



ISTA
Seed Quality Assurance



Dear ISTA and ISF Stakeholders,

During the time of the COVID-19 pandemic a lot of restrictions occur.

It is crucial that many governments acknowledge the seed sector as an essential industry. The continued delivery of quality seed to farmers is critical to ensure that they are able to grow crops during the coming planting seasons, in order to ensure food security and achieve #ZeroHunger in the long term.

We ask the continuous and increased efforts from all governments around the world to facilitate domestic and international seed movement, as well as to lift any restrictions that prevent workers in the seed sector from continuing their work.

We are pleased that all ISTA accredited laboratories are working on an emergency staffing to ensure that seed analysis certificates continue to be issued, facilitating international and domestic seed trade. In times where planting season is either ongoing, starting or under preparation delivery of healthy and good quality seed on time is critical.

In addition, accredited laboratories including from the private sector are continuing with seed health testing which is paramount to support national phytosanitary goals and facilitate the movement of healthy seed across borders.

As ISTA accreditation audits are not possible due to several reasons, the ISTA Executive Committee decided therefore to prolong the ISTA accreditation without further notice for a maximum of 1 year for the laboratories and sampling entities for which the re-accreditation audits are planned for 2020. This means that all accreditation Certificates expiring before December 31, 2020 are still valid for an additional year after the initial audit date, unless replaced by a new accreditation Certificate. The affected laboratories will not receive any further information, but will stay listed as accredited on the ISTA Website (<https://www.seedtest.org/en/memberlaboratories.html>). National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO's) and Import/Export Control Officers are asked to consult the ISTA Website, for further information on the state of the accreditation of specific laboratories.

The ISTA Accreditation and Technical Department are working hard to provide new audit dates with the respective laboratories as soon as possible.

We would like to recognize the hard work delivered by public authorities and private laboratories to cope with this unprecedented situation.

Take care, and we wish you all health!

Best regards,

Dr. Andreas Wais
ISTA Secretary General

Michael Keller
ISF Secretary General