



## Soybean Germination and Seed Quality

### // What is a warm germination test?

A Warm Germination Test (WGT) helps indicate seed viability by determining the seed's ability to germinate under ideal growing conditions. The WGT result is required by law to be included on seed labeling and is generally valid for up to 6 months. The results of this test are comparable across seed providers because the testing methods are standardized through regulation and are consistent from company to company.

### // What is Bayer's standard warm germination test percentage?

Bayer takes a lot of pride in providing farmers with the best quality product. Our internal standard WGT percentage for soybean seed is 90%. However, in years where the environment impacts seed quality, we may sell soybean seed with less than a 90% score. Every bag that is tagged below 90% goes through a review process before releasing it for sale.

### // How does this year's soybean seed quality compare to last year?

Soybean seed quality has been impacted by the poor growing and harvest conditions experienced in 2018. As a result, Bayer and other seed producers are seeing lower germination scores in some maturity groups.

### // Has this problem affected other soybean producers?

Yes. Bayer is not the only seed producer that will have lower soybean seed quality in 2019.

### // What conditions favored the production of poor soybean seed quality in 2018?

Abundant rain from the end of August through October resulted in fungal disease and delayed harvest. Many pods were infected by Diaporthe species of fungi, which can lead to stem canker, pod and stem blight, and Phomopsis seed decay. Wet fields led to harvest delays, leaving soybean seeds to rot, sprout, and shatter. The harvested crop had several seed quality issues due to disease including discoloration and chalkiness.

### // How can I best manage my affected soybean crop for 2019?

- Store soybean seed correctly prior to planting.
- Check the germination score identified on the seed bag and adjust seeding rate accordingly.
- Include fungicide seed treatments. Consider including a seed treatment that includes Phomopsis on the label. Seed treatments can help maintain the quality of the seed.
- Give your soybean crop the best possible start. Warm soils, favorable growing conditions, and a good seedbed.

### // How is Bayer managing seed quality in soybeans for 2019?

Seed is produced over a wide geography to help manage environmental risks, so not all soybeans have been impacted to the same degree. Bayer also thoroughly tests and reviews each lot of seed to help ensure a positive planting experience.

### // Has the industry experienced soybean seed quality issues before?

Of course. In those years we have utilized similar approaches to seed quality, which led to positive experiences and support for the best quality seed in the market.

### // Sources (web sources verified 02/06/19)

<sup>1</sup> Smith, D. 2018. Poor soybean seed quality and preparing for the 2019 field season. University of Wisconsin-Madison. <https://badgercropdoc.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> Unglesbee, E. 2018. Soybeans: lower quality seed for 2019 – check your germination rates – DTN. Agfax. <https://agfax.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> Begemann, S. 2019. 2019 soybean seed supplies tight, lower quality. Agweb. <http://www.agweb.com/>.

**Performance may vary**, from location to location and from year to year, as local growing, soil and weather conditions may vary. Growers should evaluate data from multiple locations and years whenever possible and should consider the impacts of these conditions on the grower's fields.

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