Growers.



Generated through a third-party platform, the badges are verifiable online credentials that can be shared across virtually any platform.

**CSGA Learn is for You!** CSGA Learn addresses the Canadian seed production learning gap, providing online access to pedigreed seed production training and best management practices nationwide.



2023 was an incredibly successful year for CSGA Learn, with the Probation Plot Grower and Experienced Seed Grower programs as the most popular materials.

To date, stakeholders have **enrolled in over 600 CSGA Learn learning materials**.

## TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL ENABLEMENT

Technology and digital enablement are two of CSGA's priorities. Together, they improve business processes, services, and operations. Leveraging digital tools and solutions helps create new service opportunities and enhances our clients' experiences and business performance.

We continue to make strategic investments in technology and cybersecurity. CSGA's technology offerings and cybersecurity are improving our tools to respond to the ever-changing seed sector landscape and our stakeholders' needs.

Digital seed tags are a key element of CSGA modernization efforts. The feedback received in Phase One of our Digital Tag project (supported by the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Agri-Assurance Program) allowed CSGA to improve the user-friendly process.

In January 2024, the Association launched Phase Two of the project for Breeder and Select seed tags, the two pedigreed seed classes within CSGA's authority.

The very first CSGA Breeder and Select seed tags are now in the marketplace as Phase Two participants can print Breeder and Select seed tags from SeedCert using CSGA-provided tag stock and their printing equipment.

**CSGA's SeedCert platform streamlines the seed certification process, reduces paperwork, and provides real-time information to all involved.**

- Growers can apply for seed crop certification online, receive inspection results, and access their certification documents in a secure online environment.
- Seed crop inspectors can use the platform to record field inspections, and access historical data.
- The CFIA can use the platform to oversee crop inspectors and inspection services and conduct inspections.





# OUR MEETINGS

## 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING St. John's, Newfoundland, July 9 -10, 2023

This marked our 119th and the first in-person in three years. President Dale Connell welcomed over 160 registrants. The AGM was an excellent opportunity to come together from coast to coast to discuss seed and our sector's future.

Delegates and their families kicked things off with a great Saturday afternoon of whale and puffin watching or a fun game of golf. Sunday morning, companions and kids enjoyed full-day adventures. At the same time, the Honorable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food in Canada, welcomed delegates to the AGM via video.

In her welcome message, the Minister said, "The seed crop certification process fosters trust, traceability and transparency in Canadian seeds, here in Canada and around the world." She added, "I want to thank CSGA for partnering with our government to ensure that Canada's food is safe and sustainable, that our agricultural supply chain is secure and that our farmers have maximum confidence in the seed they purchase and plant." On the Seed Regulatory Modernization process, the Minister said, "We appreciate CSGA's active participation and willingness to listen to the different levels of the value chain."

Executive Director Doug Miller then presented his report, which included an overview of 2022, our priorities, and our progress to date. He also spoke about various CSGA outreach activities. Doug then moved to the Financial Report and the progress on the CSGA 2.0 goals, specifically:

- Sustainable Budgets and Operating Efficiency
- New Fee Schedule to Sustain Operations
- Building Alternative Funding Streams

Vice President Glenn Logan presented responses to the 2022 member resolutions and the election of the Board of Directors. With no member proposals received for the 2023 AGM, the AGM portion of the day was adjourned.

Chief Operating Officer Caroline Lafontaine proudly presented the soft launch of the "This is Canadian Certified Seed" campaign, aimed to show farmers and end users why they

should #ChooseCertifiedSeed for the highest quality, identity-assured, third-party verified seed to set them up for success.

After a closed member-to-member session, Keynote speaker Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, known as the Food Professor, took to the stage for an engaging talk on navigating the future in agri-food and the importance of promoting Certified seed to consumers.

On Monday, delegates heard from Dr. Mohsen Yoosefzadeh Najafabadi (University of Guelph) on how Artificial Intelligence and machine learning are used in plant breeding. Then, SGS Canada's Holly Gelech discussed how computer vision can be used in seed testing.

Following the closed member-to-member session, CFIA's Wendy Jahn presented an update on Seed Regulatory Modernization, including the drivers for change, the co-development approach, a look at the Task Teams and what they've heard so far.

Monday's meetings closed with a fantastic fireside chat session with young growers. Thank you to Jake Ayre, Amanda Ellis, and Craig Rickard for sharing their unique perspectives on the future of seed production.

Our Gala Awards Luncheon was the perfect way to end our Newfoundland adventure. The hotel's garden atrium provided a lush backdrop as we lifted our glasses in honour of this year's recipients.

**Robertson Associate Award:**

Dave MacKellar (ON) and Martin Provencher (QC)

**CSGA Honorary Life Award:**

Heather McBey (MB) and Glyn Chancey (ON)

**Retiring Director:**

Roxanne Asselin (QC)

Jennifer Seward, a 2020 Honorary Life Award recipient, received special recognition for 20 years as Executive Director of the Manitoba Seed Growers' Association.

# OUR FINANCIAL UPDATE

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

The Association finished the year in a strong financial position, with assets increasing by \$515,903 to a total of \$3,429,047 (\$2,913,144 in 2023). Current assets increased by \$344,654, mostly due to an increase in cash of \$323,448.

The Association's current liabilities increased by \$68,630, primarily due to a \$60,000 increase in deferred revenue for Member Deposits. The Association's Deferred Pension Liability also increased by \$65,855, which resulted from an increase in the Accrued Benefit Obligation, which was partially offset by an increase in the Fair Value of Plan Assets.

The Association's Net Assets increased by \$381,418 due to an increase in Unrestricted Net Assets of \$358,308. As a result, the Association's Net Reserve Policy continues to be in compliance and provides the organization with funding to enable special projects and initiatives that support the Association's strategy in the coming years.

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Total Revenue decreased by \$78,858, representing a 1.96% decrease over 2023. The largest decrease was associated with Client Service Fees, which decreased by \$87,831. Investment-related revenue increased by \$93,727, which helped offset revenue decreases in Acreage and Membership Fees and Government Grants and Subsidies.

Total Expenses increased by \$144,169 to \$2,903,732, which represents a 4.2% increase from the previous fiscal year. The increase in expenses was driven by an increase of \$267,023 in General and Administrative Expenses due in part to increased professional fees, increased communication and sector engagement around the CFIA's Seed Regulatory Modernization initiative, delivery of the AgriAssurance funding deliverables (e.g., #ChooseCertifiedSeed campaign, digital seed tags), and business continuity support around key areas like accounting and technology.

CSGA's financial statements are available in [Appendix A](#), and the complete audited Financial Statements for 2023-2024 are available online at [seedgrowers.ca](http://seedgrowers.ca).

# OUR STAKEHOLDERS

*CSGA prioritizes partnerships to deliver on our mandate and achieve our strategic priorities.*

## AGRICULTURE CARBON ALLIANCE (ACA)

In June 2022, CSGA joined the Agriculture Carbon Alliance (ACA) as a member of its national coalition, which represents more than 7% of Canada's land and includes 190,000+ farm businesses. The ACA was formed to ensure that Canadian farmers and ranchers are included in important discussions about environmental policies and regulations that directly affect their businesses and livelihoods. The main focus of the ACA in 2023 was Bill C-234, which aims to remove the federal carbon tax from natural gas and propane used on farms.

## AOSCA, OECD, ECCC The International Harmonization of Seed Standards

One of CSGA's core roles is to ensure that Canadian seed certification standards are aligned with international requirements to ensure that seed trade is not negatively impacted.

- **Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA):** Member agencies include 44 U.S. states, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, New Zealand, and South Africa. CSGA is a recognized leader in AOSCA. CSGA staff hold leadership roles throughout the organization, including the Board of Directors, the Certification Requirements and Standards Council, the Advisory Committee, and several commodity committees.

- **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Seed Schemes** with 62 participating countries, develops internationally recognized seed varietal certification standards. CSGA actively supports the CFIA and represents Canada's seed sector at the Annual Meeting and meetings of the Technical Working Group and ad hoc working groups. Meetings of the Seed Schemes afford opportunities to liaise with the International Seed Federation (ISF), the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA), the International Union for Protection of New Varieties (UPOV) and the representatives of the national designated authorities of the participating countries. In June 2023, the Annual Meeting was held in Antalya, Turkey; general provisions for the authorization of varietal mixtures of certified seed under the OECD Seed Schemes were approved, as was the revised Strategic Plan. CSGA has continued in a consulting capacity to assist the Seed Schemes in making progress on its digitalization initiative.

## CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY (CFIA) Business Continuity and System Improvements

As regulatory partners responsible for Canada's seed certification system, the CFIA and CSGA met every two weeks during the 2023 season to ensure effective delivery and oversight of certification services and to resolve in-season issues as they emerged.

## CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL (CAHRC) Professional Development Services

With the successful launch of *CSGA Learn*, CSGA continues to work with CAHRC to provide ongoing support to the online learning system and material.



### **CANADIAN GRAIN COMMISSION, GRAIN RESEARCH LAB**

#### **Seed Research and Innovation**

CSGA has a long-time working relationship with the Canadian Grain Commission's Grain Research Lab (GRL), and its testing is related to seed identity. In 2023, CSGA traceability data supported a CFIA investigation of malt barley purity, including genetic purity testing by the GRL.

### **CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE (CFA)**

#### **Seed and Agriculture Policy Development**

CSGA's membership in the CFA continued to provide an effective forum for developing common policy positions with many of Canada's leading farm organizations on issues ranging from seed regulatory modernization and sustainability to the Grocery Code of Conduct. CSGA has also been actively engaged with the CFA through its Seed Sector Committee.

### **CANADIAN GENERAL STANDARDS BOARD (CGSB)**

#### **Organic Certification Standards**

CSGA participates in the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) technical committee on organic certification standards and ensures those standards are developed with due consideration for the Canadian seed certification system.

### **CANADIAN ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE CROPS (CRSC)**

#### **Responsible Grain Code of Practice**

CSGA's membership in CRSC provided access to the national forum 2023 for CSGA and other producer organizations to review and revise the proposed code for sustainable crop production following widespread concern expressed by producers. CSGA supports CRSC's mission to provide a national forum for coordinating and communicating the sustainability of Canada's grain production.

### **HEALTH CANADA OFFICE OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

#### **New Hemp Varieties**

CSGA is an original member of Health Canada's Interdepartmental Working Group, which meets twice a year to recommend new hemp varieties for addition to the List of Approved Cultivars that are eligible to be grown in Canada.

### **SEEDS CANADA**

#### **Collaboration to Advance the Seed Sector**

Seeds Canada and CSGA are Canada's predominant seed organizations, playing different but complementary roles in advancing the seed sector. Seeds Canada is the Association's important seed sector partner, and CSGA holds an Affiliate membership.

## OUR PEOPLE

# OUR BOARD

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The CSGA Executive Committee is comprised of the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, the immediate Past President, and a Provincial Government Advisor.

### DIRECTORS

CSGA is governed by a Board of Directors drawn from its members. CSGA's By-laws ensure that at least one Director is nominated from each seed producing region.

### ADVISORS

The Board is supported by nine Provincial Government Advisors, each appointed by their respective provincial Minister of Agriculture and one Academic Advisor. As official advisors to CSGA and Branch Boards, our Provincial Government Advisors provide important governance and policy development input.

### Executive Committee



**DALE CONNELL**  
President



**GLENN LOGAN**  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President



**SHANNON BIEMAN**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President



**JOE RENNICK**  
Past President



**PETER SCOTT**  
Provincial Government  
Advisor

### Directors

**Andrew Ayre**, Manitoba

**Shannon Bieman**, Ontario

**Carl Bolton**, Ontario

**Richard Brault**, Québec

**Roy Klym**, Saskatchewan

**Glenn Logan**, Alberta

**Ryan Murray**, Manitoba

**Marc-Antoine Paquet**, Québec

**Chelsea Tomlinson**, Alberta

**Laurie Wakefield**, Saskatchewan

### Advisors

**Damien Chaput**, Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec

**Krista deMilliano**, Alberta Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

**Joanna Follings**, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

**Steve Hamill**, PEI Department of Agriculture and Land

**Dr. Bryan Harvey (OC, SOM, FAIC, DSc, PhD, PAg)**, Academic Advisor

**Chami Amarasinghe**, Manitoba Ministry of Agriculture and Resource Development

**Amy Sangster**, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture

**Brenna Schilds**, British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture

**Peter Scott**, New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

**Sara Tetland and Matt Struthers**, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

# OUR STANDING COMMITTEES

## EXECUTIVE

Dale Connell\*  
Glenn Logan  
Shannon Bieman  
Joe Rennick  
Peter Scott

## APPEALS

Glenn Logan\*  
Shannon Bieman  
Richard Brault  
Ryan Murray  
Christina Rowan\*\*  
Peter Scott  
Matt Struthers  
Sara Tetland  
Chelsea Tomlinson  
Laurie Wakefield

## AUDIT

Roy Klym\*  
Carl Bolton  
Dale Connell  
Glenn Logan  
Peter Scott

## AWARDS

Andrew Ayre\*  
Carl Bolton  
Richard Brault  
Chelsea Tomlinson  
Laurie Wakefield

## GOVERNANCE

Glenn Logan\*  
Andrew Ayre  
Carl Bolton  
Roy Klym

## INTERBRANCH COORDINATION

Roy Klym\*  
Colleen Acres  
AJ Armstrong  
Chris Barker  
Kelly Chambers  
Andrew Dawson  
Jean Dumont  
Brian Ellis  
Tom Greaves  
Laurie Hayes  
Tim Montague  
Kurt Printz  
Jennifer Seward

## PLANT BREEDERS

Bryan Harvey\*  
Helen Booker  
Annie Claessens  
Bruce Coulman  
Greg Gingera  
Rale Gjuric  
Robert Graf  
Michel McElroy  
Istvan Rajcan  
Tom Warkentin

## REGULATORY SERVICES

Glenn Logan\*  
Roxanne Asselin  
Andrew Ayre  
Carl Bolton  
Richard Brault  
Damien Chaput  
Krista deMilliano  
Jim Downey  
Willy Drost\*\*  
Steven Hamill  
Bryan Harvey  
Wendy Jahn  
Roy Klym  
Philippe Lemaître  
Rick Love  
Brigette Moore  
Ryan Murray  
Jonathan Nyborg  
Christina Rowan\*\*  
Laurie Wakefield

\* Chair  
\*\* Official Observers

# OUR STAFF

<b>DOUG MILLER</b>	Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
<b>CAROLINE LAFONTAINE</b>	Chief Operating Officer
<b>PAM COLES</b>	Managing Director, Finance and Administration
<b>MIKE SCHEFFEL</b>	Managing Director, Policy and Standards
<b>GAIL HARRIS</b>	Standards Manager
<b>BRIANNA CHOUINARD</b>	Certification Manager
<b>TANIA CALVERLEY</b>	Communications and Engagement Manager
<b>DOMINIQUE BEAUDIN</b>	Technology and Digital Enablement Manager
<b>EMMANUEL FONDI</b>	Policy and Certification Officer
<b>JACKIE PRIDHAM</b>	Programs and Certification Officer
<b>ALEX BOUMA</b>	Certification Officer
<b>MELANIE FARAH-ROY</b>	Client Services Manager
<b>MEAGAN LEBLANC-MONTREUIL</b>	Client Support Officer
<b>RANDY PREATER</b>	Special Advisor



# APPENDIX A

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Statement of Operations

Period ended January 31, 2024, with comparative information for the year ended January 31, 2023

	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2023
<b>Revenues:</b>		
Acreage fees	\$ 1,751,148	\$ 1,793,485
Membership fees	584,910	591,825
Client service fees	615,941	703,772
Branch acreage and membership fees	564,263	591,746
Plot fees	208,060	185,840
Assessment for CFIA inspections	85,411	83,575
Investment and other revenue	160,642	66,915
Government grants and subsidies	–	32,075
	3,970,375	4,094,233
<b>Expenses:</b>		
General and administrative expenses	2,903,732	2,636,709
Branch acreage and membership fees paid out	564,263	591,746
CFIA inspections	87,534	83,536
AAFC AgriAssurance Program expenses (net)	(21,871)	77,498
	3,533,658	3,389,489
<b>Excess of revenue over:</b>		
Expenses before the undernoted	436,717	659,744
<b>Other income (expense):</b>		
Loss on disposal of capital assets	–	(4,637)
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>	<b>\$ 436,717</b>	<b>\$ 655,107</b>

### Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year ended January 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	INTERNALLY RESTRICTED	INVESTED IN TANGIBLE CAPITAL AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS	UNRESTRICTED	2024	2023
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 92,059	\$ (10,410)	\$ 2,081,649	\$ 1,836,178
Excess of revenue over expenses	–	–	436,717	436,717	655,107
Remeasurements related to pension liability	–	–	(55,299)	(55,299)	(409,636)
Purchase of tangible capital and intangible assets	–	66,757	(66,757)	–	–
Amortization of tangible capital and intangible assets	–	(43,647)	43,647	–	–
<b>Balance, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 115,169</b>	<b>\$ 347,898</b>	<b>\$ 2,463,067</b>	<b>\$ 2,081,649</b>

## Schedule of General and Administrative Expenses

Period ended January 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2023
Amortization of tangible capital and intangible assets	\$ 43,647	\$ 43,567
Annual general meeting (net)	10,196	(9,882)
Bad debts	(548)	2,611
Contracted services	127,961	88,384
Data processing	152,482	135,624
Employee benefits	283,289	245,919
Honoraria	92,804	100,137
Insurance	43,362	49,271
Internet and web site service	4,905	5,847
Membership fees	33,156	25,162
Office supplies and stationery	3,317	3,538
Postal services	5,837	5,135
Presentations and sponsorships	(1,046)	1,000
Printing	17,743	4,239
Professional fees	106,510	77,192
Publicity	73,656	54,708
Rent	61,631	56,129
Rental of equipment	10,621	10,827
Salaries	1,474,303	1,441,182
Special projects	40,915	9,555
Stakeholder education	16,762	17,325
Subscriptions	627	353
Technical and data development	123,167	98,405
Telephone	7,796	7,705
Travel, directors	93,837	101,060
Travel, staff	76,802	61,716
	<b>\$ 2,903,732</b>	<b>\$ 2,636,709</b>

Note: Annual general meeting expenses are shown on a net basis.



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