



CANADIAN SEED INSTITUTE  
INSTITUT CANADIEN DES SEMENCES

## CSI Quality System Assessments and ISO Client Compliance

A number of CSI clients have taken the initiative to gain ISO registration for business purposes and have requested clarification on the requirement for a CSI assessment in addition to the ISO audit. A committee was assembled by CSI to examine the feasibility of using ISO audits without CSI participation for the purposes of CFIA. The committee came to the conclusion that the current ISO audits did not investigate, and ISO auditors were not trained to evaluate, technical issues related to the sampling, grading, handling, testing, importing or labelling of pedigreed seed. The committee recommended a technical assessment be conducted to deal with requirements of the *Seeds Act and Regulations* or the Canadian Methods and Procedures for Testing Seed, as applicable.

### Details of the Program

CSI will require ISO-registered clients to have the technical components of their quality system assessed by a CSI accredited assessor/technical expert **in conjunction with or in addition to** an ISO audit. The technical assessment will fulfill the requirements of the agreement between CSI and the client, and CSI's obligations to CFIA to verify specific technical components of the various programs.

If the ISO client and auditor choose to combine the ISO audit and CSI technical assessment, the ISO auditor will act as lead auditor and prepare and submit his report to CSI. The CSI assessor will submit copies of his checklists and technical report summary to the ISO auditor for inclusion in the report. The CSI assessment need not occur for each annual ISO audit but instead follow the assessment frequency as stipulated by CSI.

If the ISO audit and CSI assessment are to be conducted separately, it is the client's responsibility to ensure that the ISO auditor's report is submitted to CSI. It is also the responsibility of the client that a CSI technical assessment is scheduled and takes place on the anniversary date of the initial contract with CSI as per the assessment period as stipulated by CSI.

New applicants for AC, BSF, or AI scope of accreditation will follow the process of accreditation by a CSI accredited assessor based on a review of the quality manual and confirmation of licences and accreditation of personnel. An on-site assessment within three months will be conducted against the technical assessment checklists.

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Following completion of the second CSI technical assessment, clients with ISO registration and AC, BSF or AC/BSF accreditation (who meet the CSI extended interval requirements) will have the option of having a CSI technical assessment once every four years.

If a client has multiple sites, the extended interval option is applicable to those sites. For example, if a client has 30 sites included in their ISO registration, then 7 or 8 sites would undergo a CSI technical assessment each year. Whether an ISO client is a single site or a multi-site, interval samples must be submitted by a site in the second year following a CSI technical assessment when the site is on the extended interval. Instructions for submitting interval samples are found on the CSI website, and are sent to the client by CSI when interval samples are required.

For clients with Lab scope of accreditation, the increased interval program is not an option. All assessments must be conducted at three year intervals following initial accreditation by CFIA. A CSI lab technical expert will select the technical questions (accreditation of personnel, all activities related to the M & P, equipment lists etc.) from the current lab assessment checklists when conducting the technical review.

For clients with AI scope of accreditation the checklist questions in AI - SWI 7.1.1 may be used, **excluding** those that are not asterisked in Appendix V.

Recognized as a Conformity Verification Body by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and  
as an Organic Certification Body by the United States Department of Agriculture