

BOOST YOUR GRADING KNOW-HOW TO BENEFIT YOUR BOTTOM LINE



BE PART OF THE PROCESS

Routinely observe the grading of your canola

Grading and dockage assessment should not be a mystery or a black-box process. Grain buyers licensed by the Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) should have a transparent grading system that allows farmers to observe the grading of their grain at the point of sale. Asking to observe the grading of your grain is your right. It is a sound business practice and does not imply a sign of mistrust with your grain buyer.

THE GRADE AND DOCKAGE YOU RECEIVE FOR YOUR CANOLA DIRECTLY affects your bottom line. What you need to know to help you get the most value for your crop:

1. Know what you've got

- Grain harvested from a seemingly uniform field can have varying grades and quality characteristics from truckload to truckload resulting in varying grades within a bin, and from bin to bin.
- Get in the habit of taking a running sample from every harvest truckload that goes into each bin or grain bag, thoroughly mix it, store it in a moisture proof container and label it.
- Knowing the quantity and quality of what you've got to market will:
 - > help you negotiate with grain buyers;
 - > give you more confidence when asking for a second opinion; and
 - > help maximize the value of your entire canola crop, especially if crop quality varies by bin.

2. Understand testing and grading factors

- Familiarize yourself with the procedures for assessing dockage and grading canola. The Official Grain Grading Guide is available from the Canadian Grain Commission.
- Ask to observe the elevator operator assess dockage and grade your grain. It is your right to do so.
- Take a course in grain grading. Look for upcoming courses from organizations such as Olds College Continuing Education program.



Images courtesy: Canadian Grain Commission

DID YOU KNOW

the Canadian Grain Commission as well as several private companies have services that allow you to get an unofficial assessment of the grade and dockage of your canola?

3. A representative delivery sample is key

- Ensure samples are taken from the entire load to ensure they fully represent the lot being delivered. (i.e. collect samples at regular intervals from start to finish, or position the truck for the probe to optimally collect the representative sample, etc.)
- Remember, the sample is the basis for grading your canola so make sure that it is taken accurately.

If using commercial grain haulers make sure you have a contract with your grain buyer based on your on-farm sample so there are no surprises.

4. Pay close attention to what is considered dockage

- Sound seed, regardless of size, should not be assessed as dockage. Hot, dry growing conditions, frost or disease can produce many smaller than normal seeds.
- With small canola seeds, the size of the sieve used is critical to assessing dockage.
- There is a range of sieve sizes that can be used. Inspectors use their discretion in choosing which is most appropriate.
- If you observe many sound, smaller seeds being included as dockage, request a smaller sieve be used to minimize the loss of sound canola.
- Every 1% increase in dockage costs you about \$5.50/mt.

IF YOU DON'T AGREE, ASK FOR A SECOND OPINION – IT'S YOUR RIGHT

- If you disagree with the elevator's grade assessment, request a sample be sent to the CGC for a binding decision on grade and dockage (fee applies). This service is referred to as *Subject to Inspector's Grade and Dockage*, and is only available at licensed CGC primary elevators.
- Together with the elevator, a representative sample is selected and submitted. The CGC assessment is final, and the final cash purchase ticket is based on its quality assessment.
- Choosing to use this service is a business decision that should be requested in a respectful manner to help maintain a good business relationship with your grain buyer.

CGC QUALITY ASSESSMENT SERVICES

	SUBMITTED SAMPLE SERVICE	HARVEST SAMPLE PROGRAM
Availability	Year-round	September to November, pre-registration required
Cost per sample	\$46.99 for canola	Free
Unofficial grade received	Yes, including main degrading reason if present	Yes
Dockage assessment	Yes	Pilot in 2013
Quality assessed	Distinctly green, heated, etc.	Chlorophyll and oil content

Keep in mind that grade and quality results are only representative of the sample sent in and are not necessarily reflective of the entire lot of grain. Since quality can vary, it is important to collect representative samples of your grain lots.

Additional information is available on the CGC website at

www.grainscanada.gc.ca

OTHER QUALITY ASSESSMENT SERVICES

SGS Canada Inc.

www.sgs.com/SeedAndCrop
 Manitoba: 204-942-8557
 Saskatchewan: 306-934-3559
 Alberta: 403-290-0903

GenServe Laboratories

www.src.sk.ca
 Saskatoon 1-866-420-2293

Intertek Testing Service Canada Ltd.

Offices across prairies
 204-944-1887

** This list may not include all companies providing services.*



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