



- ✓ Is it the **species** you want?
- ✓ Is it the **variety** you want?
- ✓ Is it a **true variety**?
- ✓ Is a current **Statement of Seed Analysis** available?
- ✓ Is the **seed lot number** on the statement the same as the one on the bag or label?
- ✓ Is the seed provided by an **ASF member**?
- ✓ Is the variety covered by **Plant Breeders Rights (PBR)**?





## Know before you sow checklist



[ausseed.org.au](http://ausseed.org.au)

### The importance of buying good quality seed

Whether you're planting a crop or sowing a pasture, seed is the most important input you'll use. It sets the foundation for everything that follows – yield, quality, and even weed control.

That's why it pays to look closely at the seed you're buying. Is it good quality? Will it perform as expected? And just as importantly, is it free from unwanted surprises, like weed seeds?

To help you make informed choices, the Australian Seed Federation (ASF) has created the **Know before you sow checklist**. It's a simple set of questions you can ask your seed supplier to help reduce risk and get the best value for your investment.

Seed might look clean and healthy, but that doesn't mean it's free from issues. It could contain weed seeds or have a lower-than-expected germination rate, and that can cost you. That's why it's important to ask for a **Statement of Seed Analysis**. It gives you a clearer picture of what you're actually buying.

And here's another catch: seed from different varieties of the same species often looks exactly the same. So how do you know what you're getting? The best way is to buy **certified or quality-assured seed**, which comes with the guarantees and traceability to back it up.

To be recognised as a true variety, the seed must meet internationally agreed standards. That means proving genetic stability, uniformity, and consistent performance across generations.

### Choosing a species and variety

Not sure what to sow? A good advisor or agronomist can help you choose a species that suits your purpose – whether you're after persistence in a pasture, yield in a crop, or disease resistance in a veg line, the right variety can make all the difference.

There are also tools like the ASF Pasture Seed Database to help. It lists all commercially available pasture seed products in Australia by species, variety, IP status, and marketing details, as provided by local marketers. For those seeking pasture seed, it's a great starting point for comparing your options and making a more informed decision. You can also check out the Pasture Trials Network e-tool, it shows how different pasture varieties actually perform across a range of real-world conditions, with independent data you can trust.

Looking at cereals or field crops? The National Variety Trials (NVT) online platform is a great place to start. It lists a wide range of cereal and field crop varieties, with details on the breeder, marketers, and PBR status. Even better, it gives you access to independent trial results so you can see how new varieties are performing across different parts of Australia.

### Let's be honest, anyone can make a claim

Putting seed in a bag and promising performance is easy. But if you want confidence that what's claimed will actually deliver, you need to know what you're buying, before you sow it.

In Australia, if a variety is protected under **Plant Breeder's Rights (PBR)**, using or trading it without permission isn't just risky, it's illegal. Make sure you know what you're buying, and that it's being sold legally and transparently.