



## PLANT PROTECTION AND CERTIFICATION CENTERS Seed Area



Photos by CREA

## CREA-DC Seed Area



Photo by M. Leandri

The Council for research in agriculture and analysis of the agricultural economy CREA is the leading Italian research organization devoted to agri-food supply chains. It operates under public law, and is supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture.

One of the twelve centers of which it is composed, is the Plant protection and certification centers (CREA-DC), which deals with the protection of plants and the certification of seed materials.

In particular the Seed Area, a part of CREA-DC, has inherited the tasks, structures and staff of the Ente Nazionale Sementi Elette (ENSE).

The Seed Area provides the official certification of seed materials in compliance with national and international laws.

It carries out technical examinations for listing in the National Register of new plant varieties and for the recognition of the title of protection of new plant varieties.

The Seed Area conducts studies and research for the development of new methodologies for varietal and technological evaluation of seed materials.

The Seed Areas are located throughout the Country and operate through their laboratories and experimental stations.

## Listing in the Variety Register and grant of Community Plant Variety Right

The CREA-DC Seed Area, on behalf of MIPAAF, performs tests to ascertain the requirements for listing in the National Register of new varieties of vegetable and agricultural plant species.

The tests involve all of the CREA-DC stations throughout the country and, for the evaluation of the agricultural species, a complex network of external bodies and structures. Each CREA-DC Station is assigned the technical coordination of the tests of certain species or group of species.

The tests consist of plot sowing inspections and laboratory analyses that allow the evaluation of the candidate varieties on the basis of the official national and European protocols.

The CREA-DC Seed Area is the *Examination Office* on behalf of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) for the release of European plant rights of new varieties of durum wheat, maize (FAO classes 500-600-700), Narbonne vetch, pannonian vetch, rice, cathartic bromine, alexandrine clover, emmer wheat, tomato (determinate grown type), melon, cardoon and artichoke.



## Seed Certification

The seed certification activity aims to verify that seeds meet the legal requirements for their commercialization, such as:

- Identity and varietal purity;
- Physical, biological, physiological and phytosanitary characteristics.



Photo by A. Arioli

The inspections, therefore, take place in three stages:

***When cultivating seed-bearing plants:*** “field inspections”, to verify: **(a)** the varietal identity, that is the varietal correspondence, by comparing all characteristics of the variety which it claims to be, with characteristics that are included on the official description of the variety; **(b)** the varietal purity, that is the homogeneity degree in relation to the reproductive or multiplicative system of the species considered; **(c)** the health status of plants, that is the absence of any transmissible diseases by seed or propagation material.

***When processing and packaging seeds:*** “mechanical selection inspections”, which have the main purpose of verifying the correct procedures of the seed selection, packaging and labelling. The control phase of the mechanical selection also involves the sampling from the plot produced and the delivery of the samples to the seed analysis laboratories to verify their biological, physical and phytosanitary aspects.

***After the commercialization of plots with suitable results:*** “a posteriori inspections”, with the aim to verify, through plot testing, that all the seed production stages have taken place in compliance with current legislation for the purpose of its commercialization.



Photo by L. Barra

## **Research and Experimentation**

Research and experiments are carried out for the development and the implementation of important projects in partnership with the European Union, national and regional governmental authorities. Such initiatives address areas such as vegetable biodiversity, as well as varietal and technological characterization of seeds through field and laboratory tests.



Photos by N. Trotta

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