

Guidelines for Wheat Quality Laboratory Sample Assessment

Mission

The mission of the four USDA-ARS Wheat Quality Laboratories (WQLs) is to advance the quality and utilization of wheat grain in the U.S. for the betterment of U.S. consumers, farmers, and the milling, baking and processing industries.

End-use quality assessment

The mission of the WQLs is implemented through basic and applied research, as well as technology transfer. A major component of applied research at the WQLs is the standardized testing of experimental wheat breeding lines and commercial cultivars. Consequently, public and private wheat breeders are primary stakeholders. Additionally, the USDA has had a long and mutually beneficial relationship with land-grant and other public universities in the U.S., particularly within the breeding sector, and it is important that this relationship is maintained. The WQLs also acknowledge the current trends in the wheat industry as well as the significant benefit derived from collaboration with private breeding companies, flour milling companies, food manufacturers, and processors. This diversity of activity must be weighed and prioritized in view of limited federal resources and national program goals. Decisions must be made regarding how to best allocate these finite resources to various undertakings. The following statements provide guidelines regarding the quality assessment (QA) activities of the WQLs:

- QAs are for the greater good and serve the American public
- All research data generated by the WQLs reside in the Public Domain (unless otherwise restricted by law)
- QAs are conducted in an ethical manner, with safety and health given the first priority
- WQL resources allocated to QAs are distributed in a fair and equitable manner; serving the regional nursery and public breeding programs will have priority over QA activities for private breeding company samples not submitted through the regional nursery program
- QA activities seek to minimize redundancy with similar services performed by the private sector

Sample submission and processing

The WQLs will continue to evaluate public and private breeding lines and cultivars submitted to the ARS-organized Regional Nurseries on a fee-free basis (submission and acceptance requires the submitting breeder to adhere to an ARS Material Transfer Agreement, for example the *HWWRN Material Transfer Agreement, effective 8-18-2010*). Public breeding lines and cultivars submitted to the WQLs that are not part of the regional nursery will continue to be evaluated as resources allow.

Based upon the availability of resources, each WQL Director has the discretion to evaluate breeding lines or cultivars that private-sector stakeholders may submit.

Individual stakeholders (public or private) are encouraged to enter into a dialogue with the appropriate WQL Director to discuss evaluation strategies, number and type of samples, market class(es), breeding objectives, grain requirements, or other special considerations. If the WQLs are unable to meet the needs of any stakeholder (public or private), we will attempt to resolve the issue by exploring other options, providing/securing additional resources, or modifying the overall evaluation strategy.