

## AVAILABILITY OF TREE SEED TESTING IN THE UNITED STATES--1964

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The buyer likes to be assured that seed is viable, reasonably pure, and true to name. He may want to know other things about the seed, but these three factors are basic. To inform him on these and other qualities, all 50 States have laws that require labeling of agricultural

seed. To make official tests on such agricultural seed, most States maintain seed laboratories. These laboratories also usually make service tests.

Official tests check compliance with labeling or other provisions of the seed law, and service

tests, usually done for a fee, give basic information on the physical quality of seed. The official State seed laboratories may do both official and service tests, and some commercial seed laboratories do service testing.

With tree seed, however, the buyer is limited in obtaining both official and service tests. Thirteen States have laws that are interpreted to cover tree seeds. They could, therefore, be expected to test tree seed. Some other States might also test on a service basis. However, a few States with such legislation do little or no regular testing. Yet one of the most active States (Oregon) lacks tree seed legislation, and other States that test tree seed or are willing to do so also lack such legislation. To determine the availability of official tree seed testing, I checked with the official in charge of this activity in each of 48 States<sup>1</sup> in 1964.

According to the replies, most of tree seed testing is done in three laboratories in Georgia, New York, and Oregon. <sup>2</sup> Georgia and New York seed laws cover tree seeds. Oregon's law does not cover tree seeds, so its laboratory is limited to service tests. These three major

<sup>1</sup> Information not solicited from Alaska and Hawaii.

<sup>2</sup> The addresses of these laboratories are as follows: Eastern Tree Seed Laboratory, P.O. Box 1077, Macon, Ga., 31202; Department of Seed Investigations, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, P.O. Box 462, Geneva, N.Y.; and Seed Laboratory, Farm Crops Annex, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oreg. The addresses of other State seed laboratories can be obtained by consulting the current issue of "Seed Trade Buyers Guide," 47th Edition, 1964 Vol. XLVII, by Seed World Publications, 327 S. LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill., 60604. or by writing to the State Department of Agriculture in the capital of the State concerned.

laboratories each receive annually 100 to 800 and more tree seed samples for testing. The Eastern Tree Seed Laboratory at Macon, Ga., operated jointly by Georgia and the U.S. Forest Service, is unique in handling only tree seed.

More than 20 States either regularly test tree seed on a modest basis or indicate their willingness or intention of doing so. Some State seed laboratories test only for residents of their State. Fees vary considerably for tree seed tests. Some of the laboratories also conduct seed research while others confine their activities to official and service seed testing. Several more States that have not done any tree seed testing probably would do so if requested.

Beside State seed laboratories, commercial seed laboratories test for established fees. Some have tested tree seed. Although I have not checked any for their reactions, there are commercial laboratories that may be willing to test tree seeds in some 17 States and in 1 Canadian province. <sup>3</sup>

Now that the Association of Official Seed Analysts (AOSA) has adopted rules for testing tree seeds, more States will probably test on request of their citizens. Individuals interested in having woody-plant seed tested locally should check with their State seed laboratories. There may also be more tree seed testing by commercial seed laboratories. Chances for obtaining such services now seem better than ever.

<sup>3</sup> For further information on commercial seed laboratories, contact Robert Colborn, Secretary-Treasurer, Society of Commercial Seed Technologists, Colborn Seed Testing Service, Lincoln, Nebr.

TABLE 1.--Tree seed testing by States

Activity	States
Annually test many samples.....	Georgia* (Eastern Tree Seed Laboratory), New York,* Oregon.
Annually test a small number of samples.	Arkansas, <sup>1</sup> Colorado,* Delaware, Florida,* Iowa, Maryland,* Massachusetts,* New Jersey, New Mexico, Pennsylvania.*
Intermittently test a few samples as submitted.	Indiana, Michigan,* Minnesota, West Virginia, Wisconsin.
Refer tests to Oregon laboratory..	Idaho, Montana, Washington.
Prepared to test, or plan to do so	California, Maine, Mississippi, Nevada,* South Carolina,* South Dakota,* Virginia, Wyoming.
Do not test tree seeds <sup>2</sup> .....	Alabama,* Arizona,* Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont.
No information received.....	Rhode Island.

\* Indicates that tree seed is covered by State law.

<sup>1</sup> Only fruit tree seeds have been tested.

<sup>2</sup> Replies from several of these States implied that tree seed would be tested on request but no requests have yet been made.