**2023 Rule Change Proposal #3**

**Purpose of Proposal:** To clarify guidelines for the evaluation of borderline seedlings in germination testing.

**Present Rule:** New Rule

**Proposed Rule:** AOSA Rules Volume 1

**6.5 Evaluation of seedlings**

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d. **Borderline seedlings.** --- These are seedlings which are on the borderline between normal and abnormal. If there is only one such seedling, count it as normal. If there is an even number, count half of them as normal. If there is an odd number, count 2 out of 3, 3 out of 5, etc., as normal. As a guideline, the percentage of doubtful seedlings evaluated should be no more than 5%.

**Harmonization and Impact Statement:** The Canadian M & P includes the following statement:

*Canadian Methods and Procedures for Testing Seed (M&P)* 2020

**4.10.5 Borderline Seedlings**

These are seedlings which are on the borderline between normal and abnormal. If there is only one such seedling, count it as normal. If there is an even number, count half of them as normal. If there is an odd number, count 2 out of 3, 3 out of 5, etc., as normal.

The ISTA Handbook on Seedling Evaluation (4th Ed. 2018) includes the following statement:

**8.3 Stage of development for seedling evaluation and evaluation guidelines**

(Footnote 9) As a guideline, the percentage of doubtful seedlings evaluated should be no more than 5%; in this case a retest is recommended.

**Supporting Evidence:** This proposal is meant to be a *guideline* for evaluating “borderline seedlings” found in many germination tests. It was put together as a part of the effort to reduce some of the variation when borderline seedlings are found in a germination test. In 2022, a similar proposal was narrowly defeated (128.90, less than 134.0 needed).This new proposal would incorporate into the AOSA Rules the *exact wording* found in the Canadian M & P and the ISTA Handbook on Seedling Evaluation.

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**Date submitted:** July 26, 2022