



# BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY AND TRADE THROUGH SEED CERTIFICATION

OECD seed schemes statistics 2020

# THE OECD SEED SCHEMES

Over the last 60 years, new plant varieties have greatly improved the yield, quality and resilience of agricultural crops. Innovation and international trade of new varieties will be critical to meeting global demands for food, feed, fibre and fuel.

**The OECD seed schemes support agriculture and trade by facilitating the movement of high quality agricultural seeds across borders.** The schemes harmonise certification standards and procedures for seed varietal identity and purity between participating countries.

They help to ensure that farmers can trust the seed they are buying and provide seed breeders with reassurance when entering new markets.

Established in 1958, the OECD seed schemes now include 61 countries, made up of OECD member and non-member states. Each country nominates a National Designated Authority (NDA) that is responsible for implementation. All decisions to amend/update the rules are taken by full consensus of all participating countries. The Rules governing the Codes and Schemes are regularly updated to reflect changes in trade, agriculture, environment and health and safety standards in member countries.

Every year the OECD seed schemes collect data on the weight of seed certified and the results of post control tests. Collecting long-term data enables analysis of the performance of the seed certification system in rapidly changing seed markets and facilitates the identification of trends and opportunities for the OECD Seed Schemes.

This brochure provides a snap shot of key facts and figures and an overview of the impact of the schemes. For more information visit [www.oecd.org/agriculture/seeds](http://www.oecd.org/agriculture/seeds).

The OECD seed schemes now include 61 countries, made up of OECD member and non-member states. Every year the OECD seed schemes collect data on the weight of seed certified and the results of post control tests.



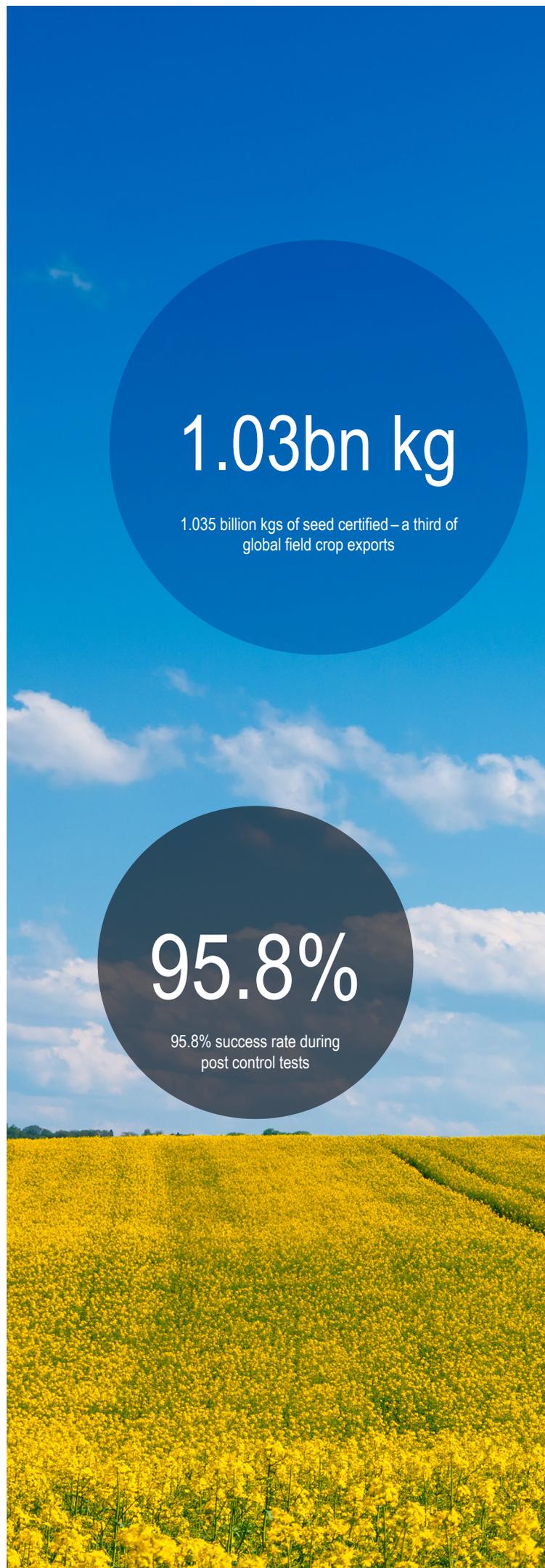
1.03bn kg

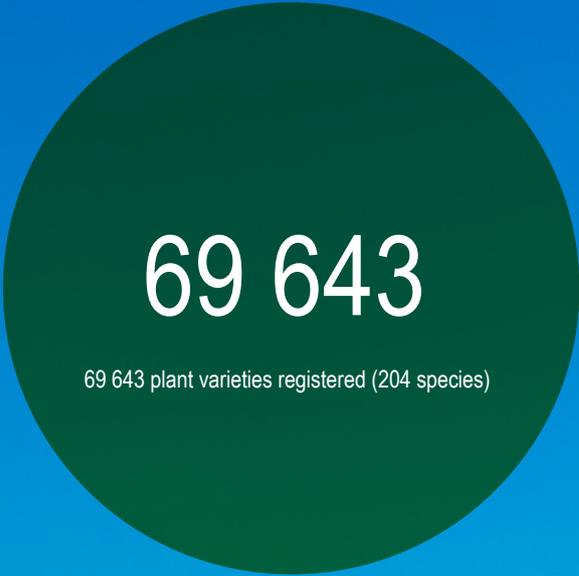
1.035 billion kgs of seed certified – a third of global field crop exports



95.8%

95.8% success rate during post control tests





69 643

69 643 plant varieties registered (204 species)



\$1.6bn

An estimated 1.6 Billion USD worth of trade

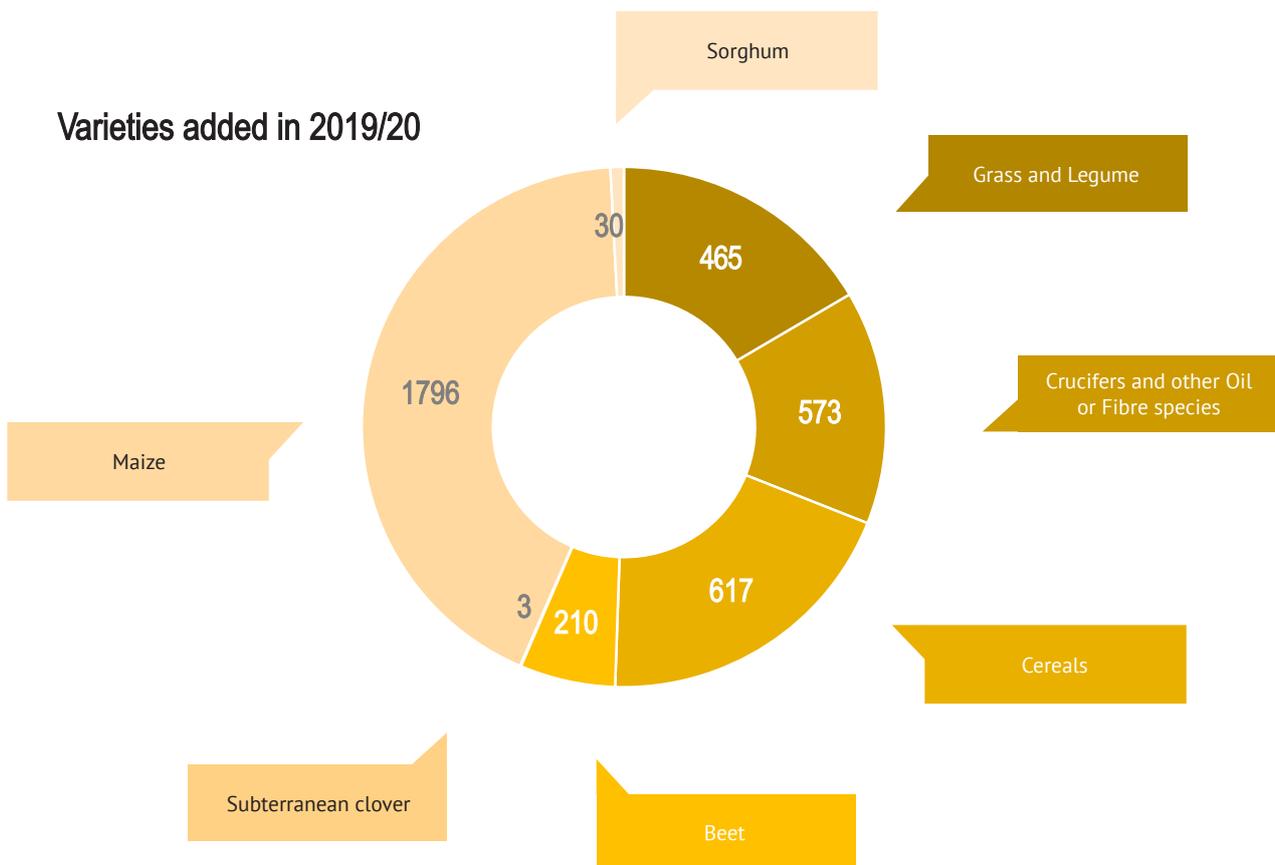
# THE OECD VARIETY LIST IS A KEY REFERENCE POINT FOR THE SEED INDUSTRY

69,643 plant varieties are currently registered under the OECD seed schemes, an increase of 4% from 2018/19. These varieties are registered under eight schemes. (Grass and Legume, Crucifers and Other Oil or Fibre species, Cereals, Beet, Subterranean Clover and Similar Species, Maize, and Sorghum)

In 2019/20 the OECD's online variety list received 117,167 page views and processed 69,282 searches. The top five countries visiting the site were Ukraine, Spain, Germany, Turkey and France.

The OECD variety list provides an insight into plant breeding and innovation for different field crops. In 2019/20, 49% of new varieties added to the OECD Seed Scheme variety list were Maize varieties.

Varieties added in 2019/20

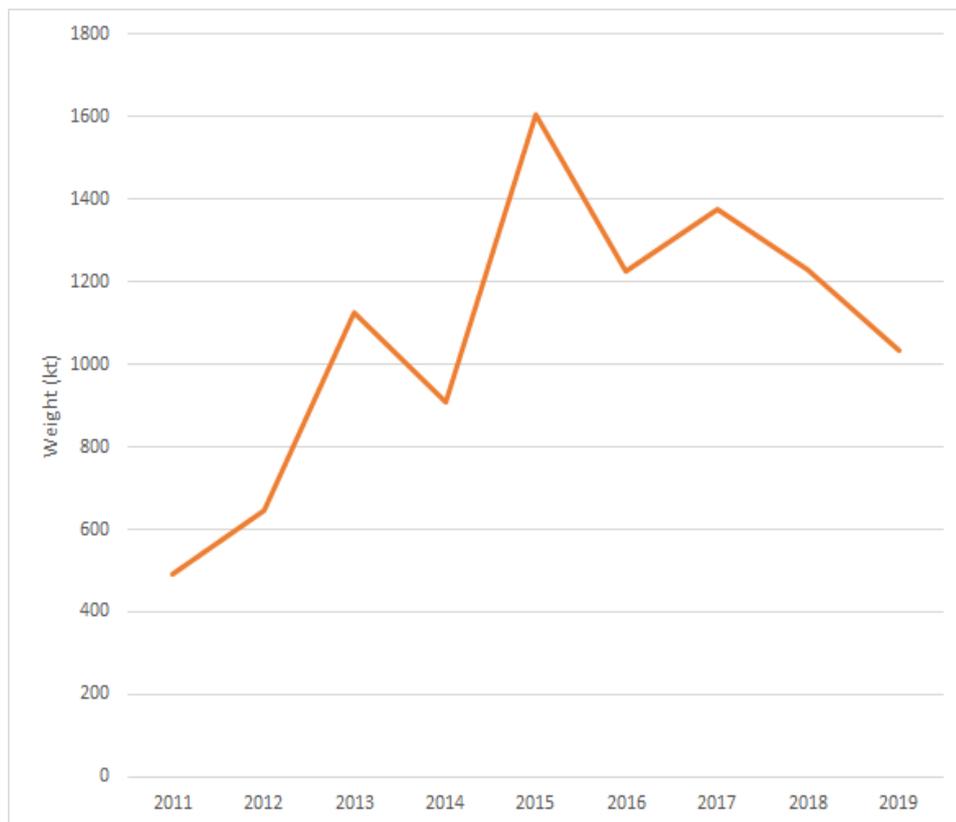


# A GROWING VOLUME OF SEED IS CERTIFIED UNDER THE OECD SEED SCHEMES

In 2019/20 the OECD seed schemes certified 1,035 billion kg of seed, roughly a third (28%) of the total global exports of field crops (pulses, cereals, industrial crops and forages). The weight of seed certified by the Seed Schemes has more than doubled in the last 10 years.

The three biggest producers of OECD certified seed in 2019-20 were Iran, France, Italy and the United States of America. They represent 741 million kg - about 3/4 of the total seed certified.

**Total weight of seed certified between 2011-2019 (million kgs)**



## THE SEED SCHEMES ENABLE COUNTRIES TO PRODUCE SEED ALL YEAR ROUND

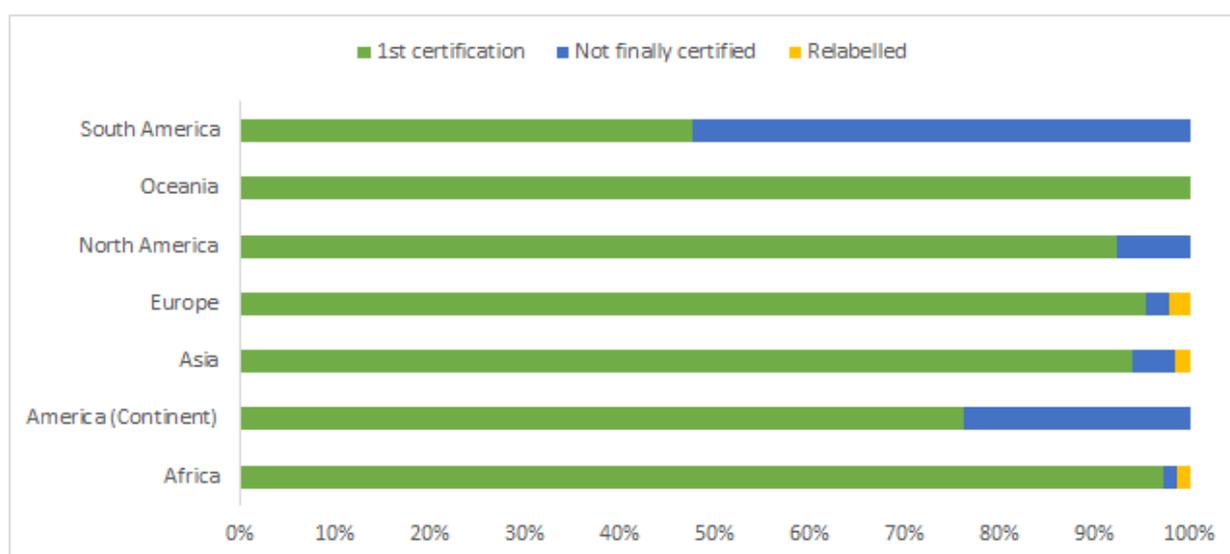
Seasonal climates limit agricultural production. Countries with restricted growing season are increasingly choosing to multiply their seed abroad.

The OECD seed schemes facilitate “off season production” and trade between countries in the northern and southern hemispheres to guarantee availability of seed in the spring. “Not finally certified” (NFC) seed makes up a large proportion of the seed produced in South American member countries

who have available land and suitable climate for off-season production.

NFC – or in other words seed that is exported from the country of production after field inspections but receives final certification in another country – provides a good indication of which countries are benefiting from multiplication abroad agreements.

Certification in each region (%)



## OECD CERTIFICATION PROVIDES A RELIABLE GUARANTEE OF SEED VARIETAL IDENTITY AND PURITY

Post Control Tests (PCTs) are a critical part of the Seed Schemes ability to monitor the performance of the system and confirm the varietal identity and purity of certified seed lots.

PCTs assess whether field inspection and other aspects of seed production that take place prior to the fastening of seed labels and sealing of seed containers have been correctly implemented.

In 2019/20 only 4.6% of post control tests failed. Of this, only 0.6 of seed failed based on identity of the seed lot and 3.6 failed based on Purity.

The data indicates that the schemes are working well as there are a high number of tests and a low number of failures.



## THE OECD SEED SCHEMES SUPPORT THE PRODUCTION OF THE WORLD'S MOST IMPORTANT FOOD AND FEED CROPS

In 2019/20 the top three species were *Triticum aestivum* (wheat), *Zea mays* (maize) and *Helianthus annuus* (sunflower). There has been limited variation in the leading species in the last five years.

347 million Kg of wheat seed was certified in 2019/20. Iran was the largest producer certifying 123 million kg, followed by the Italy (80.8 million kg) and Croatia (18.9 million kg).

293 million kg of maize seed were certified in 2019/20. France certified the greatest amount of maize seed (58 million kg) followed by Hungary (15 million kg) and then Italy (9.7 million kg) .

77 million kg of sunflower seed was certified in 2019/20, with France as the largest producer (23.8 million kg).

## GET IN TOUCH WITH US

2 rue André Pascal  
75016 Paris, France

[tad.codescheme@oecd.org](mailto:tad.codescheme@oecd.org)  
[www.oecd.org/agriculture/seeds](http://www.oecd.org/agriculture/seeds)