



*NSHS-accredited organizations
can carry out seed sampling,
inspection or laboratory
testing for the issuance of
phytosanitary certification.*

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Seed Health Accreditation Program

USDA-APHIS has responsibility for the Seed Health Accreditation Program. As part of the NSHS, accreditation can be obtained in four distinct areas:

- ▶ **Laboratory seed health testing**
- ▶ **Sampling for seed health testing**
- ▶ **Phytosanitary field (or greenhouse) inspection**
- ▶ **Visual inspection of seed for phytosanitary certification**

Any public or private organization is eligible to apply for accreditation if NSHS requirements can be met. Accreditees include seed companies, crop improvement associations, private testing and inspection lab services, and public seed testing laboratories. Seed laboratories and companies of all sizes can benefit from accreditation. Specific testing and inspection standards required for accreditation are contained in APHIS manuals available on the NSHS website at www.seedhealth.org. On-line application and accreditation fee information are also available on the website.

The Iowa State University Seed Science Center serves as the NSHS Administration Unit (AU), managing the day-to-day activities of the accreditation system on behalf of APHIS. Entities seeking to obtain accreditation through the NSHS should contact the AU at the ISU Seed Science Center or download an application from the NSHS website. If an applicant meets initial requirements, the AU will coordinate an on-site audit. Audit results will be reviewed by the USDA-APHIS. Upon successful evaluation, the applicant will be granted an accreditation certificate.

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National Seed Health System





Do you export seeds to countries requiring phytosanitary certification? Do you provide seed testing or inspection services for the seed industry? If so, becoming accredited under the National Seed Health System can be a valuable way for you to expand or improve your ability to meet your customer needs.

Objectives

The National Seed Health System (NSHS) is a government and industry collaboration designed to facilitate crop improvement and international seed trade by expediting the phytosanitary certification process. The NSHS functions according to agreements between the USDA APHIS-PPQ, the American Seed Trade Association, and the Seed Science Center at Iowa State University.

The NSHS was created to improve the flexibility and efficiency of the United States phytosanitary certification system to better meet the needs of the seed industry, through industry involvement and cooperation. NSHS personnel also provide scientific expertise to support reform of phytosanitary regulations of domestic trading partners, and carry out a scientific, peer-review system for evaluating seed health testing methods for global use in the detection of seedborne pathogens.

Benefits

NSHS-Accredited organizations can carry out seed sampling, inspection or laboratory testing for the issuance of phytosanitary certification. This can expedite the issuance of phytosanitary certificates, resulting in a more efficient business model and better customer service. Timely seed health testing and phytosanitary inspection facilitate logistical planning and can help avoid shipping delays, key to acquiring and maintaining international business. The NSHS focuses on standardizing seed

health test methods through a peer-review process that involves a panel of seed pathologists. Standardized tests along with good laboratory practices will minimize erroneous results, reducing product liability for exporters and preventing the rejection of imports. Harmonization of methods with international groups such as the International Seed Testing Association helps to assure customers and regulators of accurate results and reduces the occurrence of duplication of testing for pathogens.

Purpose

- ▶ **Establishing standardized seed health laboratory test and phytosanitary inspection procedures.**
- ▶ **Accrediting entities to carry out phytosanitary inspections and laboratory testing for export certification of seed.**
- ▶ **Promoting phytosanitary reform as a means to foster trade.**



NSHS

Accreditation Options



Seed Health Testing



Phytosanitary Inspection



Seed Sampling



Visual Inspection

Find out more: seedhealth.org

Contact: NSHS@iastate.edu or 515.294.6493