
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 1848 **Hearing Date:** 6/16/26
Author: Ransom
Version: 2/11/26
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Reichel Everhart

Subject: California Seed Law: annual registration fee

SUMMARY:

This bill would authorize the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), after consultation with the Seed Advisory Board, to increase the annual registration for any person who sells seed in California from \$40 to \$100. Beginning January 1, 2028, the bill would also authorize the Secretary, after consulting with the Seed Advisory Board, to annually increase the fee by up to \$50, but not to exceed \$300 total, for each fiscal year or portion of a fiscal year beginning July 1.

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING LAW:

Existing federal law:

- 1) Establishes the Federal Seed Act which regulates agricultural and vegetable seed shipped in interstate commerce. It requires that seed shipments between states are labeled with certain quality information necessary for seed buyers to make informed choices. The United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service provides regulatory oversight and enforcement of the Federal Seed Act and its related regulations¹.

Existing state law:

- 1) Establishes the California Seed Law (CSL) which regulates seed sold in California and requires every labeler of agricultural or vegetable seed offered for sale in this state or any persons who sell seed in this state, as provided, to

¹ <https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/fsa>

annually register with CDFA to obtain authorization to sell the seed, except as provided (*Food and Agricultural Code Section 52281-52289*).

- 2) Establishes the Seed Advisory Board to make recommendations on all matters pertaining to the California Seed Law and seed inspection regulations, the enforcement program, and the program's *budget (Food and Agricultural Code Section 52291-52298)*.
- 3) Requires each application for annual registration to be accompanied by a payment of a \$40 fee for each fiscal year or portion of a fiscal year beginning on July 1 (*Food and Agricultural Code Section 52352*).

PROPOSED LAW:

This bill:

- 1) Authorizes the Secretary of CDFA, after consulting with the Seed Advisory Board, to increase the seed seller registration fee from \$40 to \$100.
- 2) Authorizes the Secretary, on and after January 1, 2028, and after consulting with the Seed Advisory Board, to annually increase the fee by up to \$50, but not to exceed \$300 total, for each fiscal year or a portion of a fiscal year beginning July 1.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author:

“AB 1848 supports the work of the California Department of Food and Agriculture in inspecting seed products, testing germination and purity, and preventing mislabeled or contaminated seeds from entering the market. California Seed Law requires seed companies to register with CDFA and pay a fee to cover costs associated with the inspection and monitoring program. The fee, which has not been increased since its establishment in 1973, is no longer adequate and must be adjusted to sustain this important program.. The seed monitoring and inspection programs funded by these fees protect farmers from costly crop failures, promote fair competition among seed sellers, and maintain the reliability of California's agricultural supply chain. California's agriculture is a cornerstone of the international food marketplace, and protecting our breadbasket is absolutely essential. AB 1848 helps CDFA continue to

fund their monitoring and protection programs to keep our agricultural sector healthy for years to come.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION:

None received

COMMENTS:

The Seed Services program within CDFA does the following:

- Regulates the marketing of seeds so that quality information is accessible and accurate.
- Tests for seed purity and germination through sampling.
- Investigates seed complaints and attempts to resolve buyer/seller disputes through mediation.
- Works to prevent the transmission of noxious weed seeds through seed products.
- Supports research and development of seed biotechnology.

By enforcing the California Seed Law (CSL), CDFA is ensuring that consumers receive the desired product. The program fee has been set at \$40 since 1973 and costs associated with the program and enforcement have grown significantly. It is important to note the increase in the fees is supported by the seed companies who pay those fees.

PRIOR ACTIONS:

Assembly Floor:	66 - 1
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	14 - 0
Assembly Agriculture Committee:	8 - 0

SUPPORT:

California Association of Wheat Growers
California Seed Association

OPPOSITION:

None received

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