The Association of American Seed Control Officials (AASCO) was organized in 1946 with each state, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Canada Agriculture as voting members. The objectives of AASCO are to (i) maintain a recommended uniform state seed law as a means of promoting uniformity in seed laws and regulations (ii) to serve as an exchange of constructive ideas among administration of seed laws, (iii) and to promote a general appreciation of the benefits of seed control to consumers by encouraging the marketing of correctly labeled seed of high quality.

All seeds that are sold, advertised, or offered for sale, are subject to the requirements of the state seed law and regulations in the state where they are sold. This includes certified seeds. Seed control officials have responsibility for assuring that all such seeds, including certified seeds, are correctly labeled.

THE PURPOSES OF SEED LAWS

Seed laws and regulations have two principal purposes: (i) to insure that all seeds are correctly labeled within testing tolerances and (ii) to insure that all seeds meet minimum specifications identified by the laws and regulations of that state. With certified seed, a third dimension is added, in that certified seed must conform to high standards for genetic purity and, generally, high standards for other quality factors.

Seed control officials have changed their views of seed certification several times since 1950. The first change was associated with amendments to state seed laws which provided certification with legal status. This was accomplished over time, on a state by state basis. In Virginia, for example, certification was first officially recognized by an amendment to the Seed Law in 1950. The second change was associated with the passage of the Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA) in 1970. This