

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

The application deadline to certify seed potatoes in Colorado is June 1st. If June 1st falls on a weekend then the application is due on the following Monday. This year June 1st falls on a Monday, so applications are due by Monday June 1st. Even though applications are due by June 1st, PCS welcomes and appreciates earlier submittals. We encourage application as soon as planting is completed.

WHY IS IT SO EARLY IF INSPECTIONS DON'T START UNTIL LATE JUNE?

All applications undergo a rigorous and thorough review by PCS which takes a good deal of time. The first three weeks of June are needed to process the applications and return a copy to the growers. Even though applications are due by June 1st, PCS welcomes and appreciates earlier submittals.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GROWER ENTRY TIER I AND GROWER ENTRY TIER II PROGRAMS?

The Grower Entry Tier I program is the traditional grower entry program. It is designed for the grower who intends to become a full certified seed grower one or two seasons. The acres entered for certification undergo the full inspection regimen. In addition, all acres (certified and non-certified) on the farm undergo a BRR inspection.

The Grower Entry Tier II program is designed for the grower who does not intend to become a full certified seed grower, but, for a variety of reasons would like his seed lots to be inspected and if eligible sent to PHT. This grower receives a BRR inspection only on the seed entered into the program. The seed passing inspections in this program is designated as "qualified".

Growers entering either tier program need to understand:

- All seed entered for certification must be fully eligible to be certified.
- No seed sales are permitted.
- Potential growers need to contact PCS prior to May 1st.

A more detailed explanation on these programs can be found on page 16 of the "Colorado Rules and Regulations For Certification of Seed Potatoes". Additional information can be found in the Grower Entry II and Seed Act FAQ in this website.

WHAT IS THE GROWER ENTRY PROGRAM, AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE COLORADO SEED POTATO ACT?

Grower Entry Tier II – Qualified Seed Potatoes and the "Colorado Seed Potato Act"

The Grower Entry-Tier II (GE-TII) program, administered by the Colorado Potato Certification Service (PCS) was designed to create an avenue for a grower to produce their own 'qualified' certified seed for use in their own operation. This, in turn, provided an

opportunity for the grower to meet certain disease control standards for table stock potatoes being shipped for the export markets such as Mexico.

While PCS has no jurisdiction over or authority to enforce the 'Colorado Seed Potato Act' enacted by the state legislature to begin in 2012, the Grower Entry program can provide some advantages for growers anticipating how the Seed Act will be applied. The GE-TII program can be used by commercial growers to plant and potentially maintain legally 'qualified' certified seed, as specified in the Seed Act, within their own farming operations.

Following are some FAQ's and answers. Please feel free to call the PCS main office (719-754-3496) if you need further assistance or information.

WHAT IS THE BASIC IDEA OF THE GE-TII PROGRAM AS IT RELATES TO THE SEED ACT?

A commercial grower has the opportunity to plant a seed lot eligible for re-certification within their operation and enter this lot into the GE-TII program. Lots which are properly entered will be handled as certified seed lots, inspected, and verified that they meet all certification standards and tolerances. Lots that pass these inspections, can be called 'qualified' certified seed and do meet the requirements for certified seed plantings as specified in the Seed Act. Growers with 'qualified' seed can replant these potatoes the following year with the equivalent status of certified seed.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PLANT AN ELIGIBLE SEED LOT ON MY OPERATION IN RELATION TO THE GE-TII PROGRAM?

An eligible seed lot is one that meets the requirements for re-certification as set out in the Colorado Potato Certification Rule and Regulations (PCS R & R). Each lot must meet certain disease tolerance standards in the summer field inspections, have an appropriate storage inspection, and meet the prescribed post harvest disease tolerances for re-certification. All pertinent PCS R & R apply to these seed lots. These lots will have the appropriate official documentation indicating that these requirements have been met.

WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE GE-TII PROGRAM?

Any prospective applicant for the GE-TII program should contact the PCS office by May 1st of any given year. An appointment will be scheduled at the grower's convenience to review the program in more detail. The actual application deadline for certification is June 1st. PCS will work closely with the grower to make certain that the lots to be entered for certification as 'qualified' certified seed have indeed met all of the applicable PCS R & R for re-certification.

Each grower wishing to enter the GE-TII program must fill out an application listing all pertinent information about the seed lots to be entered. The application will include all pertinent official documentation including contact information about the grower and field maps showing the location of the lots within their farming operation. At the time of

application, payment of acreage fees is due. PCS is responsible for reviewing and confirming that each application is in order and that all seed lots entered are eligible.

After successful application, the grower is responsible for growing and maintaining the seed lots to be certified in an appropriate manner consistent with good seed growing techniques. During the summer, PCS will contact the grower to schedule a series of field inspections to visually walk each lot and establish the level of diseases and pests in the lot. Normally, two inspections are utilized in the effort with a third inspection utilized to detect any 'zero tolerance' diseases such as bacterial ring rot. Serological testing may be utilized during the summer to test foliage for the presence of certain virus problems if needed. All seed lots that fall within the disease and variety mix tolerance levels are said to have passed the summer field inspections and are eligible to be moved into the next phase of seed production. Lots which fail to meet the prescribed tolerances will be rejected from certification and are no longer eligible as 'qualified' certified seed. These lots, however, may still be planted as commercial seed the following year as specified in the Seed Act, providing that they do not contain any 'zero tolerance' diseases.

Lots passing summer inspections are then maintained by the grower, killed, harvested and stored in the appropriate manner. In early fall, after harvest, PCS will schedule a storage inspection to conduct an on-site visit of each stored lot. This inspection is used to verify physical separation is kept from other non-certified or entered potatoes, and to review the overall storage conditions of each operation. This is also a time for growers to have any questions about the process or concerns about the seed lots addressed. A complete summary of yield and locations, including storage maps, is required for PCS files.

The final phase of the program is the post harvest testing (PHT). Each lot must have and pass a PHT to be eligible for re-plant the following year as 'qualified' certified seed. During harvest, growers will select a representative sample of 400 tubers out of each seed lot. These samples are utilized by PCS for a field grow-out in a southern area during the winter. In contrast, some of the samples may be tested in the laboratory rather than being grown in the field. These lots are then grown and inspected to determine the levels of disease and other problems that are in the lot. If tested, the tubers are sprouted and then each sprout tested to determine the level of virus which is in the lot. Lots must meet the applicable disease tolerances for each disease to be considered eligible for re-plant as 'qualified' certified seed. Any lot exceeding 8% mosaic, 1.5% leafroll or having a 'zero tolerance' disease such as bacterial ring rot will be ineligible for replanting the following year.

WHAT IF MY GE-TII 'QUALIFIED' SEED LOT DOES NOT MEET THE TOLERANCES IN THE PCS R & R?

Plant back requirements for re-certification of seed lots are currently at 1.5% leafroll and 3% mosaic. Lots that do not meet these tolerances are still eligible for planting as commercial potatoes the following year providing that they meet the overall tolerances of the Seed Act as described before.

For example; if two seed lots pass the summer inspections, but one lot has 1.5% mosaic in the PHT and the second lot has 14.5% mosaic in the PHT, they will follow different paths. The first lot is eligible for re-certification the following year as a GE-TII lot. The second lot is eligible for plant back as a commercial lot the following year, but not eligible to be utilized in the seed program.

WHAT IS THE APPROXIMATE COST OF PARTICIPATING IN THE GE-TII PROGRAM?

There are three areas of the program that involve fees:

- 1) Application fees based on acreage entered (currently \$34/a)
- 2) Possible lab testing fees based on cultivar entered and generation
- 3) PHT fees based on sample size (currently 400 tubers x \$0.86/tuber)(this price varies each year and is based on total PHT expenses)

Listed below are a couple of different scenarios that a lot might fall under:

10 acres of G4 Canela Russet	10 x \$34	\$340
Summer lab testing fees	No test required	
Post harvest testing	400 tubers x \$0.86	\$344
Total:	\$684	

10 acres of G4 Russet Norkotah	10 x \$34	\$340
Summer lab testing fees	40 wells x \$3.5/well	\$140
Post harvest testing	400 tubers x \$0.86	\$344
Total:	\$824	

Note: all fees are subject to change. No refund of fees is permitted in the event a seed lot is rejected or withdrawn from certification.

IF I AM A GE-TII GROWER, CAN I SELL MY INSPECTED SEED AS A QUALIFIED OR CERTIFIED SEED LOT?

No. The GE-TII program specifically prohibits any seed sales. Illegal sales of seed can initiate reprimand from the Colorado Certified Potato Growers' Association and Colorado

Department of Agriculture. The program is designed to utilize inspected seed only within a grower's own farming operation.

PCS HAS A GROWER ENTRY-TIER I PROGRAM. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TIER I AND II PROGRAMS?

The GE-TI program was designed for the commercial grower who wishes to become a full certified seed grower within one to two years. In this program, the grower receives the same inspections as the GE-TII producer, but has an additional inspection for bacterial ring rot on all non-entered acreage. The GE-TII producer only receives the bacterial ring rot inspection on the acreage entered into the program.

IF I PLANT A SEED LOT THAT IS ELIGIBLE FOR RE-CERTIFICATION ON MY OPERATION AND ENTER IT INTO THE GE-TII PROGRAM, IS IT ELIGIBLE FOR RE-CERTIFICATION IN FURTHER YEARS?

Potentially, yes. If the seed lot meets the inspection tolerances, generation criteria, and all of the pertinent PCS R & R for certification, it can be planted back into your farming operation the following year as a 'qualified' seed source for GE-TII.

Yes. The Colorado Potato Seed Act allows for a one year out plant back. For example, by planting a certified seed lot in 2019, you can plant it back in 2020 with no restrictions. That, however, would be the last year it could be legally planted on your operation without further testing.

IS THERE ANOTHER OPTION BESIDES THE GE-TII PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS FOR MORE THAN ONE YEAR OUT PLANT BACK?

Yes. The Seed Act allows a grower to plant back commercial seed in two instances. The first instance requires the grower to have the lot tested by PCS to verify that it falls within the levels currently set for plant back restrictions as described before. The second instance allows a grower to submit an exemption for a lot if seed stocks of the given cultivar are restricted or unavailable. In this option, the grower must submit an application to the Seed Act Advisory committee, receive their approval and then have this recommendation submitted to the Colorado Commissioner of Ag for his approval. If approval is granted, then the grower has a one year exemption to re-plant the seed.

ARE PCS AND THE GE-TI & II PROGRAMS INVOLVED WITH THE RANDOM AUDIT PROVISIONED IN THE SEED ACT?

No. PCS is in no way involved with the random audit. Growers should record and file all seed increase information in their own files. PCS maintains records, however, that can be provided to GE-TII growers for documentation support during an audit at any time.