

# The ISTA AGM is Coming to Canada – Here is Why Industry Leaders Are Excited



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As a company deeply invested in the future of seed science and trade, SGS has long been a committed participant in the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA).

Our involvement spans numerous technical committees, reflecting our dedication to advancing global seed testing standards. In fact, SGS is represented on nearly half of ISTA's technical committees, with contributions from both our Canadian and U.S. seed laboratories.

This longstanding commitment has led to a major milestone: together with fellow Canadian ISTA-accredited labs, 20/20 Seed Labs and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canada successfully secured the bid to host the 2026 ISTA Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Calgary, Alta.

This will be the first ISTA meeting held in Canada in 43 years, since the 1983 ISTA Congress. The event will welcome delegates from around the world, offering a rare opportunity to spotlight Canada's seed industry on the global stage.

The return of the AGM to Canada is a testament to the strength, innovation, and leadership within our sector — an industry SGS proudly supports through active engagement with ISTA and other associations such as the Society of Commercial Seed Technologists, Seeds Canada, and the Canadian Seed Growers' Association.

Beyond the bid itself, SGS's ongoing participation in ISTA plays a vital role in shaping and updating international seed testing rules. Our technical experts are at the forefront of developing new protocols and addressing challenges raised by members and industry stakeholders. This leadership drives innovation and

ensures Canada remains a key contributor to the global seed testing community.

Hosting the AGM brings more than prestige — it is a great opportunity to foster collaboration, strengthen industry relationships, and inspire the next generation of seed scientists.

One of the pressing challenges in the industry today is attracting young professionals to careers in seed analysis and research. The AGM will spotlight career pathways, sponsorship programs, and the cutting-edge science that makes this field essential to agriculture, and highly appealing to those seeking meaningful, impactful work.

By hosting the AGM, Canada's seed industry demonstrates its leadership and forward-thinking approach on a global platform. SGS's year-round involvement in ISTA reflects our commitment to cross-border collaboration — a foundation for growth, competitiveness, and new international partnerships.

There are many ways for the broader industry to get involved: attend the AGM to stay informed on the latest developments in seed testing, participate in workshops to deepen your expertise, or sponsor one of the associated events to show your support. For more information, contact the ISTA Secretariat or any of the organizing laboratories.

As we look ahead to 2026, our focus remains clear — positioning Canada as a global leader in seed science excellence. The collective efforts we make today will be critical in addressing tomorrow's challenges: rising global food demand, evolving regulations, and rapid technological advancements.

Calgary will be the site of the annual meeting of the International Seed Testing Association in 2026.

