

## **2. Timeline of Farm-Saved Seed Policy/*Seeds Regulations* Modernization**

### **2013 - Bill C-18 introduced**

Bill C-18, the “Agricultural Growth Act,” is introduced and would amend several agricultural laws in Canada, including those governing Plant Breeders Rights (PBR), seeds, fertilizers, and animal health. This bill poses risks to farmers’ rights to save seed by increasing costs for those growing PBR-protected varieties and shifting seed-saving rights to a government-regulated privilege rather than a right. Currently, farmers can save PBR-protected seeds for replanting, but Bill C-18 would require them to pay royalties on entire harvests rather than just seed sales.

### **2015 - Canada amends its Plant Breeders’ Rights Act**

Canada amends its Plant Breeders’ Rights Act to align with UPOV 91, an international treaty protecting plant breeders’ intellectual property. Under UPOV 91, Canada recognized “farmers’ privilege,” allowing farmers to save seed for personal use without needing to pay royalties. The change sparks debate as some stakeholders believe it could lead to restrictions on farm-saved seeds in the future.

### **2018 - Alberta government releases report on plant-saved seed versus certified seed**

The report analyzes costs of saved and certified seeds over a thirteen-year period (2003-04 to 2015-16), using commercial prices for saved seed cleaning costs and certified seed prices from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry’s input data. Results show that saved seed was generally more economical, being costlier than certified seed in only one year. However, the analysis highlights the importance for producers to use their own data for accurate cost comparisons, weighing the convenience and opportunity cost of certified seed against the labor and resources required for saved seed.

([https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/econ15976/\\$FILE/Overview%20of%20Certified%20Seed%20and%20Farmer%20Saved%20Seed%20II.pdf](https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/econ15976/$FILE/Overview%20of%20Certified%20Seed%20and%20Farmer%20Saved%20Seed%20II.pdf))

### **2018 - “Save Our Seed” campaign launched**

The National Farmers Union (NFU) launches its “Save Our Seed” campaign, opposing changes that might impose royalties on farm-saved seeds. (<https://www.nfu.ca/learn/save-our-seed/right-to-farm-saved-seed/>)

### **2018-2019 - CFIA/AAFC consultations begin**

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) conduct consultations to explore royalty models. The idea is to increase funding for breeders by charging fees on farm-saved seed, fueling a debate about the impact on farmers’ rights and costs.

### **2019 - ASBs begin advocating for farm-saved seed**

Alberta’s Agricultural Service Boards passed a resolution requesting the CFIA/AAFC abandon the proposal to implement the adoption of End Point Royalties (EPRs) for farm-saved seed “trailing royalty contracts”. (<https://agriculturalserviceboards.com/advocacy/previous-year-resolutions/2019-resolutions/resolution-e2-19-no-royalties-on-farm-saved-seed/>)

### **2020 - CFIA creates working groups and task teams for *Seeds Regulations* amendments**

As part of its seed regulatory modernization plan, the CFIA creates working groups and task teams. The purpose of the seed regulatory modernization working groups under the AAFC's Value Chain Roundtables is to provide a collaborative approach where government and impacted seed/seed potato stakeholders collaborate in the co-development of proposed options to provide recommendations to the CFIA for amending the *Seeds Regulations*.

(<https://inspection.canada.ca/en/plant-health/seeds/seed-regulatory-modernization#a4>)

## **2021 - Seeds Canada Officially Established**

In 2020, four seed sector organizations (Canadian Plant Technology Agency, Commercial Seed Analysts Association of Canada, Canadian Seed Institute, and Canadian Seed Trade Association) all voted in favour of amalgamation to become one new national organization. Seeds Canada aims to be the leading advocate for Canada's seed sector, supporting growth domestically and internationally. Seeds Canada becomes official on February 1, 2021. (<https://redwheat.com/agronomy/wheat-news/introducing-seeds-canada/>)

## **2021 - CFIA launches Needs Assessment survey on seed regulatory modernization**

The CFIA launches a needs assessment survey to establish a baseline understanding of seed and seed potato stakeholder needs to provide important perspective to the process; issues What We Heard Report (2021) <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/about-cfia/transparency/consultations-and-engagement/completed/survey-seed-regulatory-modernization/what-we-heard-report>)

## **2021 - ASB carries motion to protect farmers right to farm-saved seed**

Background: <https://agriculturalserviceboards.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/9-21-protect-farmers-right-to-farm-saved-seed.pdf>

## **2022 - Study finds farm-saved seed performs as well as certified seed**

In a three-year comparison of Certified and farm-saved seed, no significant differences were seen in yield and protein content of wheat. (<https://www.topcropmanager.com/farm-saved-seed-performed-as-well-as-certified-seed/>)

## **2023 - CFIA holds consultations on Seed Regulatory Modernization**

The purpose of this consultation was to update stakeholders on progress made to date towards modernizing the *Seeds Regulations*; issues What We Heard Report (2023) <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/about-cfia/transparency/consultations-and-engagement/completed/seed-regulatory-modernization-winter-2023/what-we-heard-report-winter-2023>

## **2024 - CFIA holds consultations on Seed Regulatory Modernization**

The purpose of this consultation was to update stakeholders on progress made to date towards modernizing the *Seeds Regulations*; issues What We Heard Report (2024) <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/about-cfia/transparency/consultations-and-engagement/completed/seed-regulatory-modernization-winter-2024/what-we-heard-report-winter-2024>

CFIA Timeline into 2025/2026

**Winter 2025**

CFIA attends stakeholder meetings to initiate discussions on policy paper positions

**Spring 2025**

Publish a policy paper outlining CFIA direction on the *Seed Regulations*

**Summer 2025**

Stakeholder feedback on policy paper direction

**Fall 2025**

Publication of the What We Heard report on policy paper direction

**Winter 2026**

Publication of draft amendments to the *Seeds Regulations* in *Canada Gazette*, Part I for comment