



Selling Agricultural Seed in Iowa Including Selling Direct From the Farm Permit & Labeling Requirements

The purpose of this document is to provide farmers and commercial entities direction on how to sell agricultural seed in Iowa. This is a summary of the Iowa Seed Law. For more information on specifics on vegetable, turf or lawn seed; hybrid corn; noxious weed seed content; foundation or registered/certified seed; commercial sale of seed; seed permits; and seed bonds, please contact the Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship (IDALS) Entomology Bureau.

Q. Does the seller need to obtain a seed permit?

A. A person must first obtain a seed permit from IDALS to engage in business before selling, distributing, advertising, soliciting for orders, offering or exposing for sale, agricultural or vegetable seed.

EXCEPTIONS –

(a) A seed permit is not required of persons selling seeds which have been packed and distributed by a person holding and having in force a permit.

(b) A seed permit is not required of persons selling or advertising seed of their own production, provided that the seed is stored or delivered to a purchaser only on or from the farm or premises where grown.

Q. If I need a seed permit, how much does it cost?

A. A first-year seed permit is \$10. In future years the permit fee is a sliding scale based on gross annual sale of seed in Iowa the previous year.

Q. What does the Iowa Seed Law require for seed to be sold from the farm or by a permitted entity?

A. The seed must be labeled on the basis of tests performed by the Iowa State University Seed Laboratory or a commercial seed laboratory personally supervised by a registered seed technologist. The required tests are purity analysis, noxious weed examination, and germination.

Q. Any specific prohibitions a farmer should be aware of before selling seed from the farm?

A. Agricultural seed should not contain more than one and one-half percent by weight of weed seed. Seed cannot be labeled as a variety that is a protected variety under the Plant Variety Protection Act unless properly certified by the Iowa Crop Improvement Association (ICIA). The word 'trace' cannot be used as a substitute for any statement that is required. The word 'type' cannot be used in labeling in connection with the name of an agricultural seed variety.

Q. What needs to be on the seed label?

A. All agricultural and vegetable seed sold, offered for sale or transported within Iowa shall be labeled with the following -

- (1) The name of the kind, or kind and variety, of each agricultural seed present in excess of five percent, and the percentage by weight. If "variety not stated" is used on the label, the kind of seed must still be listed. Seed shall not be labeled or advertised under a trademark or brand name in a manner that may create the impression that the trademark or brand name is a variety name.

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- (2) Lot number or other lot identification
- (3) State of origin of alfalfa and red clover.
- (4) Percentage by weight of all weed seed.
- (5) The name and weight of occurrence per unit weight of each kind of secondary noxious weed seed present.
- (6) Percentage by weight of agricultural seed which may be designated as "other crop seed" other than those required to be named on the label.
- (7) Percentage by weight of inert matter.
- (8) For each named agricultural seed, the label must state -
 - a. Percentage of germination, exclusive of hard seed.
 - b. Percentage of hard seed, if present.
 - c. The calendar month and year the test was completed.
- (9) Name and address of the person/company who labeled the seed.
- (10) If the seed is treated, inoculated, or coated, contact IDALS for more labeling details.

The test to determine the germination must have been completed within nine months, excluding the month of the tests, prior to sale, transporting, or advertising for sale.

Contacts

- For questions about labeling requirements or State Law -
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