

The Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) recently revised the national warm season vegetatively propagated turfgrass certification standards. Since our (OCIA) standards must meet or exceed the AOSCA standards, we modified the OCIA standards for compliance. Some of the modifications are less stringent and some more stringent than the old OCIA standards. I enclose a copy of these modified standards which became effective **May 1, 2000**.

In this letter, I would like to clarify these modified OCIA standards:

Section I. This section relates to general standards, definitions, classes of turf , etc. The General Certification Standards were not changed except to change the word “seed” in these standards to “turf” or other term (sprigs, sod, plugs, etc.) that designate vegetative reproduction. This section also defines Foundation, Registered, and Certified turf. Our old standards did not permit the Registered class; these modified standards permit the Registered class unless the Breeder of the variety stipulates “no Registered class”. These standards also define the “Life of Stand” for clarification.

Section II. This section was not changed from our old standards except to clarify and to permit the Registered class. The standards in this section are more stringent than the AOSCA standards because we require a pre-plant inspection; whereas AOSCA regulations do not. We still feel that this pre-plant inspection is necessary to make sure the turfgrass is planted on “clean” ground.

Section III. This section is more stringent than our old standards but follows AOSCA closely. It requires three inspections per year and includes more rigorous inspections. It does permit one annual inspection rather than three when no certified crop is to be harvested ie for maintenance of purity.

Section IV. This section is less stringent than our old standards. It does have a higher tolerance for other varieties and other living plants compared to the old standards. However, the tolerance for other crops (perennial grasses) and noxious weeds are still “none”.

Certification is not complete and the turf will not be recognized as Certified (Blue Tag) Turf, Registered (Purple Tag), or Foundation (White Tag) Turf if the proper tag is not attached to each pallet or container. A certification number will be assigned when tags are ordered after the field has passed each inspection. Turf without an assigned certification number will not be recognized as certified turf. These tags are the best evidence available that the turf is a particular class of certified turf.

The complete record mentioned under Instructions and Procedures will be due annually by January 1st for the previous year’s production. A form will be provided by the OCIA office for this report.

Our Spring Directory is published (hard copy and on the internet) by February 1st of each year. All fields which have passed the Fall (October) inspection and certification numbers have been issued will be included in the Spring Directory. Our Fall Directory is

published in July. Fields which passed the Spring (April) inspection and certification numbers issued will be included in the Fall Directory.

I also enclose a copy of "Information and Fees for Turfgrass Inspections". Most of you will not be concerned with the "Special Certification" category. This category covers varieties which are under patent and/or license and which require special OCIA inspections in addition to those required by our standards.

For those of you who have already submitted requests for field inspections for 2000, we will conduct these inspections under the old fee structure and there will be no application fee for 2000. You will need to complete certification by obtaining a certification number and ordering appropriate tags. Also you will need to arrange for the Fall, 2000 inspection if you wish to produce certified turf between January and April of 2001. The new fee schedule will be effective after May 1, 2000 for those who have not already submitted applications for field inspections. Let us know if you have questions.