

**PRAIRIE GRAIN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds (PRCO)  
Operating Procedures**

(May 2008)

# Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds (PRCO) Operating Procedures

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# Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds (PRCO) Operating Procedures

## Introduction

This document outlines the evaluation and testing system operated by the Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds (PRCO). *Appendix A* contains definitions. *Appendix B* and *Appendix C* describe the operating procedures for the registration of a condiment mustard cultivar and a flax cultivar, respectively, for production in Western Canada. Information for PRCO members is incorporated into a companion document, *General Information Concerning Membership in the Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds (PRCO)* of the Prairie Grain Development Committee (PGDC), which is available to PRCO members in the password-protected section on the PGDC website ([www.pgdc.ca](http://www.pgdc.ca)), under the "Committee: Oilseeds" link.

## 1. Objectives

The PRCO is responsible for the testing and evaluation of candidate cultivars of condiment mustard [*Sinapis alba* L. (yellow mustard) and *Brassica juncea* (L.) Czern. and Coss. (oriental and brown types)] and flax (*Linum usitatissimum* L.), for registration in Canada. The PRCO mandates are:

- To establish guidelines and define criteria for the recommendation of potential cultivars of condiment mustard and flax for registration by the Variety Registration Office (VRO) of the Plant Production Division, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA);
- To co-ordinate and conduct trials and characterize the phenotype of potential cultivars of condiment mustard and flax as per the operating procedures developed by the PRCO and approved by the VRO;
- To specify relevant reference cultivars as standards for agronomic, quality and disease resistance traits of candidate cultivars of condiment mustard and flax;
- To determine whether condiment mustard and flax candidate cultivars have merit relative to the standard and to recommend such candidate cultivars to the VRO;
- To act as a forum for exchange of information relevant to the development of improved cultivars of condiment mustard and flax for Canada;
- To advise Canadian regulatory agencies on issues concerning condiment mustard and flax grown in Canada.

## 2. Guidelines for Committee Operation

The PRCO Operating Procedures are reviewed at least every three (3) years and updated as required by the membership of the PRCO. Operating Procedures are valid pending approval by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of the PRCO membership in attendance at the annual meeting of the PRCO and recognition by the VRO.

Appendices to the PRCO Operating Procedures are reviewed and updated on an annual basis, or as required, to reflect new markets, technologies, races of pathogens or testing in new environments.

Appendices to the PRCO Operating Procedures include unique procedures for condiment mustard (*Appendix B*) and flax (*Appendix C*) that govern the conduct of Co-operative tests, collection of data and the measurement of traits of interest for each crop species.

## **2.1 Membership and Structure**

The membership of the PRCO consists of individuals actively engaged in the research and development, production, marketing, commercialization and processing of commodities or end-use products of condiment mustard or flax grown in Canada. Members are recognized for their technical and/or scientific expertise for a specific crop, or the end-use products derived from the crop species within the PRCO. Members will participate on one (1) of the Evaluation Teams (Breeding, Agronomy and Production Evaluation Team, Disease Evaluation Team, and Quality and End-Use Evaluation Team) that will best benefit from their expertise. All PRCO members will vote on motions and/or resolutions at the meetings of the PRCO and its committees.

Membership on the PRCO is reviewed annually by the Membership Committee and is subject to approval by the PRCO at the annual meeting. The Membership Committee consists of a member from each of the Evaluation Teams and is chaired by the PRCO Secretary. The PRCO Secretary may request the participation of additional PRCO members. The Membership Committee reviews the membership list, receives requests for new members and sponsored members, and presents recommendations for new members as well as recommendations on membership issues to the PRCO members at the annual meeting.

All applications for new membership in the PRCO must be received by the PRCO Secretary at least seven (7) days prior to the annual meeting. PRCO members in good standing can nominate new members by forwarding the name(s), affiliation(s), and co-ordinates of the nominee(s), and written justification describing the expertise of the nominee(s), to the PRCO Secretary who will communicate the information to the Membership Committee for review.

If the nomination(s) is supported by the PRCO Membership Committee, then the PRCO membership in attendance at the annual meeting will vote on the nomination(s). New member(s) will have voting status effective April 1 following the annual meeting.

In the case of members representing the seed trade, producer organizations, and provincial governments (sponsored members), the identity of the sponsored member shall be requested in writing by the PRCO Secretary at least one (1) month prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO. The identity of the sponsored member shall be provided in writing to the PRCO Secretary at least ten (10) days prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO. Once the sponsored member has been identified, the PRCO Secretary will forward the appropriate documents to the member as well as the password to access the password-protected section of the PRCO on the PGDC website ([www.pgdc.ca](http://www.pgdc.ca)).

Members not attending at least two (2) concurrent annual meetings of the PRCO will forfeit their membership status. Exceptions to this rule are accepted only when there is prior notification of extenuating circumstances preventing the member from attending the annual meeting.

Members of the PRCO hold concurrent membership in the Prairie Grain Development Committee (PGDC) which functions to organize the annual meeting of the PRCO and the other recommending committees, and other concurrent workshops or meetings. The Chair and Secretary of the PRCO are the PRCO representatives on the Executive of the PGDC.

The Executive of the PRCO consists of the Chair and Secretary of the PRCO and the Chairs and Secretaries of the three Evaluation Teams. The Chair and Secretary of the PRCO will be elected from the membership of the PRCO. The Chairs and Secretaries of the three Evaluation Teams will be elected from the membership of their respective Evaluation Team. All Executive positions are held for a three (3) year term which commence on April 1 following the annual



meeting where the position holders were elected. Terms are renewable, subject to PRCO membership approval.

In circumstances where a Chair is unavailable to act in the official capacity of the position, the Secretary will assume the role of Chair and appoint a temporary Secretary from among the membership of the evaluation team or the PRCO, whichever is appropriate. In circumstances where the Secretary is unavailable, the Chair will appoint a temporary Secretary from among the membership of the evaluation team or the PRCO, whichever is appropriate.

A Financial Auditor may be elected from the membership.

A Parliamentarian Member is nominated by the PRCO membership at the start of the annual meeting of the PRCO. This member serves to provide guidance on the rules of order and conduct of the annual meeting.

The PRCO membership participates on the Appeals Board (Sections 2.4) and the Contract Registration Committee (Section 3.2.5).

## **2.2 Meetings**

The PRCO meets annually, usually in the second or third week of February. These meetings may be held concurrent with the PGDC meetings at a location determined at the previous annual meeting of the PGDC. Notice for the meeting will be distributed through the PGDC or the holder of the contract for organization and co-ordination of the PGDC and related meetings. The normal sequence for the February meetings of the PRCO membership is as follows although logistics may result in changes:

- Executive Committee PRCO
- Evaluation Teams, Membership Committee and other Committees as required
- Entire PRCO membership annual meeting
- Executive Committee PRCO

Meetings are open to all interested parties. All guests must make a request to the PRCO Chair to attend the meetings and are to be identified at the start of the meetings. Members attending meetings of their respective evaluation teams and/or the annual meeting of the PRCO may, by a simple majority vote, create in camera portions of the meetings, as necessary.

All meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

Quorum for the meetings of the Evaluation Teams shall be a simple majority of the total current membership of the respective Evaluation Teams. Quorum for the annual meeting of the PRCO shall be a simple majority of the total current PRCO membership. The only exception to these quorums is when a member has provided, to the relevant Chair, advance (7 days) notice of their absence and the extenuating circumstances that prevented their attendance at the meeting(s). In this case, the absent member will not be included in the total membership count.

Meetings of the Contract Registration Committee or Membership Committee will be held prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO if there is a reason to do so. Extraordinary meetings may be called on thirty (30) days notice or less with the consensus of the membership of the committees.

An Appeals Board meeting may be held after the adjournment of the annual meeting of the PRCO in February if an appeal has been initiated and the members of the Appeals Board are available for the meeting. Other meetings of the Appeals Board may be called with the consensus of the membership of the Appeals Board. The Appellant will pay for all expenses incurred for such a meeting.

Extraordinary meetings of the PRCO may be called on thirty (30) days notice. A simple majority of the total current PRCO membership is required to call such meetings. Notice of

extraordinary meetings will be communicated by facsimile, electronic mail, or telephone. The notice will be sent by the PRCO Chair or Secretary, who will record notification of receipt of the notice and tabulate the vote to support the calling of the extraordinary meeting.

### 2.3 Voting

Voting is normally done at the meetings of the Evaluation Teams and the annual meeting of the PRCO. Proxy votes are not permitted.

Major motions such as recommendations, changes to procedures, membership or set aside of the rules and tabling of motions, require a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of the membership in attendance at the meeting.

Minor motions such as calling and adjourning of meetings and approval of reports, require a simple majority of the membership in attendance at the meeting.

In special circumstances, and at the discretion of the pertinent Chair, voting may be conducted using regular mail, facsimile or electronic mail. This would be considered an extraordinary meeting. Quorum for voting at such a meeting is a simple majority of the membership who:

- a) Received the motion as distributed to the membership and notification of receipt of the motion was received back to the Chair or Secretary; and
- b) Are available to submit their vote back to the PRCO Chair or Secretary in the time allocated for completion of the vote.

Voting at Evaluation Team meetings will normally be by a show of hands of members in attendance at the meeting. Voting at the annual meeting of the PRCO will be by a show of voting cards that have been prepared as per the current membership list and distributed to members at the beginning of the annual meeting. Counting of votes will be by two (2) members of the PRCO appointed by the Chair at the start of the meeting. The members will independently count and record the votes. If the vote count agrees between the recording members, the result will be announced. If the vote count does not agree, a recount will be done.

It is expected that all members will vote impartially.

Abstentions are expected only in the case of a previously and openly declared conflict of interest (refer to Section 6). Where the number of abstentions is equal to or greater than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the votes cast, the Chair will ask for a re-vote. If the re-vote results in the number of abstentions being equal to or greater than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the votes cast, the Chair will file a report stating that no recommendation could be made.

The Chair (or Acting Chair) is not entitled to a vote. The Chair may actively participate in the discussions only if the Chair steps down from that position for the duration of the discussion.

Under extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary for the PRCO to temporarily disregard its approved procedures. Any proposed suspension of procedures must be put to a vote, with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of the membership in attendance required for the procedures to be suspended. The rationale for such an action and the record of the empowering vote will form part of the final decision.

There are two levels of voting for consideration of a candidate cultivar. These levels are at the Evaluation Team meetings and at the annual meeting of the PRCO. All members will cast a vote, including the breeder/sponsor, providing that he/she is an eligible voting member.

In order to allow sufficient time for consideration of the request to support a candidate cultivar, the members must receive the Request for Support of Registration document for a candidate cultivar at least seven (7) days prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO. Members are expected to cast their vote based on the science of the data presented in the Request for Support of Registration document and vetting of the data at the Evaluation Team meetings. The

vote at the annual meeting of the PRCO will be made according to the holistic attributes of the candidate cultivar.

**Voting at the Evaluation Team meetings:** Based on information provided by the Registration Trials and on the member's area of expertise, each Evaluation Team member will consider the specific merit<sup>1</sup> of each candidate cultivar which has completed the registration testing requirements relevant to the Evaluation Team.

The Chair of the Evaluation Team will call for a vote to be cast in one of the following categories:

- Support:** The candidate cultivar has a summary of performance superior to that of the relevant check cultivar(s) for the traits specified in the operating procedures developed for the relevant crop.
- Do not object:** The candidate cultivar shows similarity to relevant check cultivar(s) by having a summary of performance equal to or better than the relevant check cultivar(s) for the traits specified in the operating procedures developed for the relevant crop.
- Object:** The candidate's attributes for the traits being considered are inferior to those of the relevant check cultivar(s) for the traits specified in the operating procedures developed for the relevant crop.
- Abstain:** Abstentions are only expected in cases of openly declared conflicts of interest, or in the absence of information on which to base a decision.

**Voting at the annual meeting of the PRCO:** Based on the information provided by the Registration Trials, and vetting by the Evaluation Teams, the PRCO membership will consider the overall attributes and merit of the candidate cultivar. The breeder/sponsor may present a case requesting support for the registration of the candidate cultivar. Deliberations and recommendations are then presented by the Chair of each Evaluation Team. Following discussion, a motion to support the recommendation for registration of the candidate cultivar may be put forward by the breeder/sponsor. At the PRCO level of consideration of a candidate cultivar, deficiency in one characteristic of merit may be compensated for by strength in another characteristic of merit. Traits not considered for merit should not be used to influence the basis for decision of the vote for a candidate cultivar.

The PRCO Chair will call for a vote to be cast in one of the following categories:

- Support:** The candidate cultivar shows merit by having a summary of characteristics which are equal to, better than, or superior to the relevant check cultivar(s) for the traits determining merit as specified in the operating procedures developed for the relevant crop.

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<sup>1</sup> A candidate cultivar that shows merit is "equal to", "better than" or "superior to" relevant check cultivar(s). The phrase "equal to" is defined as arithmetic equality to the check mean or mean of the checks. The phrase "better than" is defined as arithmetic superiority to the check mean or mean of the checks. The phrase "superior to" is defined as statistical superiority to the check mean or mean of the checks by a one-tailed test at the 95% confidence level using the pooled error mean square as the error term.

- Object:** The candidate cultivar's attributes are inferior to those of the relevant check cultivar(s) for the traits determining merit as specified in the operating procedures developed for the relevant crop.
- Abstain:** Abstentions are only expected in cases of openly declared conflicts of interest, or in the absence of information on which to base a decision.

Recommendations to support the registration of a candidate cultivar are in effect for two (2) years from the adjournment of the annual meeting where the recommendation was made. The PRCO Secretary will record the results of the votes and/or recommendation and submit the documentation to the VRO within two (2) weeks from the adjournment of the annual meeting. Exceptions to this include, but are not limited to, the meetings of the Contract Registration Committee and request for support for Interim Registration. If erroneous data or omission of pertinent data is used as a basis of decision for voting on a candidate cultivar, the breeder/ sponsor must inform the PRCO Chair with an explanation and provide a new supporting document to the PRCO Executive. The PRCO Executive will determine if there was an omission or error and if this information may have affected the original decision. If it is determined that the original decision would have been affected, then the Chair will inform the PRCO membership of the need for a re-vote.

#### **2.4 Appeal of PRCO Recommendation for Request of Support for Registration of a Candidate Cultivar**

The PRCO recommendation for request of support for registration of a candidate cultivar may be appealed by the breeder/sponsor of the candidate cultivar. The bases of appeal of a PRCO recommendation of a candidate cultivar are:

- a) Failure of the PRCO to follow its approved Operating Procedures document and its relevant appendices; and/or
- b) The recommendation was the result of erroneous data.

A written request to appeal the recommendation must be received by the PRCO Chair within fifteen (15) days of the close of the annual meeting of the PRCO. The appeal must indicate the basis for the appeal and include a copy of the data package for the candidate cultivar. Consideration of the appeal will be done by the Appeals Board.

The Appeals Board will consist of eight (8) individuals, representing the PRCO Executive and PRCO membership. Where there is a conflict of interest, members of the Appeals Board will appoint alternates. These alternates will be selected based on the next ascending seed number on the PRCO membership list. The PRCO Chair will preside over the meeting of the Appeals Board and the PRCO Secretary will record the minutes. The Appeals Board consists of:

- The PRCO Chair and Secretary (2 members);
- The PRCO Evaluation Teams Chair or Secretary (3 members); and
- The PRCO Members selected on his/her randomly generated seed number and not being part of the PRCO Executive (3 members).

The processing of the appeal may take one of the following forms as decided by the Appellant:

- a) If the members of the Appeals Board are available immediately or shortly after the adjournment of the annual meeting of the PRCO, then a meeting may be held where the Appellant will be given the opportunity to present the Appeal to the Appeals Board. Documentation on the Appeal will be distributed to the Appeals Board by the Appellant. Following presentation of the arguments, the Appellant will withdraw from the meeting room, the vote will be held and the Appellant will be notified upon conclusion of the meeting.
- b) If the Appeal is requested after the annual meeting of the PRCO is adjourned, the Appeal documentation will be circulated to the Appeals Board by the Appellant. A conference call defending the Appeal may be arranged by the Appellant and the vote will be held during the conference call. Alternatively, a written case defending the Appeal may be provided to the Appeals Board. The vote is conducted using regular mail, facsimile or electronic mail.

Following deliberations of the Appeals Board, the Chair will call for the vote and the decision will be based on  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of the Appeals Board members present. Where the number of abstentions is equal to or greater than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the votes cast, the Chair will ask for a re-vote. If the re-vote results in the number of abstentions being equal to or greater than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the votes cast, the Chair will file a report stating that no recommendation could be made. No additional Appeals will be available at the Recommending Committee level.

The Appellant and members of the Appeals Board will be sent written notification of the Appeals Board decision and its rationale by April 1. All expenses incurred by the Appeals Board meeting will be paid by the Appellant.

## **2.5 Appeal of a PRCO Recommendation by the Contract Registration Committee**

See Section 3.2.5 Contract Registration Trials.

## **3. Registration Trials**

### **3.1 Types of Registration**

In Canada, varieties are currently registered on the basis of merit. Registration of varieties of plants in Canada falls into one of two categories: Full or Restricted registration. The Seeds Act and Regulations is the federal legislation governing the testing, inspection, quality and sale of seeds in Canada. Registration of condiment mustard and flax candidate cultivars is based on recommendation from the recommending committee officially recognized by the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for this purpose - the Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds (PRCO).

#### **a) Full Registration<sup>2</sup>**

“Unless otherwise specified in the certificate of registration, the registration is valid for all provinces and territories of Canada, until such time as the registration is cancelled or suspended, and without any restrictions on the production of the seed or commodity. Regional tests normally provide the basis for national registration. A variety is to be entered into official

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<sup>2</sup> Procedures for the Registration of Crop Varieties in Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Plant Production Division, Variety Registration Office, November 2007, available on the CFIA website.

tests in the area(s) of anticipated adaptation. If it is supported by a recommending committee (see *Appendix A*) and granted a registration, it may be imported or sold in all of Canada, except where regional restrictions apply”.

#### **b) Restricted Registration**<sup>3</sup>

Restricted registration consists of Interim, Regional, or Contract Registration.

*Interim Registration* is used for the purpose of production of grain or other commodity for market acceptability tests; or for emergency/crisis reasons (e.g., disease). A minimum of one (1) year of evaluation in variety registration trials is required for Interim Registration. Interim Registration may be granted initially for a period of up to three (3) years, if requested by the Recommending Committee, provided the appropriate fees are submitted and that an acceptable application package is received. Otherwise, a variety will be granted a one (1) year registration. Interim Registration may be renewed for additional periods, to a maximum total life of five (5) years.

*Regional Registration* may be granted for crop varieties in those instances where the variety poses a potential threat to agriculture in specific regions for reasons such as seed/grain distinguishability, quality, disease or where the variety or its progeny may be detrimental to human or animal health and safety, or the environment. For Regional Variety Registration purposes, “harm” is defined as harm to the industry.

*Contract Registration* is used for varieties where delivery of the resulting commodity into traditional commodity channels would cause harm to those channels. Thus, a variety must demonstrate the possibility of harm if granted an unrestricted registration in order to qualify for this type of registration. The applicant must make available to the VRO, a quality control system that describes fully how any and all potentially adverse effects of the variety will be managed. In addition, the quality control system must address any regulatory concerns under the Canada Grain Act and the Canadian Wheat Board Act.

## **3.2 Registration Trials**

### **3.2.1 General Guidelines**

Some of the following guidelines may not apply to disease resistance testing. Guidelines for disease resistance testing are described in *Appendix B/Sub-Appendix B3* (condiment mustard) and *Appendix C/Sub-Appendix C3* (flax).

#### **a) Purpose**

Registration Trials are conducted by groups of collaborating public institutions and/or by private sector companies or organizations.

The purpose of Registration Trials is to generate relevant, unbiased and representative data on candidate cultivars and the relevant check cultivar(s). This data is provided to the Evaluation Teams, the PRCO or its relevant committees to provide the basis for an informed decision for consideration of candidate cultivars for registration.

The procedures and operation of Registration Trials for condiment mustard and flax candidate cultivars are under the jurisdiction of the PRCO and are approved by the members of the PRCO. Where there is disagreement over testing protocols, admittance of a candidate to a Registration Trial, interpretation of data, or validity of data, the majority decision of the PRCO will be final.

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<sup>3</sup> Procedures for the Registration of Crop Varieties in Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Plant Production Division, Variety Registration Office, November 2007, available on the CFIA website.

There are different types of registration trials. Co-operative trials are managed on behalf of the PRCO by Test Co-ordinators and the co-operating group. Test Co-ordinators of Co-operative Trials are appointed by the co-operators in the test, subject to approval by the PRCO. In addition to Co-operative Trials, there are Pre-registration, Private Registration and Contract Registration trials. Upon agreement of the PRCO, new Co-operative Registration Trials may be established. Operation and standards for new trials will be similar to existing Co-operative Registration Trials.

Co-operative Pre-registration Trials may be organized by interested parties. The purpose of these trials is to generate data for entry of candidates into the Co-operative Registration Trials and do not operate under the auspices of the PRCO (Section 3.2.3).

Plants known to have novel traits must have been granted unconfined release status for such material by CFIA before acceptance into the condiment mustard or flax Co-operative Registration Tests. Should it be determined that the candidate cultivar violated any protocols for isolation and containment, all resulting damages or liability will be borne by the breeder/sponsor and not the Test Co-ordinators or Co-operators, providing that all approved Co-operative Registration Test procedures were followed. In situations where there are concerns over material which may be considered as "Plants with Novel Traits" (PNT), the issue should be discussed with the PRCO prior to the testing of any such material in the unconfined field trials of the Co-operative Registration Test. Where there is concern that the requirements for testing a particular candidate cultivar(s) would seriously jeopardize the normal operation of the Co-operative Registration Trial, the co-operating group may refuse entry of the candidate cultivar(s) into the Co-operative Registration Test. In such a case the PRCO may recommend the candidate cultivar enter into Private Registration Trials (Section 3.2.4) or Contract Registration Trials (Section 3.2.5). Candidates accepted for testing under Contract Registration Procedures will not normally be tested in Co-operative Registration Trials.

#### b) Locations

Locations for Registration Trials are chosen to represent areas of adaptation for commercial production of condiment mustard or flax in targeted agro-ecological zones throughout Western Canada.

#### c) Security of Entries

Test Co-ordinators and Co-operators will take reasonable precautions to ensure the security of entries and will not distribute seed for purposes other than registration testing without the written consent of the owner.

#### d) Experimental Design

Registration Trials shall be no larger than 30 entries, including relevant check cultivar(s) with a minimum of three (3) complete replicates. Use of recognized experimental designs that permit localized error control through the use of sub-blocks is encouraged.

#### e) Check Cultivars

Check cultivars of condiment mustard and flax are widely grown, established cultivars, special purpose cultivars or recent cultivars of superior merit. A superior cultivar with an offsetting weakness in a particular trait (e.g., a high yielding cultivar with unusual susceptibility to fusarium wilt) may be included as a check cultivar without diminishing the selection standard for the trait in which it is deficient. Such cultivars will be specifically excluded as a check cultivar for the traits in which they are deficient at the time of their elevation to check status and all such exceptions are to be noted in the list of check cultivars.

Changes in check cultivars must be approved by the PRCO and are listed in the PRCO Minutes. Data collected for a check cultivar(s) prior to registration are considered to be check data.

Candidate cultivars will not be compared to other lines in the test for registration recommending purposes. The candidate cultivar will be compared specifically to the relevant check cultivar(s) of their type at the time of consideration.

*N.B.* The current check may not be the same as the one used when the candidate cultivar was first entered in the Registration Trials. Refer specifically to *Appendix B* and *Appendix C*, the operating procedures for condiment mustard and flax, respectively, for the requirements for testing of candidate cultivars relative to check cultivar(s).

#### f) Seed Purity of Candidate and Check Cultivars

Seed stocks for candidate and check cultivars used in the Registration Trials must be of reasonable purity. As a guideline, the standards for germination should be similar to that required for Certified Seed, as defined by the Canadian Seed Growers' Association (CSGA). Candidate cultivars may have morphological off-types, but these should not exceed 5%. Acceptable off-types are plants that exhibit phenotypes or genotypes that can be readily removed during the process of breeder seed development.

#### g) Inspection

Registration Trials will be inspected on an annual basis. These inspections may be done by a Test Co-ordinator, Assistant Test Co-ordinator or a CSGA recognized plant breeder. At least  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the Co-operative Registration Trials should be inspected by a recognized plant breeder who is independent of the test site. Further, inspection of a Co-operative Registration Trial by a plant breeder employed at the same location is permissible if there is no association with the trial. Access to Co-operative Registration Trials will be granted to the Test Co-ordinator, Co-operators and other parties with a *bona fide* interest in the test. Co-operators should be contacted in advance to provide entrance to the trial site, treatment lists, randomizations and other pertinent information.

Trial sites will be considered valid when a minimum of three (3) complete replicates have been approved. If a check cultivar has only two (2) acceptable replicates in a trial, the data for that trial will be considered non-valid. Exceptions to this principle are made in the case of recognized weakness in a specific check cultivar (e.g., disease susceptibility). In addition, a trial is considered non-valid if visual inspection reveals unacceptable planting, emergence, soil gradient, pest and/or environmental problems.

Inspectors should discuss concerns for the site with the individual responsible and, if possible, agree on corrective action. A brief, critical evaluation of the site should be written, identifying the areas that required attention and the solutions discussed. These reports shall be forwarded to the Test Co-ordinator of the Co-operative Registration Test or the Chair for Contract and Private Registration Trials, for action, follow-up, and additional inspection if necessary. If issues are not resolved by the PRCO Chair, the concerns will be forwarded to the PRCO Executive.

#### h) Reporting of data

Data for each agronomic trait must be summarized on a site basis, with standard errors or least significant differences (LSDs) reported for each trait. Test Co-ordinators must use discretion in judging acceptability of data for each trial site. In general, yield data will be considered acceptable if the coefficient of variation (C.V.) for yield is  $\leq 16\%$  for condiment mustard and  $\leq 15\%$  for flax.

### 3.2.2 Co-operative Registration Trials

Traditionally, oilseed breeders, agronomists, pathologists and seed or end-use quality experts work together to evaluate candidate cultivars of condiment mustard and flax. It is the collective responsibility of the participants in the Co-operative Registration Trials to ensure unbiased and accurate testing of the candidate cultivar(s).

The Test Co-ordinators are responsible for admission of new candidate cultivars, general co-ordination of the trial, compilation and analysis of the data, and preparation and distribution of the Co-operative Test Reports. Co-operative Test Reports are included in the PRCO Minutes.

The Co-operators are responsible for the management of the individual trial sites. All trials are managed and harvested according to the standard and sound agronomic and scientific practices as appropriate for each site. At the present time, no “special management” practices shall be performed for any candidate cultivar. If the need for special management of a cultivar candidate can be demonstrated by the breeder/sponsor, a new testing procedure may be developed. Co-operators should meet all reasonable requirements set by the Test Co-ordinator with regard to quality, quantity and time for submission of seed, and provision of data for consideration of candidates.

#### a) Entry into trials

Request for entry of a candidate cultivar(s) into Condiment Mustard Co-operative Registration Trials must be made prior to March 1 of the year of planting of the next Co-operative Test. Exceptions to this principle may be accommodated provided the numbers of entries in the Co-operative Registration Trials are low enough to ensure precision and to avoid undue demands on those performing the testing. Request for entry of a candidate cultivar(s) into Flax Co-operative Registration Trials must be made one (1) week prior to the annual PRCO meetings. The request and data documents must be sent to the Test Co-ordinator, no later than the Monday, seven (7) days prior to the start of the Annual Meeting of the PRCO. This request and document containing pre-Coop data will then be forwarded by the Test Co-ordinator to members of the Flax Workers group at least five (5) days prior to the start of the Annual Meeting of the PRCO. Merits of flax candidate(s) for entry into the Co-op Test will be evaluated by the Flax Workers group at the PRCO meeting, and will decide whether the candidate will be included in the upcoming Co-op Test.

Candidate cultivars entered into the Co-operative Registration Trials must have sufficient merit to warrant registration testing and the consumption of limited research resources. An entry must meet the minimum criteria for agronomic, disease resistance and quality characteristics.

Entry of candidates into the Co-operative Registration Trials requires previous testing in preliminary or pre-registration trials, comparison to the relevant check cultivar(s) and satisfactory evaluations for important agronomic, disease and quality traits. Refer to approved PRCO Operating Procedures in *Appendix B* and *Appendix C* for the criteria for entry into Co-operative Registration Trials for condiment mustard and flax candidate cultivars, respectively.

The data collected will be submitted to, and vetted by, the Test Co-ordinator and the co-operators. Entries are admitted or retained based on the performance of the candidate cultivar(s) compared to the relevant check cultivars, the likelihood of their registration, consensus among the co-operators, and the decision of the Test Co-ordinator.

If an entry that has been tested in the Co-operative Registration Test, and has not been supported for registration, yet has been requested by the breeder/sponsor to be re-entered into a Registration Trial, permission by the PRCO is required.

Although Co-operative Registration Trials may be run without charge, co-operators are reminded that testing candidate cultivars is expensive. The PRCO has the authority to institute

a system of charges pending additional costs and benefits of operating the Co-operative Registration Test. Such fees are subject to annual review. Institutions that do not make a substantial contribution towards the co-operative testing system may be charged a candidate entrance fee to help defray the costs of testing.

An offer of payment for testing does not assure entry or retention of a candidate into the Co-operative Registration Test. A description of any such charges will be documented in the appendices as a requirement for entry.

If an individual or company cannot get a candidate cultivar entered into the Co-operative Registration Test, then the appeals mechanism provided by the PRCO Appeals Board will be used.

#### b) Disposition and Retention of Entries

The breeder/sponsor of a candidate cultivar may withdraw it at any time.

Candidate cultivars or registered cultivars are retained in the Co-operative Registration Test based on the request of the breeder/sponsor, the approval of the co-operators and the PRCO. Retention of candidate cultivars for a second or third year of testing should focus on performance in the Co-operative Registration Test. Retention of an entry in the registration testing system, beyond one (1) year of the completion of its trial requirements, is at the discretion of the Test Co-ordinator and is dependent on interest and availability of resources.

Exceptions to this are the testing of registered varieties which are grown throughout the targeted agro-ecological zones. Data generated by the Co-operative Registration Test on these registered varieties may be used as performance information for provincial publications which are available to producers. In this case and dependent on size of the trials and the resources available, the decision of the Test Co-ordinator will determine the retention of the registered varieties in the Co-operative Registration Trials.

#### c) Reporting of data from the Co-operative Registration Trials

The Co-operative Test Reports (agronomic, quality and disease evaluations) should be circulated by the Test Co-ordinator at least seven (7) days prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO.

### **3.2.3 Pre-Registration Trials**

Data for entry of candidates into a Co-operative Registration Test may be obtained by organizing or participating in Co-operative Pre-registration Trials (e.g., "A" and "B" level tests or "preliminary" tests). While the consideration of these trials may appear as an agenda item, these trials are not run under the auspices of the PRCO. The co-operating groups set rules for their operation and the PRCO will not mediate among the co-operating group in such trials.

### **3.2.4 Private Registration Trials**

Private Registration Trials may be conducted outside of the co-operative testing system and must emulate the professional standards set by the comparable Co-operative Registration Trials. The company or institution conducting Private Registration Trials must obtain approval of testing protocols from all of the Evaluation Teams prior to evaluation of the candidate cultivar(s), rather than at the time when support for registration is being sought. Without prior approval of the testing protocols by each Evaluation Team, the PRCO will not recognize the proposed Private Registration Trials.

The following rules apply to the establishment and conduct of Private Registration Trials for candidate cultivars of condiment mustard and flax.

N.B. With respect to disease resistance and end-use quality testing, it is very important to consult with the pertinent Evaluation Team to determine the specific testing requirements and/or methodology prior to seeking approval of the proposed testing protocols.

a) Request for Private Registration Trials

The proposal for Private Registration Trials will be submitted to the PRCO no later than February 1 in the year of first planting to allow discussion prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO, where approval of the Trials will be requested.

The requirements indicated in Section 3.2.1 (General Guidelines) apply for Private Registration Trials with regards to the following categories: Locations, Security of Entries, Experimental Design, Check Cultivars, Seed Purity, and Inspection. In addition, the requirements for agronomy, disease and quality assessment using methodology approved for the respective Co-operative Registration Trial are required for the Private Registration Trial.

b) Time of Testing

Testing of a candidate cultivar in a Private Registration Trial shall encompass three (3) consecutive years. The required number of station-years is the same as that required for candidate cultivars in the Co-operative Registration Tests for condiment mustard and flax.

c) Reporting of Data

Annual reports of the Private Registration Trial will be distributed to the PRCO membership at least seven (7) days prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO. The Evaluation Teams and PRCO membership will conduct an annual vote to accept the report data as valid, and will provide guidance to improve the tests and/or report, if necessary. Annual or revised reports of the Private Registration Trial will be made available to the Chair and Secretary for inclusion in the PRCO Minutes.

The report must be prepared in a manner similar to that used for the Co-operative Registration Test. In addition, a brief explanation of the testing protocol for each trait measured is required to assist the Evaluation Teams and PRCO in determining the validity of the data.

The Request for Support of Registration document for candidate cultivars which were tested in the Private Registration Trials must meet the same requirements as that of candidate cultivars tested in the Co-operative Registration Trials (Section 4).

### **3.2.5 Contract Registration Trials**

a) Requirements for Contract Registration

Before a cultivar will be considered suitable for testing under Contract Registration procedures, the breeder/sponsor (or designate) must provide the rationale for Contract Registration. A written document addressing the following points must be received by the Contract Registration Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting of the PRCO:

1. The candidate cultivar is considered for Contract Registration where the biochemical or biophysical characteristics of such a candidate would distinguish it from the majority of registered varieties of the same kind or species and it may have an adverse effect on the identity of those registered varieties;
2. Delivery of the resulting commodity into traditional commodity channels would cause harm to those channels. The candidate cultivar must demonstrate the possibility of harm if granted an unrestricted registration in order to qualify for this type of registration;
3. An end-user/purchaser exists for the specialty product. This is indicated by a letter of support and commitment for the candidate cultivar by the end-user/purchaser; and

4. A closed loop system for the isolation, production, transport and/or processing of the candidate cultivar must be in a Quality Control System that is reviewed and acceptable by the VRO. The closed loop system is necessary to provide assurance that “off-grade” production shall not enter the normal marketing system for the commodity crop.

Breeders/sponsors of candidate cultivars being tested under Contract Registration procedures are encouraged to contact the VRO for details on the required Quality Assurance Manual, which must be complete before registration is granted. See Appendix VIII of the Procedures for the Registration of Crop Varieties in Canada ([www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)) for further information.

Upon the endorsement that testing of the cultivar under Contract Registration procedures is appropriate, the VRO will be informed of the recommendation and any additional data requirements prescribed by the Contract Registration Committee.

Contract registration is not to be used as a substitute for traditional forms of registration (full or interim) or in situations where the PRCO has objected to the registration of the candidate cultivar based on deficiency in merit. However, the PRCO may recommend that the candidate be considered for Contract Registration if the required conditions for Contract Registration can be met. In this case, an extraordinary meeting of the Contract Registration Committee may be required.

#### b) Contract Registration Committee

A Contract Registration Committee will exist under the auspices of the PRCO and will normally consist of five (5) members:

1. One (1) plant breeder recognized by the Canadian Seed Growers Association (CSGA) who is a member of the PRCO Breeding, Agronomy and Production Evaluation Team;
2. One (1) pathologist member of the PRCO Disease Evaluation Team;
3. One (1) seed quality expert who is a member of the PRCO Quality and End-Use Evaluation Team;
4. One (1) provincial oilseed specialist; and
5. One (1) representative from a producer organization of the candidate cultivar crop species, where the producer organization is a member of the PRCO.

The Chair of the Contract Registration Committee will be chosen from among these five (5) individuals. In cases where confidentiality of data is important, and there is a conflict of interest, the owner of the proposed candidate may request an alternate member to be appointed by the remaining members of the Contract Registration Committee, provided that member meets the requirements for membership on the Committee. Members of the Contract Registration Committee will act to protect the confidentiality of data where required.

#### c) Contract Registration Request and Recommendation

The breeder/sponsor of a candidate cultivar will provide the Contract Registration Committee written notification of their intent to approach the PRCO or the Contract Registration Committee at least seven (7) days in advance of the annual meeting. Appropriate documentation, letters of intent and/or data summaries must be included with the notice. The breeder/sponsor of the candidate cultivar will be informed of the date and time of the Contract Registration Committee meeting and is allowed to address the committee. Following the meeting, the Contract Registration Committee will have up to ten (10) days to rule on the suitability of the candidate for testing under Contract Registration procedures, prescribe additional data requirements over the minimum specifications, or make a recommendation on the request for Contract Registration.

The Contract Registration Committee may seek external advice, recognizing that confidentiality may be of extreme importance. A simple majority vote will constitute the decision of the Contract Registration Committee. Votes will be cast in two categories: "Support" or "Object".

#### d) Appeal of Decision of Contract Registration Recommendation

The breeder/sponsor of the candidate cultivar may contest a Contract Registration Committee decision. The basis of appeal of a PRCO Contract Registration Committee recommendation of a candidate cultivar is based on a recommendation where:

1. The Contract Registration Committee has determined that the candidate cultivar is ineligible for testing under Contract Registration procedures; and/or
2. The Contract Registration Committee has objected to the Contract Registration of the candidate cultivar.

Appeals will be conducted as outlined in the PRCO Operating Procedures for the Appeals Board. Costs incurred in convening any extraordinary meeting of the Executive shall be borne by the Appellant.

#### e) Conduct of Contract Registration Trials and Minimum Data Requirement

It is a condition that, upon acceptance of a candidate for testing under Contract Registration procedures, the breeder/sponsor agrees that the testing and evaluation protocols defined by the Contract Registration Committee are appropriate and that these protocols, however defined, will not justify an appeal. The following are minimum data requirements for Contract Registration of a candidate cultivar; however, the Contract Registration Committee may set additional requirements within ten (10) days following the meeting, to determine the suitability of the candidate for Contract Registration procedures.

A minimum of two (2) years of testing is required. Testing must be conducted in the region where production is intended to take place. The geographic region(s) may vary in area from all of Western Canada to a smaller region within a province. Testing will provide comparisons with the relevant check cultivar(s) for the crop kind, as currently used in regular registration (Co-operative) testing, or as determined by the Contract Registration Committee. Agronomic performance and disease reaction data will not be considered confidential.

Agronomic data must be collected but will be used for descriptive purposes only. No minimum levels of performance are required for agronomic traits. A minimum of eight (8) station-years of agronomic data are required, with a minimum of three (3) station years in each of two (2) calendar years. A minimum of three (3) of the eight (8) station-years of data shall be collected by an individual or organization that is independent from the breeder/sponsor, with a minimum of one (1) station year in each of the calendar years tested. The independent test organization must be disclosed to the Contract Registration Committee prior to conducting trials for approval. An independent third party PRCO member will be identified by the Contract Registration Committee to inspect all field trials.

Disease evaluation will take place in each of two (2) years of testing and shall be conducted under the auspices of the Disease Evaluation Team. Candidates must meet minimum disease resistance requirements in place for traditional cultivars (full registration), unless the owner of the candidate can demonstrate that susceptibility to a particular disease will not endanger production of traditional cultivars in, or adjacent to, the geographic region(s) identified for contract production.

Seed quality data will be deemed confidential. The trait deemed to cause potential harm will be evaluated in each year of testing, and compared to the relevant check cultivar(s) for the crop kind. This data will be evaluated by the Contract Registration Committee in consultation with appropriate grain quality experts if deemed appropriate or necessary. The Contract Registration Committee will respect the confidential nature of the data in soliciting expert advice. The

purpose of this evaluation is to confirm that the candidate has the quality claimed by the breeder/sponsor and that such quality requires production within a closed, contract system.

All costs for data collection for Contract Registration shall be borne by the breeder/sponsor of the candidate cultivar.

Recommendations in support of Contract Registration will be made by the Contract Registration Committee and forwarded to the VRO. The VRO will examine the request and rule on the applicability of the candidate for Contract Registration.

### 3.3 Registration Recommendation

The PRCO will only consider a Request for Support of Registration for a candidate cultivar that has shown satisfactory performance compared to the relevant check cultivar(s) in the required amount of testing for condiment mustard and flax as prescribed in their respective operating procedures. Exceptions to this are extraordinary circumstances where there is strong evidence of urgent, great benefit to the industry should the candidate cultivar be considered for support of some form of registration.

Interim Registration may be requested for a candidate cultivar prior to its completing the requirements for evaluation in the Co-operative Registration Trials. This request must be supported by the Canadian Grain Commission and would require suspension of PRCO procedures. This would be considered an extraordinary occurrence and the vote must pass with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.

Varieties which have the potential to cause harm and for which further registration is required, may be granted Contract Registration. Contract Registration may be granted interim or permanent registration (*i.e.*, with no restriction on duration of registration) for varieties for which merit has been established.

Varieties which have the potential to cause harm and for which further registration is required, may be granted Interim Contract Registration. Interim Contract Registration may be requested for initial periods of one (1) to three (3) years, and may be renewed for further terms to a maximum of five (5) years in total.

Renewal of Interim Contract Registration requires the recommendation of the appropriate Contract Registration Committee, approval by the VRO and a review of the Quality Management System with the appropriate audits to determine if conditions have changed significantly from the time of initial recommendation.

Recommendations to support the registration of a candidate cultivar are in effect for two (2) years from the date of the conclusion of the annual meeting of the PRCO where the recommendation was made. A recommendation for support of registration by the PRCO of a candidate cultivar does not represent a recommendation by the PRCO endorsing commercial production of the candidate cultivar. The recommendation on registration made by the PRCO is ratified by the VRO.

The breeder/sponsor must submit the request to the VRO to register a candidate cultivar within the two (2) year period. After this period, a breeder/sponsor wishing to register a candidate cultivar will require the PRCO to review the original request document and re-vote on the recommendation to support registration.

Based on the decision of the PRCO or its relevant committee, the PRCO Secretary will inform the VRO in writing of the recommendation of the PRCO regarding the candidate cultivar. Copies of this communication and copies of the deliberations from the Evaluation Teams will be provided to the breeder/sponsor, the PRCO Chair and to the VRO.

The breeder/sponsor submits the Registration Application Form available from the VRO, or from the CFIA web site ([www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)). The application, along with other required supporting documentation, reference samples and the prescribed fee, must be sent to:

Variety Registration Office  
Plant Production Division  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency  
59 Camelot Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y9  
Telephone: (613) 221-7533  
Facsimile: (613) 228-4552

Further information on Contract Registration is available on the CFIA website:  
[www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)

#### **4. The Request Document**

The Request for Support of Registration document will be concise and error free. Legible copies of the request document must be received by the voting membership of the PRCO no later than the Monday, seven (7) days prior to the start of the annual meeting of the PRCO. The Request for Support of Registration document may be distributed by electronic mail unless the member does not have access to an electronic mail method of communication, in which case, a paper copy will be sent by postal mail. If electronic mail distribution is used, then an acknowledgement of receipt of the correspondence should be requested when the mail is sent. The PRCO may refuse to consider a request on the grounds of late circulation, illegibility or inaccuracy.

##### **4.1 Description of the Candidate**

The Request for Support of Registration document will contain the following information describing the candidate cultivar. Where this information is omitted, justification may be required.

- The testing identification under which the candidate cultivar was tested;
- The species name and type of the candidate cultivar;
- The breeder/sponsor and/or proposer of the candidate cultivar;
- The registration category being sought (interim or full);
- A brief description of the phenotype;
- Details of parentage, derivation and selection history must be included with the phenotypic description, but exceptions may be made if they disclose information of significant technological or commercial value;
- The testing history;
- All strengths and weaknesses of the candidate cultivar;
- The expected area of adaptation;
- The expected end-use; and
- The rationale for registration.

## 4.2 Data Summaries

The data summaries must use all the data generated by the Registration Trials in which the candidate cultivar was evaluated, where the data was valid, accepted by the PRCO and reported in the Co-operative Registration Test Report. The Request for Support of Registration document will contain the following summary of data supporting the request of registration:

- The individual testing years and an overall summary of agronomic performance;
- The individual testing years and an overall summary of quality characteristics; and
- The individual testing years and an overall summary of disease reactions.

A summary of end-use quality may also be included; however, the PRCO will only consider that information as supplemental information which should not influence the decision for registration.

Performance of other candidates unregistered at the time of application is not relevant, nor is the performance of previously registered cultivars not designated as check cultivars.

The manner in which data was summarized will be in accordance with accepted scientific practice, and will not conceal any weakness of the candidate. Registration Trial data may be reanalyzed, and other supporting data may be introduced in support of specific or unusual claims of performance, but this will not replace the summary that was accepted by the PRCO in the Co-operative Registration Test Reports. The PRCO may assume that a candidate is deficient in an important trait if it is excluded from the summary.

## 4.3 Errors in the Request for Support of Registration Document

If the Request for Support of Registration document or the Co-operative Registration Test Reports have missing or erroneous data, or omission of pertinent data is used as a basis of decision, the breeder/sponsor may call for a re-vote on the revised data package. This request must be submitted in writing, to the PRCO Chair, accompanied by an explanation and a new Request for Support of Registration document. The PRCO will determine if there was omission or erroneous data and if this information could have changed the original decision. If there is majority agreement among the PRCO Executive, the PRCO Chair will then inform the membership and a re-vote will be conducted. If the annual meeting of the PRCO has concluded, then the re-vote will be carried out using regular mail, facsimile or electronic mail. The PRCO Secretary will distribute the information, collect the voting records, and report to the PRCO Chair who will inform the breeder/sponsor. All documentation for this process will be provided to the VRO along with the results of the re-vote.

## 4.4 Definition of Merit

To receive support for registration, a candidate cultivar must show merit. A candidate cultivar that shows merit is “equal to”, “better than”, or “superior to” relevant check cultivar(s). The phrase “equal to” is defined as arithmetic equality to the check mean or mean of the checks. The phrase “better than” is defined as arithmetic superiority to the check mean or mean of the checks. The phrase “superior to” is defined as statistical superiority to the check mean or mean of the checks by a one-tailed test at the 95% confidence level using the pooled error mean square as the error term.

## **4.5 Supplementary Data**

Data collected external to the Registration Trials may be included in the Request for Support of Registration document to improve the case for registration or substantiate claims of specific or unusual performance. Data generated outside the prairie region of Canada or other relevant source will be considered a supplement to the registration trial data, not a substitute for it. Registration Trial data and supplementary data must be presented in separate tables and labeled appropriately. A motion to accept the supplementary data as part of the Request for Support of Registration must be passed by a 2/3 majority.

## **5. Policy on Release of Information**

### **5.1 PRCO Operating Procedures**

Operating Procedures used by the PRCO will be available from the Secretary of the PRCO on request directed from the PRCO Chair.

### **5.2 PRCO Co-operative Test Reports**

Reports of the PRCO will be available to all registrants of the meeting, usually for a fee. A disclaimer indicating the restricted distribution of the report and limitations of the data will be included on each document.

Developers, owners and marketing institutions may only use the data generated on their lines and relevant check cultivar(s). Comparisons may only be made with check cultivars in the trials in which the candidate was evaluated.

Data must be used in entirety (*i.e.*, all valid trial sites).

Data for candidates supported for registration may be used in “provincial government variety guides” without request for permission.

The PRCO Co-operative Test Reports will be placed on the password-protected PRCO section of the PGDC website following the annual meeting of the PRCO.

### **5.3 PRCO Minutes**

The PRCO Minutes will be placed on the password-protected PRCO section of the PGDC website following the annual meeting of the PRCO. Included in the Minutes will be the Minutes of the meetings held by the Evaluation Teams and the Minutes of the annual meeting of the PRCO (including the Evaluation Team and PRCO voting results for each candidate cultivar).

*Disclaimer to be published with the PRCO Minutes:*

“The data contained in this document is the copyright property of the Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds (PRCO). The information contained herein may not be reproduced, published or disseminated in any form other than in its entirety, without the express written consent of the PRCO Chair. The data contained in this document are collected from several sources. The PRCO does not guarantee the veracity of subsets of these data. The members/experts of the PRCO evaluate the merit of genotypes/candidate cultivars using a pool of performance parameters collected over several years and multiple locations. Any

subset of these data cannot be considered a reliable indication of overall merit. Requests for permission to use portions of this document must be forwarded, in writing, to the PRCO Chair.”

**Guidelines** to the PRCO Chair in granting permission to use portions of the PRCO data:

- a) Permission to use data subsets will be refused in situations where, in the considered opinion of the Chair, the data will be presented in a misleading manner.
- b) The data for the checks is considered public domain and a request for use will be approved unless it conflicts with point (a).
- c) The use of data specific to entries may be approved with the express written consent of the relevant breeder/sponsor.
- d) The Chair, in granting permission to use the data, will consider and respect information that is proprietary.

## **6. Conflict of Interest**

One of the mandates of the PRCO is the responsibility to advise on the performance of lines in test and make recommendations to the VRO. While members are expected to vote impartially, abstaining from a vote is appropriate when sound ethical judgment indicates a “Conflict of Interest”.

According to Dr. Michael McDonald, Director of the Centre for Applied Ethics at the University of British Columbia, “a Conflict of Interest arises when an individual acting in an official capacity (public official, employee, professional, etc.) has private or personal interests sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of their duties. Conflicts of Interest interfere with professional responsibilities by clouding objective, professional judgment.

The key elements in defining a Conflict of Interest are:

1. Private or personal interest: The pursuit of private or personal interests does not create a conflict of interest unless it occurs during the exercise of official capacity.
2. Exercise of official capacity: Duties and obligations that are part of an office or official capacity must prevail over private or personal interests.
3. Responsibility to use objective professional judgment: Professionals are expected to provide sound, objective and independent advice. Factors that interfere (or appear likely to interfere) with professional objectivity are a matter of legitimate concern to those who rely on this advice.

In addition to actual conflicts of interest, apparent and potential conflicts should be avoided. An Apparent Conflict of Interest is a situation in which a reasonable person would believe that the professional’s judgment is likely to be compromised. A Potential Conflict of Interest is a situation that could develop into an actual conflict of interest.

The key in discovering a personal conflict of interest is to determine if the situation is likely to interfere, or appears to interfere, with the independent judgment expected in performing one’s official duties. Trust is the core issue. Conflicts of Interest involve an abuse (actual or potential) of the trust that people have in professionals. In addition to direct damage to particular clients and employers, Conflicts of Interest injure the entire profession by reducing the confidence that people have in professionals.”

When a personal Conflict of Interest is recognized, the ethical responses are:

1. Reveal your private interest to the relevant parties.
2. Remove yourself from the decision making process or advice-giving role.

## **APPENDIX A - Definitions**

### **Acronyms:**

CFIA	Canadian Food Inspection Agency
CSGA	Canadian Seed Growers Association
PGDC	Prairie Grain Development Committee
PRCO	Prairie Recommending Committee for Oilseeds
VRO	Variety Registration Office of the CFIA

**Candidate cultivars:** Candidate cultivars are lines which are being evaluated according to the rules specified by the Operating Procedures of the PRCO and for which Request for Support of Registration documents may be submitted to the VRO following recommendation for registration at the annual meeting of the PRCO or by the Contract Registration Committee of the PRCO.

**Check cultivars:** Check cultivars (or checks) are widely grown, established cultivars, special purpose cultivars or recent cultivars of superior merit of condiment mustard and flax against which the performance of candidate cultivars is assessed. A superior cultivar with an offsetting weakness in a particular trait may be included as a check without diminishing the selection standard for the trait in which it is deficient. Such cultivars will be specifically excluded as a check for the traits in which they are deficient.

**Co-operators:** Co-operators are scientists or field trial managers responsible for conducting the various tests, or breeders/sponsors submitting candidate cultivars to the Co-operative Registration Test.

**Co-ordinators:** Co-ordinators are appointed by the Co-operators in the test, subject to approval by the PRCO. Test Co-ordinators are responsible, in consultation with the Co-operators, for deciding on admission of new candidates, general co-ordination of the trial, compilation and analysis of the data, and preparation and distribution of the Co-operative Test Report.

**Co-operative Trials:** Co-operative Trials are replicated yield trials grown at testing sites representing areas of adaptation for commercial production of condiment mustard or flax in targeted agro-ecological zones throughout Western Canada. Co-operative Trials are conducted by groups of collaborating public institutions and/or by private companies or organizations.

**Co-operative Test:** A co-operative Test is the collective of the Co-operative Trials for condiment mustard or flax, and the data generated from the entries grown at these individual testing sites.

**Evaluation Team:** An Evaluation Team is a collection of members based on the area of technical and/or scientific expertise that the individual member is contributing to the recommendation process.

The Breeding, Agronomy and Production Evaluation Team consists of members who provide expertise relating to:

- a) Developing or assessing new cultivars of condiment mustard and flax for production in Western Canada;
- b) Producing or marketing of new cultivars of condiment mustard and flax; and
- c) Co-ordinating regional performance variety trials of condiment mustard and flax.

The Disease Evaluation Team consists of members who provide expertise relating to the evaluation of Co-operative Test entries for disease resistance and /or pathology of diseases affecting the commodity crops of condiment mustard and flax, or related crop species.

The Quality and End-Use Evaluation Team consists of members who provide expertise relating to the chemistry of the seed and its components, the commodity crops of condiment mustard and flax, or the end-use products produced from the commodities or their components.

**Extraordinary Vote:** An extraordinary vote may be held as a result of extenuating circumstance at a time other than the annual meeting of the PRCO membership. In this case, the vote will be conducted using regular mail, facsimile or electronic mail.

**PRCO Members:** Membership in the PRCO consists of individuals actively engaged in the research and development, production, marketing, commercialization and processing of commodities or end-use products of flax or condiment mustard grown in Canada.

In the case of seed trade and producer organizations (associations or commissions), the member must be elected by a democratic process within their organization, and as such, are accountable to the organization for their actions. Only one individual will act as member on behalf of the organization they are representing.

Organizations or private companies may be Canadian or foreign-owned, provided that they are directly involved in the processing and/or development and marketing of the Canadian condiment mustard or flax crops, the commodities produced from or the end-use products derived from these crops.

**Merit:** Merit is the worth or excellence of a candidate cultivar in comparison to the check cultivar with regards to traits that will make the cultivar beneficial for a particular use in a specific production area of Canada. A candidate cultivar that shows merit is “equal to”, “better than” or “superior to” relevant check cultivar(s). The phrase “equal to” is defined as arithmetic equality to the check mean or mean of the checks. The phrase “better than” is defined as arithmetic superiority to the check mean or mean of the checks. The phrase “superior to” is defined as statistical superiority to the check mean or mean of the checks by a one-tailed test at the 95% confidence level using the pooled error mean square as the error term.

**Plants with Novel Traits (PNTs)**<sup>4</sup>: A PNT is defined as a plant that contains a trait which is both new to the Canadian environment and has the potential to affect the specific use and safety of the plant with respect to the environment and human health. These traits can be introduced using biotechnology, mutagenesis, or conventional breeding techniques and have some potential to impact weediness, gene flow, plant pest potential, non-target organisms, or biodiversity.

**Seed number:** Seed number is a randomly-generated number assigned annually to members of the PRCO.

**Recommending Committee**<sup>5</sup>: All committees that recommend varieties for registration must be officially recognized by the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for this purpose. Appendix IX of the Procedures for the Registration of Crop Varieties in Canada lists the

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<sup>4</sup> CFIA, [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca), Plant biosafety Office.

<sup>5</sup> CFIA, Variety Registration Office, Procedures for the Registration of Crop Varieties in Canada, November 30, 2007. <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/variety/proced/regproe.shtml#9>

currently recognized committees. The names and addresses of the contact persons for each recommending committee is available on the CFIA website at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/variety/vartoce.shtml>.

The recommending committees are responsible for:

- Formulating testing procedures that are appropriate for their crop(s) including a mechanism for verification of trials/validation of data;
- Regularly reviewing the testing procedures to ensure that they reflect acceptable scientific practices; and
- Ensuring that reference varieties are current and fairly represent the requirements of Canadian agriculture.

**Registration Trials:** Registration Trials are replicated, multi-location experiments designed to evaluate agronomic performance (e.g., flowering, maturity, lodging, plant height and seed yield). Seed collected from these experiments are analyzed for seed quality traits. Response to disease is assessed in replicated disease nurseries or using a recognized laboratory test.