



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DIRECTORATE: PLANT PRODUCTION
DIVISION: SEED EVALUATION (OSTL)
Private Bag X250
PRETORIA
0001

2015-03-30

SEED TESTING FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES

Please find herewith a list of the revised tariffs for all the seed testing services that are applicable from 2015-04-01. You are kindly requested to notify all concerned personnel as soon as possible of the tariffs. Preference, urgent or priority tests are double tariff. This tariff will only be permitted under very special circumstance (see below), therefore please consult with the Head of the Official Seed Testing Laboratory (OSTL) before indicating this request. A list of the seed kinds that are declared in terms of the Plant Improvement Act is also included.

Be assured of our commitment towards service excellence and an expeditious seed testing service. However, as we have limited personnel and resources, we can unfortunately not provide an unlimited service to the seed industry. In lieu of the increased demand for our seed testing services, i.e. especially the issuance of international certificates (OIC's & BIC's) and also the fact that we have no indication of the quantities and seed kinds that will be submitted for testing, we have looked at ways in which we can conduct our seed testing activities "smarter". We aspire to be able to offer an effective and efficient service but also complying with the norm of seed testing, namely accurate, reliable and repeatable results, as is required from our international accreditation at the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA).

Take note of the areas that have been highlighted in bold and/or those marked with **(NB)** just to refresh your memory, in order that we can improve on our service delivery. Special attention has been given to allowing the technical administrative component to conduct their work in a more organised manner, i.e. sufficient time to start and complete an activity versus trying to accomplish many things at one time.

The current procedure, which came into operation on 2004-04-01, for the payment of service delivery by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), has been in place for a number of years and rests on the basis of the fact that no service should take place before payment has been received. This is a requirement as stipulated in the Public Financial Management Act (PFMA) applicable to all departments in government. You are reminded of this system for seed testing as follows:

- Upon receipt of the sample/s for testing, an invoice will be issued and sent **(preferably by e-mail)** to the applicant. **Please only use the fax as an alternative as we are also trying to implement a paperless system and also in support of a more friendly environment.**
- An e-mail 'sent report' is attached to the invoice as proof of notification for payment.
- **Payment must then be made and proof submitted as soon as possible per e-mail.**
- Internal reconciliation then takes place for payment made with the correct invoice.
- Remember that the concession has been made that testing will not be delayed, which will proceed in the normal manner. This is due to some germination test periods which can be as extensive as 21 – 28 days, and also to make provision for re-testing.

- The applicable certificate or test report can then be released when testing has been finalized and proof of payment received. In order to assist with this system, our Directorate for Financial Management has permitted an account for the payment of the seed testing services tariffs exclusively. Please find the particulars for this account hereunder. **You are reminded that this account can only be used for payment of the services rendered by seed testing and not for payment for any other invoices issued by the DAFF.**
- Electronic banking or a normal deposit slip can be used **but it is essential that the invoice number be cited in both cases**, in order for us to be able to reconcile with the invoice/s that was issued.
- Once a month we receive a statement with details of all payments that have been received into this bank account from our head office and are then able to finally reconcile payment with the invoice.
- The banking details are as follows:

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Bank | : | Standard Bank |
| Branch name | : | Arcadia |
| Branch code | : | 01-08-45 |
| Account number | : | 011244887 |
| Account name | : | NDA: Seed Testing Services |

NB:

- You are reminded that invoices are issued twice a week, namely Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- If no proof of payment is received, with the correct invoice No., the invoice will remain as pending for payment until the reconciliation report is received. This only takes place once a month.
- This results in delays in the issuance of the certificates/test reports as they will only be issued once notification that payment has taken place is received.
- Invoices are only sent to the person who applies for testing on behalf of the applying company. It is the responsibility of this person to put procedures in place to ensure that payment takes place and the required notification sent to the OSTL. We often find that finalized tests are in the pending tray and we are only notified about payment when the month end reconciliation is done. We also wish to prevent the re-sending of invoices which is time consuming.

The OSTL, which is housed in the Division Seed Evaluation of the Directorate Plant Production, is on the premises of the Evaluation Centre at Roodeplaat. This building is known as the Plant Genetic Resources Centre and houses the Division Seed Evaluation, as well as the National Gene Bank of the Directorate Genetic Resources.

Delivery to our premises can be made as follows:

- 1) Postal system
- 2) Courier
- 3) Self (to the premises at Roodeplaat).

As the Directorate: Plant Production or the OSTL does not have a dedicated private bag address; we utilize the department postal address, namely Private Bag X250. This may result in delays e.g. post strikes. You are requested to rather use a courier service or self delivery in order to speed up

the process for the OSTL to receive your samples. Telkom / Postnet cannot do a counter to door or door to door delivery service due to our location, i.e. we do not have a street address.

Our postal address is as follows:

FOR ATTENTION: Name of applicable contact person.
Division - Seed Evaluation (Roodeplaat)
Directorate - Plant Production
Private Bag X250
Pretoria
0001.

The fax number for the Plant Genetic Resources Centre is currently (012) 8085383/94. The general e-mail address for the OSTL, namely SeedTesting@daff.gov.za is unfortunately often not operational. However, most officers also have personalised addresses for direct communication, however, when on leave messages may remain unanswered, therefore always copy to an additional related officer as well. **NB.: Take note of the e-mail addresses listed below that are to be used. If other addresses are used, they may not be replied upon.** We unfortunately do not have a subsidized cellular phone for the OSTL, therefore when using any personal cell phones such as 0828095950, use only in urgent cases and only in working hours. For delivery to the Plant Genetic Resources Centre, Roodeplaat, a map has been included for your convenience.

You are reminded that the following is applicable with regard to matters concerning the testing of seed:

Division: Seed Evaluation (also known as the Official Seed Testing Laboratory)
Head : Pamela Strauss
Tel. no. : (012) 8085395
E-mail : PamelaS@daff.gov.za

OR

Laboratory Testing Services

Rebecca Matlala
(012) 808 5391
BeckyM@daff.gov.za

Receiving, Registration & Reporting of Sample results

Andani Madzinge
(012) 808 5385
AndaniM@daff.gov.za

Routine enquiries with regard to this sub-division e.g. how far tests are, availability of reports/certificates, etc. can be made directly to the Technical Administrative Office (TAO).

Remember that preliminary results cannot be made available e.g. first evaluations of germination tests.

Contact persons : Hilda Bokala, Sarah Magolego & Lina Nkosi
Tel. no. : (012) 8085394
E-mail : HildaB@daff.gov.za, SarahMa@daff.gov.za &
LinaN@daff.gov.za

NB.:

- **No other e-mail address may be used for this office unless otherwise indicated.**
- **Enquiries to this office may be made daily but only from 10:30 to 12:30. This should allow more than sufficient time for you to update yourselves on the progress of your tests.**
- **When enquiring please have all particulars available with regard to the samples you submitted for testing such as application number, seed kind / variety / lot & code no.'s, etc. as searching for information is also time consuming and counter productive. It is preferable that enquiries be made per e-mail and not per telephone, as all officials at the OSTL have telephone grants which can easily become exhausted.**
- **Also if you have a land line, please supply the number, as the OSTL will make contact per landline only, unless not available.**

Primary function:

- Testing of official samples (trade control and imported seed) to ensure compliance with prescribed standards of the Plant Improvement Act (PIA) for physical purity, germination and viability (TZ).

Secondary functions:

- Presentation of annual examinations* in practical seed analysis methods and techniques, for registration of seed testing analysts in terms of the PIA requirements.
- Conduction of detailed registration inspection of Seed Testing Laboratories in terms of the PIA requirements.
- Monitoring the activities of registered seed testing laboratories that includes follow-up inspections, check tests, etc.

*** The tariff for an examination is R320.00 per person per examination for 2015/2016.**

Services:

- Testing of seed samples for the issuance of International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) Certificates (orange and blue). We are currently the only accredited laboratory in South Africa.

NB.: However, due to the increase in demand for this service delivery we have implemented the queue system (first-come-first serve), i.e. as samples are received they will move into the queue for waiting for testing. In lieu of this the urgent tariff will no longer be permitted and only under very special circumstances and with consultation with the Head of the OSTL. As your certificates may take longer than anticipated, please make provision when exporting seed lots.

- Conduction of seed testing for routine quality determination purposes.
- Presentation of the annual practical demonstration course** in seed analysis methods and techniques for analysts entering the seed testing trade.

**** The tariff for attendance of the course is R 2 132.00 per person (5 days).**

NB: All clients/applicants that are utilizing the service delivery for issuance of international certificates are reminded of the new provisions that came into place from 01 April 2013, i.e. the issuance of sub-lot certificates and the terminating of a germination test when a required germination has been attained. This can be found in the letter on the application for International Certificates. Kindly read this amended procedure carefully.

Sub-Division: Seed Investigations

Angel Mabaso

(012) 808 5052

AngelMAB@daff.gov.za

Primary functions:

- Seed testing services to amend regulatory system (Plant Improvement Act – Table 4).
- Investigation of disputes and complaints with regard to seed testing in terms of the PIA requirements.

Secondary functions:

- Development of new methods and improvement of existing techniques for assessing the quality of seed in terms of the PIA.
- Implementation of a national proficiency testing program (germination) in order to evaluate the registered seed testing laboratories performance.

Services:

- Investigation of the quality of seed using methods that is not of the routine type, such as vigour, etc.
- Conduction of seed testing and investigations for quality determination.

Sub-Division: National Seed Collection

| | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| Scientist | : | Alta Gildenhuys |
| Tel. no. | : | (012) 8085390 |
| E-mail | : | AltaG@daff.gov.za |

Primary functions:

- Identification and verification of seed (including prohibited seed) found in official samples.
- Ensuring the reliability of the National Seed Collection in order to ensure accurate identification for compliance with ISTA and the PIA.

Services:

- Identification and verification of seed for various purposes, such as establishment of seed collections in registered laboratories, unknown seed found, etc.

- Conduction of seed testing and investigations for quality determination related to seed identification.
- Implementation of a national proficiency testing program (purity & seed identification) in order to evaluate the registered seed testing laboratories performance.

The organisation and presentation of the annual specialist workshop*** in order to promote standardisation of seed testing in South Africa can be undertaken by any of the sub-divisions, depending on the topic. **The workshop for 2015/2016 will most probably not be presented during 2015 due to the number of other seed related workshops already scheduled for this period.**

***** The tariff for attendance of the course is R 565.00 per person per day, as the number of days can differ from year to year, depending on the topic.**

You are reminded that the Division Seed Evaluation is responsible for the implementation of its primary and secondary function/s and that priority will be given to both. If possible the issuance of international certificates will receive the required attention. Be aware of the fact that the official functions of the OSTL cannot always be placed at the end of the queue in lieu of testing for international certificates.

The registered seed testing laboratories are responsible for the testing of seed in order to:

- determine quality of seed lots for trade purposes (marking/labeling of seed lots);
- conduct follow-up tests on seed lots, especially carry-over seed, dealer returns, etc. that are in the trade to determine if they still conform to the requirements (germination);
- conduct seed testing for certification purposes;
- testing of unprocessed seed (i.e. before cleaning) for determining the quality thereof;
- other purposes as deemed necessary by the laboratory.

ISTA amended their constitution a number of years ago to make provision for all seed testing laboratories, i.e. independent and company laboratories, to have the opportunity to become accredited. The procedure for accreditation is available on the website of ISTA (www.seedtest.org). As the workload for the OSTL has increased, and appears to continue to increase on an annual basis for issuance of international certificates, seed companies are encouraged to consider ISTA accreditation to ensure timeous testing for international certificates for export purposes.

In lieu of the afore-mentioned it will be necessary to first enquire before submitting samples in order to establish if we will be able to test your private samples.

Your co-operation is as always appreciated.

Kind regards



**JOAN SADIE
REGISTRAR: PLANT IMPROVEMENT ACT**