

# Farmer's Guide for Seed Buying

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North Dakota seed laws require labeling of all seed sold. The label, seed tag, or analysis tag describes the seed for the buyer. This helps in determining the true value of the seed for planting purposes.

The buyer should learn to read and understand a seed tag, because seed quality is more than just goodlooking seed.

The sample tag shows how any lot of seed offered for sale should be labeled.

For wheat, durum, oats, barley, rye,  
soybean, edible beans and flax,  
the variety must be stated.

SAVE THIS TAG			
This is your Seed Record			
GRANDIN WHEAT	LOT 90W-4		
Pure seed 99.90%	Germ 98%		
Other crop .04%	Date 10-90		
Weed seed .01%	Weight 61 lb.		
Inert .05%	14,000 seeds/lb		
YOUR SEED FARM			
Anytown, N.D.	Origin: N.D.		

## Understand The Seed Tag

**Kind and Variety**—Kind of crop (wheat, barley, alfalfa, etc.) is always given. For wheat, durum, barley, oats, rye, soybeans, edible beans and flax, the variety name must be stated. If the seed is a mixture of varieties, each component in excess of 5 percent of the whole must be named together with the percentage by weight. Where more than one component is named, the word "mixture," or the word "mixed," must be shown on the label.

**Lot Identification**—A number or other lot identification is used by the seller to identify a definite amount of seed of uniform quality and represented by a given seed test.

**Pure Seed**—Indicates percent of purity as to kind of crop and also as to variety if named. In most cases, however, variety cannot be identified by seed characteristics; therefore laboratory analysis reports carry a statement: "Test not based on variety." The pure seed percentage is then based on kind of crop only. A certified tag gives added assurance of varietal purity. Variety labeling is the responsibility of the labeler.

**Other Crop Seed**—Percent by weight of other kinds of crop seeds.

**Weed Seed**—The percent of weight of weed seeds.

**Inert**—Indicates percent of chaff, sticks, dirt, cracked seed, etc., present.

**Prohibited Noxious Weeds**—Any seed lot containing prohibited noxious weed seeds is PROHIBITED FROM SALE. These weeds are field bindweed, leafy spurge, Russian knapweed, hoary cress, Canada thistle, perennial sowthistle, absinth wormwood, hemp, musk thistle and spotted knapweed.

**Restricted Noxious Weeds**—The tag must show by common name and number per pound of each restricted noxious weed present over five. Restricted noxious weeds include: quackgrass, dodder, wild mustard, wild oats, field pennycress and hedge bindweed. The maximum allowable limit for these seeds is 90 per pound in aggregate.

**Germination**—Gives percent of seed producing normal seedlings during the standard laboratory germination test period.

*Hard seed*—This is the percent of seed that did not germinate during the standard germination test period because of an impermeable seed coat. Hard seed may germinate at a later time.

*Germination and hard*—This is the total of germination and hard seeds. The sum of the germination and hard seed cannot be labeled as "total germination."

**Date of Test**—The calendar month and year the test was completed. A germination test must be completed within nine months prior to sale or transportation of the seed, not including the month tested.

**Origin**—Shows the state or foreign country where the seed was grown. If origin is unknown, that fact must be stated.

**Name and Address**—The party who labeled the seed or who sells the seed in the state.

## OPTIONAL:

**Disease Test Result**—Results for seed borne diseases are specified.

## NOTE:

Seed found by the State Seed Department to be improperly or not correctly labeled is subject to a "stop sale order" and cannot be moved, used or sold until it is relabeled correctly.

## Information Not on the Seed Tag

Not all seed quality factors are shown on the tag. Other factors that should be evaluated in determining seed quality are listed:

**Physical Appearance of the Seed Sample**—A look at the seed itself will show a few things that may not be shown on the tag. These items include:

- (a) Color and condition of the seed.
- (b) Seed size and uniformity of seed size.
- (c) A check on weed seeds not identified on the tag.
- (d) Disease.
- (e) Odor.

**Treated Seed Tag**—Any seed that is chemically treated must be labeled, indicating chemicals used and precautions to be taken.

**Additional Information**—Sometimes information not shown on the tag or that can't be seen by looking at the seed is available from the seller. For example, the seller may know the percent of loose smut in barley seed based on the embryo test; the seed size, number of seeds per pound or test weight if not on the seed tag; or that the seed is from a field that passed field inspection but final certification was not completed.

The seed should be a recommended variety for your locality.

## How To Determine Your Best Seed Buy

The "pure live seed" basis is used by many in determining the comparative value of different seed lots. This is done by multiplying the purity by the germination and dividing by 100. This number divided into the asking price gives you the actual cost per pound or bushel on a pure live seed basis.

### Example:

$$\frac{90 \text{ purity} \times 60 \text{ germ}}{100} = 54\% \text{ pure live seed}$$

$$\frac{\text{Cost 27 cents per lb.}}{.54} = 50 \text{¢ actual cost of pure live seed per pound}$$

Being a good seed buyer can help increase profits on your farm.  
**"Good seed doesn't cost—it pays."**

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