

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: June 25, 2024

Report Number: CH2024-0073

Report Name: Planting Seeds Annual 2024

Country: China - People's Republic of

Post: Beijing

Report Category: Planting Seeds, Vegetables, Oilseeds and Products, Grain and Feed

Prepared By: FAS China Staff and Garrett McDonald

Approved By: Adam Branson

Report Highlights:

In Marketing Year (MY) 2022/23, China imported 67,000 metric tons (MT) of planting seeds valued at \$478 million. The United States is the largest supplier of planting seeds to China, accounting for 22 percent of MY 2022/23 planting seeds imports by value. This report provides information on the supply, trade, and utilization for a range of planting seeds, including row crops, vegetables, and grass. In addition, this report summarizes updated policy and regulatory information.

I. Production

According to a Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) [report](#) (link in Chinese) published in March 2024, and the [China Major Crop Seed Production Supply and Demand in 2023-2024](#) released by National Agriculture Technology Extension Service Center of MARA in September 2023, major crops seed production increased in MY 2023/24, creating an oversupply of seeds resulting in stable to declining prices.

Corn Seeds

Hybrid corn seed production is estimated at 1.74 million metric tons (MMT) in MY 2023/24 (October-September), a 28 percent increase from MY 2022/23 due to expanded corn seed planted area. MARA statistics show hybrid corn seed area increased 27 percent to 309,000 hectares (ha) in 2023, a ten-year high. The growth in area and production are due to several factors, including lower corn seed stocks (approximately 0.9 – 1 MMT) spanning four consecutive years from 2018 to 2021, higher corn seed prices which rose about 20 percent from the previous year, and rising corn seed production costs. The latter has driven production as expectation of higher near-term production costs incentivize farmers to produce more seed at a lower cost at present for sale at a greater profit within two to three years. Xinjiang and Gansu provinces are the top producers of corn seed, with area of 112,600 ha and 110,300 ha, respectively. Together, they account for 72 percent of total corn seed area.

China's total corn seed supply in MY 2023/24 is estimated at 2.05 MMT, including 310,000 MT of carry-in stocks. MARA estimates MY 2023/24 hybrid corn seed demand at 1.22 MMT. The national average sales price of spring corn seeds is stable from the previous year at 34.8 yuan/kg (\$2.26/lb).

Rice Seeds

Hybrid rice seed production is estimated at 340,000 MT in MY 2023/24, a 21 percent increase from the previous year on higher yield and larger planted area. MARA statistics show hybrid rice seed area increased 10 percent to a record 144,000 ha in MY 2023/24, or slightly more than half of total rice planted area. Average yield for hybrid rice seed in MY 2023/24 is 2,361 kg/ha, about 10 percent higher than the previous year due to favorable weather conditions in major hybrid rice seed producing areas, such as Fujian, Hunan, Hainan, and Jiangxi provinces. Combined, these areas account for over 70 percent of total hybrid rice seed production.

Total hybrid rice seed supply in MY 2023/24 is estimated at 400,000 MT, including 60,000 MT of carry-in stocks. Total hybrid rice seed demand (domestic use and exports) in MY 2022/23 is estimated at 270,000 MT (including 30,000 MT for exports), unchanged from MY 2022/23. The national average sales price of hybrid rice seeds is 72.3 yuan/kg (\$4.62/lb.), a decrease of 10 percent over the same period last year.

Conventional rice seed production is estimated at 1.3 MMT in MY 2023/24, a 10 percent increase from MY 2022/23. MARA statistics show conventional rice seed area increased five percent to 160,000 ha in MY 2023/24. The average yield of conventional rice seed in MY2023/24 is 7,935 kg/ha, a five percent increase from the previous year.

Total conventional rice seed supply in MY 2023/24 is estimated at 1.35 MMT, including 50,000 MT of carry-in stocks. Total conventional rice seed demand in MY 2023/24 is estimated at 590,000 MT, unchanged from MY 2022/23. The national average sales price of conventional rice seeds is 8.9 yuan/kg (\$0.57/lb), unchanged from the same period last year.

Soybean Seeds

Soybean seed production is estimated at 1.15 MMT in MY 2023/24, a 31 percent increase from MY 2022/23 due to expanded soybean seed planted area. MARA statistics show soybean seed area increased 36 percent to 426,000 ha in 2023, driven by PRC policies to incentivize greater soybean production (see GAIN report [2024 China Oilseeds Annual](#) for more information). MARA estimates total soybean seed demand in MY2023/24 at 610,000 MT. The national average sales price of soybean seeds in spring of 2024 was 10.4 yuan/kg (\$0.67/lb.), a decrease of seven percent over the same period last year.

Cottonseeds

Cottonseed production is estimated at 160,000 MT in MY2023/24, maintain flat from MY2022/23. MARA estimates total cotton seed demand in MY2023/24 at 78,000 MT. For more information on China's cotton production please see GAIN Report [2024 China Cotton Products Annual](#).

Wheat Seeds

MARA estimates total spring wheat seed supply at 240,000 MT and demand at 180,000 MT in MY2023/24. Winter wheat seed supply for MY 2023/24 is estimated at 4.56 MMT and demand at 4.05 MMT. For more information on China's wheat production please see GAIN Report [2024 China Grain and Feed Annual](#).

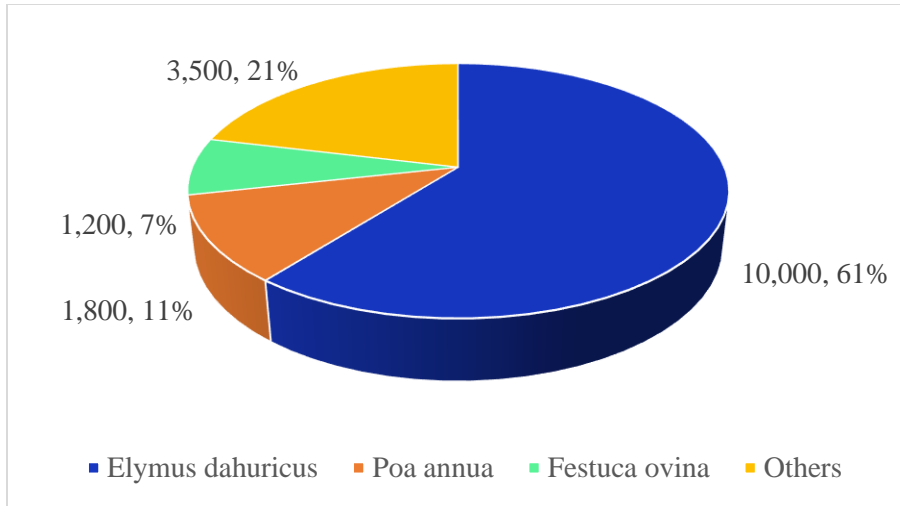
Rape Seeds

MARA estimates total winter rapeseed supply at 25,460 MT and demand at 21,000 in MY2023/24.

Grass Seeds

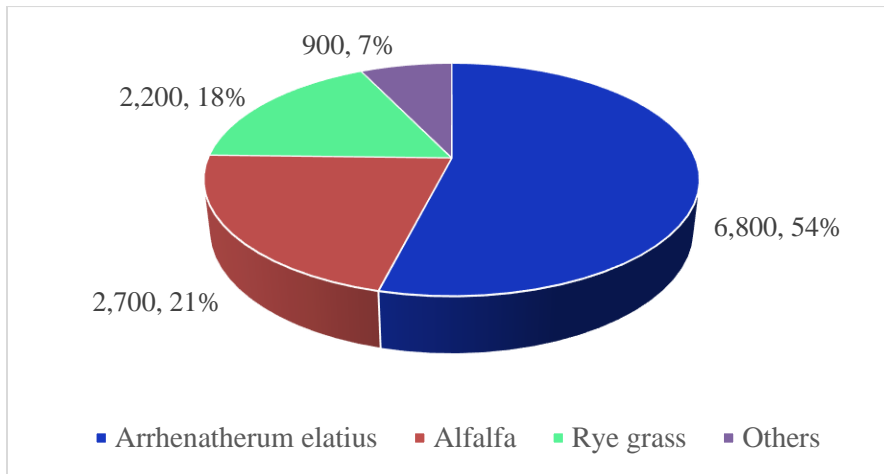
According to the [2024 China Grass Seed Supply and Demand Analysis Report](#) (link in Chinese) published by National Forestry and Grassland Administration in October 2023, grass seed production in MY 2023/24 is estimated at 29,100 MT and harvested area at 33,300 ha. This represents a 73 percent and 15 percent increase, respectively, from MY 2022/23 when production declined due to poor weather conditions including extreme drought and government policies to protect cultivated land for food production. These factors reduced grass seed production by 52 percent in MY 2022/23 to 16,800 MT from the 34,800 MT in MY2021/22. Qinghai province is the largest grass seed producer in China, accounting for 44 percent of total grass seed production in MY2023/24, followed by Gansu province at 26 percent, and Shaanxi and Ningxia provinces each at nine percent. Ecological grass seed production is estimated at 16,500 MT, and forage grass seed production at 12,600 MT.

Figure 1. China: MY 2023/24 Ecological Grass Seed Production (MT, % of Total)



(Source: 2024 China Grass Seed Supply and Demand Analysis Report)

Figure 2. China: MY 2023/24 Forage Grass Seed Production (MT, % of Total)



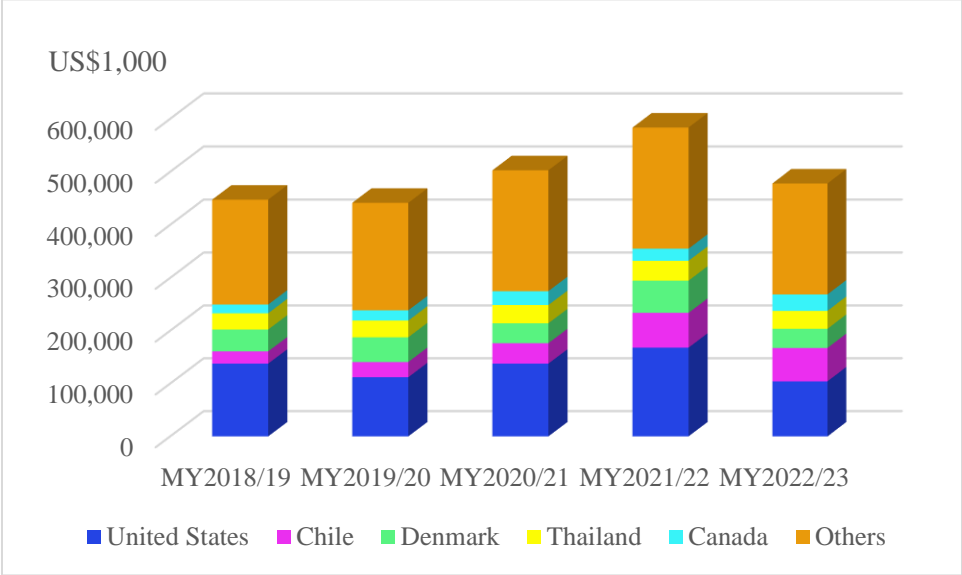
(Source: 2024 China Grass Seed Supply and Demand Analysis Report)

II. Trade

Imports

Seed imports are forecast at 75,000 MT in MY 2023/24, 12 percent higher than MY 2022/23 due to higher grass seed imports which account for nearly 80 percent of total seed imports by volume. China imports few seeds for major grain crops such as corn, wheat, rice, and soybean due to market access limitations for these crops and owing, in part, to the PRC policies intended to create self-sufficiency in grains. Vegetable and grass seed are the top two imported seeds, combined accounting for 56 percent of value and 79 percent of volume in MY 2022/23. The United States is the largest seed supplier to China, accounting for 22 percent of planting seed imports by value, followed by Chile (13 percent), Denmark (eight percent), Thailand (seven percent), and Canada (six percent).

Figure 3. China: Seed Imports from Major Suppliers



Source: Trade Data Monitor, LLC.

Table 1. China: Major Planting Seed Imports from the World

HS Code	Description	Value (U.S. \$1,000s)			Volume (MT)		
		10/20 - 09/21	10/21- 09/22	10/22- 09/23	10/20 - 09/21	10/21- 09/22	10/22- 09/23
	Planting Seeds	512,200	596,560	478,263	102,159	94,539	67,234
120925	Rye Grass Seeds	44,641	91,840	47,887	30,727	39,777	29,676
120991	Vegetable Seeds	244,076	275,488	268,862	10,572	10,256	8,760
100410	Oat Seed	7,572	8,696	7,402	12,753	10,496	8,679
120999	Fruit and Spores Seeds	45,903	40,678	28,636	11,001	8,988	4,380
120924	Kentucky Grass Seeds	20,921	31,693	14,095	6,566	5,334	4,379
120921	Alfalfa Seeds	16,628	10,935	17,768	4,511	2,283	4,222
120923	Fescue Seeds	38,484	54,277	9,020	19,585	12,937	3,327
120929	Forage Seeds	2,442	1,288	2,965	2,091	990	1,968
120922	Clover Seeds	13,255	13,307	3,568	3,350	2,602	735
120910	Sugar Beet Seeds	23,441	14,610	25,173	639	407	693
100510	Corn Seed	3,260	4,492	5,024	261	355	303
120930	Herbaceous Seeds	35,192	33,362	31,235	55	64	60
120770	Melon Seeds	6,714	10,354	10,819	18	31	29
12060010	Sunflower seeds	9,670	5,540	5,809	29	19	23

Source: Trade Data Monitor, LLC.

Table 2. China: Major Planting Seed Imports from the United States

HS Code	Description	Value (U.S. \$1,000s)			Volume (MT)		
		10/20 - 09/21	10/21- 09/22	10/22- 09/23	10/20- 09/21	10/21- 09/22	10/22- 09/23
	Planting Seeds	137,485	167,688	102,639	54,515	35,596	29,788
120925	Rye Grass Seeds	20,752	26,891	27,593	17,857	12,834	19,573
120924	Kentucky Grass Seeds	18,306	24,260	13,976	5,556	4,027	4,339
120923	Fescue Seeds	34,592	43,158	6,650	17,557	9,876	2,424
120999	Fruit and Spores Seeds	33,275	30,102	18,842	6,575	4,869	2,087
120929	Forage Seeds	1,926	709	1,170	1,590	480	719
100410	Oat Seed	2,124	2,053	408	3,736	2,964	482
120991	Vegetable Seeds	13,392	33,355	31,351	429	192	128
120921	Alfalfa Seeds	303	1,138	150	48	187	29
120930	Herbaceous Seeds	8,356	5,443	2,499	16	7	7
120922	Clover Seeds	4,459	579	0	1,151	160	0

Source: Trade Data Monitor, LLC.

Vegetable Seed Imports

Vegetable seed imports for MY 2023/24 are forecast at 5,300 MT, a 40 percent drop from MY 2022/23. According to China Customs trade data, vegetable seeds imports declined 64 percent to 2,280 MT in the first six months of MY 2023/24 from 6,287 MT during the same period the previous year; while import value only declined 12 percent during the same period. Industry contacts suggest the sharp drop in import volume is due to three factors. First, improved vegetable seed breeding capabilities lowered imports of mid-range conventional vegetable seeds. Second, coriander seed imports, whether used as planting seeds or spices, were re-classified as spices under HS code 09092100 in mid-2023. According to China Customs data, the average import price of coriander seed was \$800/MT while the average import price of vegetable seed was \$19,750/MT in 2023. Lastly, the 2018 Special Management Measures for Foreign Investment Access (Negative List) lifted restrictions for foreign investment in some crop seed business, which means that foreign investors can set up wholly-owned vegetable seed companies, lowering the need for imports as more foreign companies move vegetable seed production to China. Although the COVID-19 pandemic and PRC response delayed this trend, industry contacts believe it resumed in 2023 following the removal of zero-COVID restrictions.

Italy, Indonesia, Thailand, and Denmark together accounted for 85 percent of vegetable seed imports by volume in MY 2022/23. By contrast, Chile and the United States only accounted for 2.5 percent and 1.5 percent of the import volume respectively. However, by value, Chile and the United States accounted for 23 percent and 12 percent of total import value, respectively, due to higher unit prices of seeds imported.

According to a [MARA report](#) (link in Chinese), China's total facility agriculture¹ area is about 2.7 million ha, of which over 80 percent are planted with vegetables. High investment in facility agriculture requires high return. As a result, farmers are willing to pay for high-end and high-quality vegetable seeds that can generate higher margins. Continued expansion of facility agriculture is expected to grow demand for unique and high-end vegetable seeds for the foreseeable future.

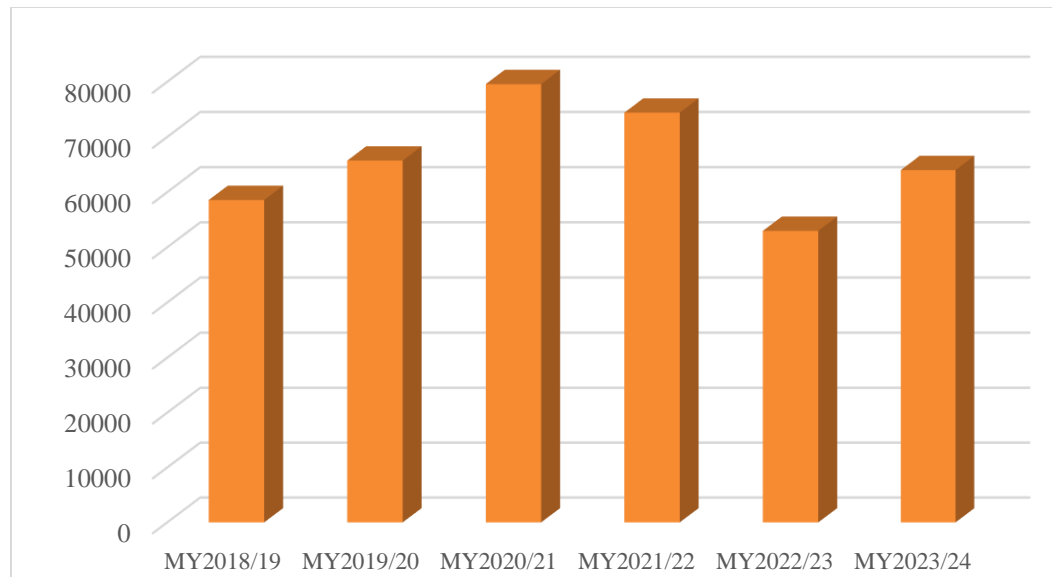
Grass Seed Imports

Grass seed (alfalfa, rye, fescue, clover, oat, and Kentucky) imports for MY 2023/24 are forecast up 20 percent to 64,000 MT from a low baseline in MY 2022/23 (see figure 4 below). According to China Customs data, grass seed imports increased 96 percent in the first six months of MY 2023/24 over the same period the previous year. However, industry contacts indicate that the rebound in grass seed imports is not likely to extend to the second half of MY 2023/24 as higher volumes witnessed in the first six months were driven by lower inventories, which have since recovered, as opposed to overall demand growth. Industry sources report overall demand for grass seed, particularly lawn seed used for greening, remains weak due to China's slowing economy. The sluggish real estate market and tight government budgets have reduced demand

¹ Facility agriculture refers to the use of new production equipment and modern technology to regulate the temperature, light, water, soil, air, fertilizer and other environmental conditions required for the growth of animals and plants in greenhouses, plastic greenhouses and other protective facilities. It involves the improvement of the growth environment of animals and plants, so that growth is rarely restricted by natural conditions and allows for continuous, high-quality production.

for grass seeds for urban greening. Contacts report demand forage grass seeds such as oat grass seeds and some ryegrass seeds are higher than that for greening grasses seeds.

Figure 4. China: Grass Seeds Imports (Unit: MT)



Source: Trade Data Monitor, LLC.

Ryegrass seed is China’s top imported grass seed, accounting for 56 percent of total grass seed imports in MY 2022/23. Annual ryegrass is mostly used as forage for feeding cows, sheep, poultry and fish, while perennial ryegrass is mostly used as ecological and lawn grass. According to [2024 China Grass Seed Supply and Demand Analysis Report](#), two thirds of imported ryegrass seeds were perennial and one-third were annual in the first eight months of 2023. Kentucky, fescue, and clover grass, mostly used ecological and lawn grass, together accounted for 16 percent of total grass seed imports in MY 2022/23.

The United States continues to be the largest seed exporter to China, accounting for 53 percent of total grass seed imports in MY 2022/23, followed by Canada, Denmark, and New Zealand, with market share at 25, 11 and 7 percent respectively.

Exports

Seed exports for MY 2023/24 are forecast at 36,000 MT, about 18 percent higher than MY 2022/23, due to higher rice seed exports which accounted for 71 percent of total seed exports. Although rice seeds represent the largest export volume, by value they only account for 28 percent of total seed exports. By contrast, vegetable seed accounted for only 13 percent of export volume but represented 49 percent of total seed export value in MY 2022/23.

Rice Seed Exports

Hybrid rice seed exports for MY 2023/24 are forecast at 28,000 MT, about 20 percent above MY 2022/23 volumes. According to China Customs data, rice seed exports increased 37 percent in the first six months of MY 2023/24, of which exports to Pakistan and the Philippines increased

45 percent and 50 percent, respectively. Combined these countries accounted for over 80 percent of total rice seed exports. Pakistan’s rice acreage is forecast to reach a record high in MY 2024/25 due to high prices providing farmers the incentive to increase rice plantings, which generates high demand for rice seeds (see GAIN report [Grain and Feed Annual Pakistan 2024](#) for more information on rice production in Pakistan). Demand is also expected to remain stable or increase in the Philippines where the government continues to encourage farmers to use hybrid rice seeds to improve yields (see GAIN report [Grain and Feed Annual Philippines 2024](#) for more information). Despite year-to-year fluctuations, industry contacts believe the long-term trend is for rice seed exports to decline as importing countries expand locally produced rice seed supply, in part with investments from Chinese rice seed companies. In the first quarter of 2024, the PRC donated 1.5 MT of rice seed to The Gambia valued at \$17,000.

Vegetable Seed Exports

Vegetable seed exports in MY 2023/24 are forecast at 3,400 MT, a 13 percent decrease from the previous year on lower exports to EU countries, who have increased buying vegetable seeds from Ukraine. According to trade data provided by Trade Data Monitor LLC., EU vegetable seed imports from Ukraine increased to 3,009 MT in the first five months of MY 2023/24 from 898 MT during the same period of MY 2022/23; while its imports from China declined to 591 MT from the 999 MT during the same period.

The Netherlands, China’s largest export market, accounted for 15 percent of total vegetable seed exports in MY 2022/23, followed by South Korea, Vietnam, Italy, and the United States, with market share of 11, 10, 9 and 8 percent, respectively. China’s top vegetable seed exports include tomatoes, sweet peppers, lettuce, and eggplant.

Table 3. China: Major Planting Seed Exports to the World

HS Code	Description	Value (US\$1,000s)			Volume (MT)		
		10/20 - 09/21	10/21 - 09/22	10/22 - 09/23	10/20 - 09/21	10/21 - 09/22	10/22 - 09/23
	Planting Seeds	253,220	287,487	306,665	29,798	33,511	30,546
10061021	Long rice seeds	74,462	93,973	86,517	20,151	23,917	21,757
120991	Vegetable Seeds	122,884	131,664	151,543	4,252	4,067	3,897
10061029	Other rice seeds	6,306	4,813	5,479	1,941	1,424	1,622
100510	Maize Seed	3,864	5,464	3,721	1,001	1,386	986
120930	Herbaceous Seeds	22,256	24,488	24,169	952	1,045	813
120999	Fruit Seeds	4,983	5,482	5,447	764	755	744
120929	Forage Seeds	1,025	1,331	1,113	333	227	261
12077010	Melon Seeds	16,684	19,303	27,880	161	159	209
120721	Cotton Seeds	159	582	381	79	426	151
120110	Soybean Seed	372	323	415	101	76	106

Source: Trade Data Monitor LLC.

III. Policy

The following are seed-related policy updates and key policies affecting planting seeds in China since the publication of the [2023 Planting Seed Annual Report](#).

Draft GACC Approvals of Special Quarantine Permits for Prohibited Imported Animals and Plants for Special Purpose

On May 27, 2024, the General Administration of Customs China (GACC) issued a notification proposing to optimize the approval procedures of special quarantine permits for prohibited imported animals and plants for special purposes, such as scientific research. According to Article 5 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Entry and Exit Animal and Plant Quarantine “Whoever, because of special needs such as scientific research, imports any objects prohibited from entering the country, must submit an application in advance, which shall be subject to the approval by the State animal and plant quarantine department,” however, industry contacts previously reported that there is no clear pathway to apply for such approval. The draft proposal provides applicants with a clear pathway to apply by: 1) clarifying the procedures for handling special quarantine permit approval, including the timeline, reviewing units, and review procedures; 2) clarifying documentation requirements including the application form, certification documents, risk self-assessment reports, and standardized formats for some application materials; and 3) clarifying the use of special quarantine permits, which are valid for one use within the validity period and cannot be issued in batches. GACC is accepting public comments on the draft at dapq@customs.gov.cn before June 26, 2024. Please refer to [GACC Notification to Optimize the Approval of Special Quarantine Permit on the Entry Animal and Plant](#) (link in Chinese) for more information on the draft proposal.

Revised Draft General Directive for Labeling of Agricultural Seeds Published

On January 4, 2024 MARA published a revised [General Directive for Labeling of Agricultural Seeds \(Draft for Comments\)](#) (link in Chinese). The revised draft directive expands label content, requires a description of cultivation and uses, and clarifies label requirements for genetically modified (GM) seeds and imported seeds. The directive serves as a mandatory national standard and applies to all crop seeds sold in China. On February 12, 2024, the PRC notified the revised draft General Directive for Labelling of Agricultural Seeds to the WTO under [G/TBT/N/CHN/1818](#). For an unofficial translation of the draft directive and analysis of updated language, please see GAIN report [Revised Draft Directive for Labeling of Agricultural Seeds Published for Comments](#).

GE Seed Cultivation and Production and Operation Licenses

On December 26, 2023, MARA announced the issuance of 26 GE corn and soybean seed production and operation licenses. However, even if a GE seed production and operation license is obtained, the approved GE corn and soybean varieties can only be planted in PRC approved areas, which will limit the scale of planting in the near term. For more information on the GE corn and soybean seed production and operation licenses, please refer to GAIN report [China Issued First Batch of Genetically Engineered Corn and Soybean Seed Production and Operation Licenses](#).

Foreign Investment Prohibition

The PRC prohibits foreign direct investment in the biotech sector under the 2021 Special Administrative Measures on Access to Foreign Investment, which was released on December 27, 2021. No new “Negative List” on investment has been released since then. Please see [2021 Plant Seeds Annual Report](#) for more information on the measures and [Agricultural Biotechnology Annual 2023](#) for detailed information on China’s biotechnology sector developments.

Crop Seed Certification

On September 6, 2023, State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) and MARA jointly published the [Implementation Opinions of SAMR and MARA on Carrying Out Crop Seed Certification](#) (link in Chinese). The Opinions provide working mechanisms, implementation requirements, and supervision on crop seed certification. The Opinions indicate that seed certification in China is voluntary rather than mandatory; however, seed certification is encouraged through certain incentives, such as reducing the frequency of supervision² for certified seed companies and crop seed certification agencies. Additionally, certified companies are given priority when applying for relevant major research and project construction tasks. For an unofficial translation of the document and analysis of updated language, please see GAIN report [PRC Issues Final Implementation Opinions for Crop Seed Certification](#).

WTO Notified Quarantine Measures for Imported Plant Propagation Materials

On August 7, 2023, the PRC notified [Measures for the Quarantine Administration of Imported Plant Propagation Materials \(Revised Version\)](#) to the WTO under [G/SPS/N/CHN/1282](#). According to the notification, “Based on the actual situation of quarantine supervision work in recent years, the management measures have made further detailed regulations on the quarantine approval of imported plant propagation materials, port quarantine, post-entry quarantine and other related matters, but no new requirements have been put forward for overseas related parties.” According to the PRC [interpretation](#) (link in Chinese) on the Measures, one of the key reasons for updating the measures is to align requirements with the Biosafety Law with regards to designated ports of entry and risk assessment. For an unofficial translation of the notified measures and a comparison of the current version of the revised edition, please refer to GAIN report [WTO Notified Measures for Plant Propagation Materials](#).

WTO Notified Revised Draft Seed Standards

On January 5, 2024, the PRC notified a [National Standard for Quality Grading of Gramineous Seed](#) (link in Chinese) to the WTO under [G/TBT/N/CHN/1786](#). According to the notification, the updated draft national standard applies to products covered by HS codes 100310 (Barley seed for sowing), 100410 (Oat seed for sowing), 120923 (Fescue seed for sowing), 120924 (Kentucky blue grass seed for sowing), and 120925 (Rye grass seed for sowing), among other forage/turf and related gramineous plant seeds. For an unofficial translation of the standard and analysis of updated language, please refer to GAIN report [WTO Notified Quality Grading Standard for Gramineous Seeds](#).

² Although “supervision” is not defined in the Opinions, Post generally understands this to mean the frequency of audits, inspections or other reporting required to maintain certification status.

On February 12, 2024, the PRC notified [National Standards for Seed of Food Crops-Part 1: Cereals \(Draft for Comments\)](#) (link in Chinese) to the WTO under [G/TBT/N/CHN/1817](#). According to the notification, the updated draft national standard applies to products covered by HS codes 100191 (wheat seed for sowing), 1003 (barley seed for sowing), 100410 (oat seed for sowing), 100510 (corn seed for sowing), 100610 (rice seed for sowing), 100710 (sorghum seed for sowing), and 120929 (beet seed and other feed plant seed for sowing). For an unofficial translation of the standard and analysis of updated language, please refer to GAIN report [Revised Draft Cereals Seed Standards Notified](#).

On February 12, 2024, the PRC notified the [National Standards for Seed of Economic Crops-Part 2: Oil Species \(Draft for Comments\)](#) (link in Chinese) to the WTO under [G/TBT/N/CHN/1819](#). According to the notification, the updated draft national standard applies to products covered by HS codes 120230 (peanut seed for sowing), 1204 (flax seed for sowing), 120590 (rapeseed for sowing), 120740 (sesame seed for sowing), and 120930 (herbaceous plants seed for sowing). For an unofficial translation of the standard and analysis of updated language, please refer to GAIN report [Revised Draft Oil Seed Standard Notified](#).

PVP Applications Maintain Rapid Growth

In China, plant variety protection (PVP) approval must meet the following three conditions:

1. The plant shall belong to the genus or species of plants listed in the [National Catalogue of Protected Plant Varieties](#);
2. The variety has novelty, distinctness, uniformity, and stability; and,
3. The variety has an appropriate name and can be distinguished from the name of a known variety of the same or similar plant genus or species.

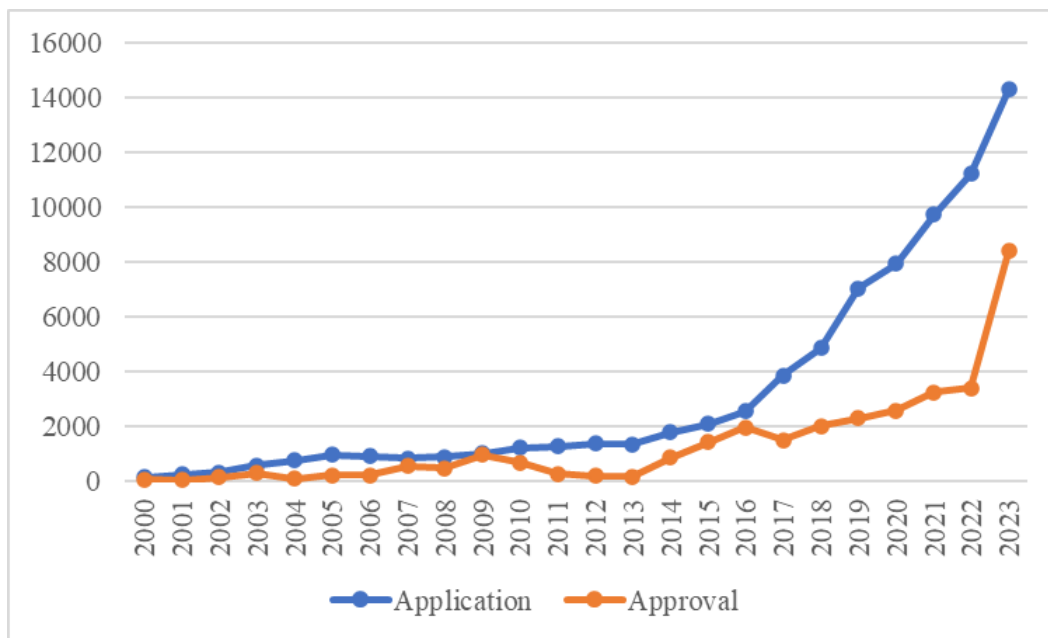
The PRC's annual PVP applications have been the highest among International Union for the Protection of New Plant Varieties (UPOV) members since 2017. According to a February 2024 [MARA report](#), the PRC received nearly 77,000 PVP applications and granted over 30,000 approvals as of the end of 2023. In 2023 alone, the PVP Office received 14,278 applications and granted 8,385 approvals, representing a 27 percent and 148 percent increase, respectively, from 2022. The substantial growth in approvals in 2023, in part, reflects a clearing of a backlog of PVP applications that increased in volume since 2018 and were delayed due to PRC zero-COVID policies (see Figure 2). According to the report, average approval time for approval shortened to 2-3 years in 2023 from 4-5 years in recent years past.

On December 24, 2021, the PRC published an amended Seed Law of the People's Republic of China. The amended Seed Law (see [GAIN Report CH2021-0185 Final Seed Law Published](#)), effective on March 1, 2022, established an essentially derived varieties (EDV) that establishes a benefit sharing mechanism between the owner of the original variety and the owner of the derived variety and encourages the breeding of initial varieties by strengthening the protection of legal rights and interests of owners of new plant varieties.

On November 21, 2022, MARA released a revised draft for comments of PRC Plant Variety Protection (PVP) Regulations. The draft regulation incorporates the implementation steps and methods of the EDV system. The final version of the PVP Regulation has not been published as of May 2024. For an unofficial translation of the article-by-article comparison between the

revised draft and the existing regulations, please see [GAIN Report CH2022-0127 China Releases Plant Variety Protection Regulations for Comments.](#)

Figure 5. China: PVP Applications and Approvals (2000-2023)



Source: MARA

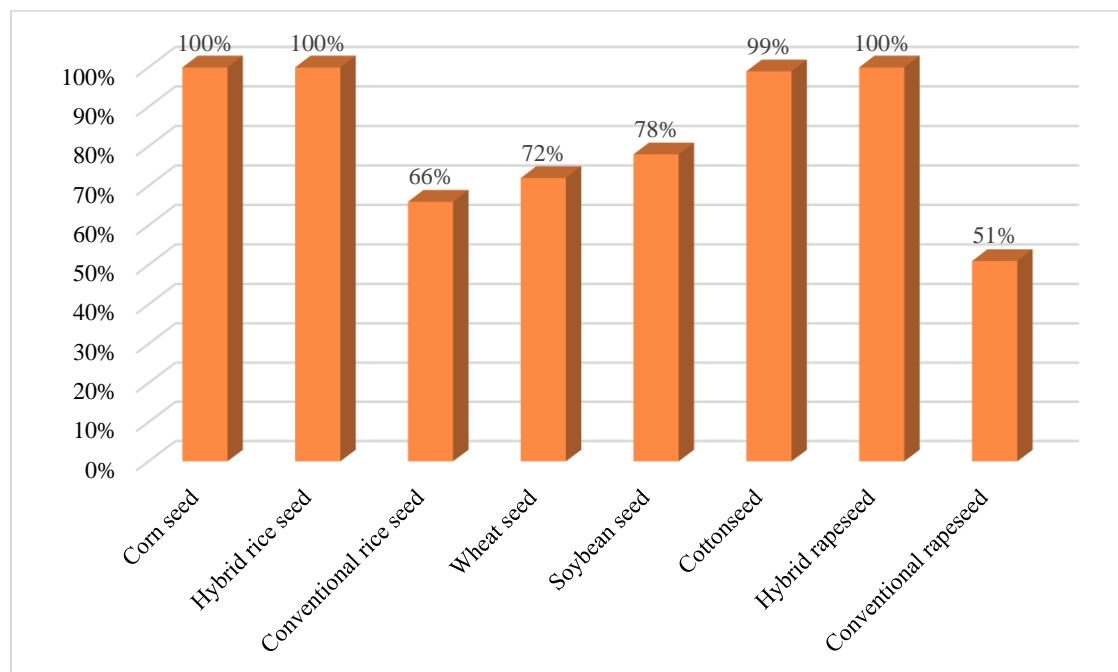
IV. Marketing

General Seed Market Information

China, the second largest seed market in the world behind the United States, annually plants 12 MMT of seed, valued at \$18.5 billion³. According to MARA’s 2023 Crop Seed Industry Development Report, seed usage of seven key crops (corn, rice, wheat, soybean, cotton, potato, and rapeseed) was approximately 10 MMT, valued at \$14 billion. Commercial seed accounts for 72 percent of seed usage for above mentioned seven major crops with the remainder farm-saved seed from previous harvests.

³ Based on the 2023 Seed Report estimate China’s seed market value at 133 billion yuan. The exchange rate is 1 US dollar = 7.2 yuan.

Figure 6. Market Share of Commercial Seeds by Crop (2022)



Source: 2023 Crop Seed Industry Development Report

According to the 2023 Seed Report, different trends in seed usage have emerged. Seed corn usage declined, from 28.65 kilograms per hectare (kg/ha) in 2017 to 27.15 kg/ha in 2022, mainly due to precision planting technology; while hybrid rice seed increased from the 16.8 kg/ha in 2017 to 17.85 kg/ha in 2022, mainly due to increased use of mechanized rice planting. Wheat seed increased from 187.4 kg/ha in 2017 to 208 kg/ha in 2022, mainly due to increased seeding density.

Seed Trade Certification Requirements

Seed products trade should be accompanied by required certificates/permits issued by the relevant competent authority. Table 4 below provides certification requirements for U.S. seed exports to China. For additional information, please see GAIN report [FAIRS Export Certificate Report Annual 2024](#).

Table 4. China: Certification Requirements for U.S. Seed Product Exports

Certification	Attestation Required
Quarantine Inspection Permit (QIP)	Information regarding the content, volume, and physical characteristics of the shipment
Certificate of Origin	Certifies origin of wood and wood product imports
APHIS Phytosanitary Certificate	Certifies product is free of quarantine pests
Agricultural biotech products: MARA import permit	Permits the importation of crops of agricultural biotechnology; each permit is valid for each shipment and for a period of six months.

Tariffs on U.S. Origin Seeds

China imposed retaliatory tariffs on planting seeds on September 1, 2019. However, the tariff does not apply to most grass seeds, which combined accounted for over 95 percent of total seed imports from the United States by value in MY2022/23. For seeds subject to the tariffs, importers may apply for tariff exclusions. For information on the procedures for importers to apply for tariff exclusions on specific products see USDA GAIN report [CH2020-0017](#).

Table 5. China: Schedule of Tariffs on U.S. Planting Seeds

HS Code	Product Description	MFN* Rate	Section 232 Retaliatory	Section 301 Retaliatory*	Total Applied Tariff
	Implementation Date	Jan 1, 2022	Apr 2, 2018	Feb.14, 2020	Feb.14, 2020
10021000	Rye Seed	0%	0%	5%	5%
10031000	Barley Seed	0%	0%	5%	5%
10041000	Oats Seed	0%	0%	5%	5%
10071000	Grain Sorghum Seed	0%	0%	5%	5%
10089010	Other Cereals Seed	0%	0%	5%	5%
12011000	Soya Beans for Cultivation	0%	0%	5%	5%
12023000	Ground nuts, for cultivation	0%	0%	5%	5%
12072100	Cotton seeds, for cultivation	0%	0%	5%	5%
12091000	Sugar beet seed	0%	0%	5%	5%
12092990	Other forage seeds	0%	0%	5%	5%

Source: China Customs

*Eligible for 301 retaliatory tariff exclusion.

Conferences and Events:

2024 Asian Seed Congress

City: Sanya, Hainan province

Date: December 2-6, 2024

<https://web.apsaseed.org/asc2024>

The Asian Seed Congress is the largest and most significant seed industry event in the world. The 29th Asian Seed Congress will be held at the Mangrove Tree Resort World Convention Center in Sanya, Hainan, China from December 2-6, 2024. This Congress is organized by the Asia & Pacific Seed Alliance (APSA) and the China National Seed Trade Association (CNSTA) as the official National Organizing Committee, in collaboration with the Sanya Government and Yazhou Bay Science and Technology City (ZBSTC).

China Seed Congress

City: Sanya, Hainan province

Date: March 23-26, 2025

<https://cnseed.nfnfb.cn/>

China Seed Congress is one of the most influential seed industry events in China, with more than 2,000 guests attending each year. Speakers include senior government officials, senior industry experts, and corporate executives. The event includes dialogues and exchanges on China's seed industry policies, industry development, intellectual property protection, breeding and cultivation and other topics.

The event also features an exhibition area to display new varieties, new technologies and new achievements of grains, vegetables, and other products from various regions of the country.

China International Seed Industry Expo and National Seed Information Exchange and Commodity Trading Fair

City: Fuzhou, Fujian province

Date: October 2024

<https://www.natesc.org.cn/ZTZL/List?CategoryId=df40a458-4d2f-436e-a0a6-6a3d95aaa37d&Cate1=%E4%B8%93%E9%A2%98%E4%B8%93%E6%A0%8F&Cate2=%E7%A7%8D%E5%AD%90%E5%8F%8C%E4%BA%A4%E4%BC%9A&kind=ztzl>

The China International Seed Industry Expo is hosted by the Agricultural Trade Promotion Center of MARA and the Agricultural Industry Branch of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade. The event promotes exchanges and cooperation between Chinese and foreign agriculture and seed industries, the application of new concepts, new varieties, and new technologies. Focus is given to China's seed industry and its innovation and development capabilities and international competitiveness. The National Agricultural Technology Center will release supply and demand forecasts for major seeds (hybrid corn and hybrid rice) at this event.

Contacts:

USDA Office of Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Beijing, China Tel: (86 10)85313600 Fax: (86 10)85313636 Email: Agbeijing@usda.gov	USDA Agricultural Trade Office, U.S. Embassy, Beijing, China Tel: (86 10)85313600 Fax: (86 10)85313974 Email: ATObeijing@state.gov
USDA Agricultural Trade Office, U.S. Consulate, Shanghai, China Tel: (86 21) 62798622 Fax: (86 21) 62798336 Email: ATOShanghai@fas.usda.gov	USDA Agricultural Trade Office, U.S. Consulate, Guangzhou, China Tel: (86-20) 38145000 Fax: (86-20) 38145310 Email: GuangzhouATOSTaff@state.gov
USDA Agricultural Trade Office, U.S. Consulate, Shenyang, China Tel: (86-24) 23181380 Fax: (86-24) 23181332 Email: ShenyangATO@state.gov	USDA APHIS, U.S. Embassy, Beijing, China Tel: (86-10) 8531-3030 Fax: (86-10) 8531-3033 Email: IS.Beijing.China.Staff@aphis.usda.gov
American Seed Trade Association Email: info@betterseed.org	CropLife Asia
China Seed Association Email: zzxh@agri.gov.cn	China Seed Trade Association Email: cnsta@263.net

Attachments:

No Attachments.