

PRESS RELEASE

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Columbia Grain International Explores How Soybeans of Other Colors (SBOC) are Causing Grading Issues and its Ramifications on American Farmers

A known seed coat color variation is causing grading issues, posing challenges for grain buyers and exporters alike.

Portland, OR (OCTOBER 2022) — Soybeans of other Colors is yet another challenging issue the agriculture industry has had to face this year. Simply stated, SBOC includes soybeans that have green, black, brown, or bicolored seed coats, and while they are nothing new in the last 3-5 years there's been a marked increase. As of July, 25% of USDA certificates for U.S. #2 soybean or lower was due to SBOC, meaning the amount of SBOC in U.S. #1 soybean has increased threefold. Initial end-use testing indicates no correlation between the seed coat color issues and the final quality of the interior of the soybean. Meal and oil tests seem to indicate normal results. These varieties also have specific other agronomic advantages related to weed control. Unfortunately, because of SBOC more and more soybeans are not making grade as No. 1 or No. 2 using current Federal Grain Inspection Service grading factors, making it harder for farmers to find markets. SBOC is leading to rejections at either the origin or destination of these shipments. Furthermore, a high level of SBOC can result in monetary discounts on the crops. Columbia Grain has been working with the National Grain and Feed Association and the North American Export Grain Association to navigate the hurdles presented by SBOC and find solutions for their producers and end users.

"CGI plans to actively engage on this topic to make our producers and others aware of the challenges," said CEO and President of CGI, Jeff Van Pevenage. "It's our job to inform the producer about the markets in which their soybeans can be sold. SBOC increases risk for all in the value chain."

CGI is in favor of working together as an industry to conduct independent research to determine if functionality is impacted by seed coat discoloration associated with currently commercially available genetically engineered seeds, looking at the impact of coat discoloration on processing as well as on the nutritional values of soybeans and their products/ byproducts.

"Other major soy producing and exporting countries do not use seedcoat color as a grading factor in their grading standards," said Van Pevenage. "The U.S. is at a disadvantage compared to other export competitors because of SBOC and we are committed to addressing this issue to support our customers to continue our mission of nourishing the world, safely."



“We take great care in making sure that we are follow the grading standards set forth by the USDA to help assure that we can then meet the requirements when we sell the commodities we purchase from our producers,” said Senior Vice President of Columbia Grain’s Grain Division, Kurt Haarmann. “We segregate grain and oilseeds to the best of our ability based on grade factors we are seeing and the requirements of the export market. Columbia Grain is actively working with other industry partners through our representatives at the National Grain & Feed Association and the North American Export Grain Association to address this problem with our buyers and the Federal Grain Inspection Service. We urge our producers to contact their CGI representative if they feel this could be a problem for their crop.”

About Columbia Grain International

Since 1978, Columbia Grain International™ (CGI) has been *Cultivating Growth™* as a global leader in the origination, processing, logistics, and distribution of high-quality bulk grains, pulses, edible beans, oilseeds and organics for U.S. domestic and worldwide export markets. Headquartered in Portland, OR, CGI’s reliable supply chain spans the western region of the US, ensuring abundant ingredients for all of its partners, thanks to their trusted relationships with their farmers throughout the fertile croplands of Washington, Idaho, Montana and North Dakota, well known for its high-quality wheat, feed grains, canola and pulses. CGI is an owner of Montana Specialty Mills, who operates an organic and non-GMO oilseed crushing facility in Great Falls, Montana, a mustard seed facility in Conrad, Montana, and most recently Montana Craft Malt —providing specialty malt barley from Montana farmers to the craft brewing world. Today, they are vertically integrated, operating assets including grain elevators, processing plants and agronomy centers to support their farmers, which stretch the northern tier of the United States. With multiple touchpoints across the food supply chain, CGI provides trusted solutions and cultivates high-quality ingredients from their local farmers for a farm to table philosophy that nourishes the world, safely.

For more information, visit [Columbia Grain International](https://www.christieand.co) online, For media inquiries, contact Christina Madrid at Christie & Co, www.christieand.co, by phone (805) 576-7102 and/or email christina@christieand.co.

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