

2024 Rule Change Proposal 10

PURPOSE OF PROPOSAL: To improve the definitions of the species classifications in AOSA Rules Volume 3.

PRESENT AND PROPOSED RULE: (changes indicated in red text)

SYMBOLS AND DEFINITIONS USED IN RULES VOLUME 3

Species involved directly or indirectly in seed commerce have been described by different classes in Rules Volume 3. These classes and their associated symbols are described as follows:

Agricultural (A) – Cultivated crops which are harvested for grain, ~~en~~silage, fiber, sugar, oil, or hay, or are planted for culturally improved pastures.

Flowers (F) – Domesticated or wild plants grown for the aesthetic appearance of the flowers or foliage.

Herbs and Spices (H) – Cultivated species grown for the aromatic, medicinal or flavor qualities of their seed or vegetative parts. Often these species are perennial and subject to multiple harvest of annual top growth.

Revegetation and Rangeland (R) – Native or introduced species capable of establishing permanent vegetation on rangelands and naturalized pastureland or used to stabilize disturbed or denuded sites.

Shrub and Trees (S) – Woody, perennial species including fruit producing species.

Turf (T) – Species used for lawns, sports fields, or play areas. They are usually perennial, stoloniferous or rhizomatous grasses ~~and~~ subject to mowing to maintain uniform top growth.

Vegetable (V) – Cultivated species where the seeds, fruit, stems or roots are consumed as food. They are mostly herbaceous annuals, but some are perennial in temperate and tropical zones.

Weeds (W) – Undesirable species that are excessively competitive, difficult to control or eradicate, poisonous, or simply not wanted. This symbol is used in the “spp. Class” column (see Format for Rules Volume 3, item four, page v) if the species is generally weedy in nature. The weeds category may also be used in response to the “contaminating” species classification under the seven crop types as described under Format for Rules Volume 3, item five, page v.

HARMONIZATION STATEMENT:

The AOSA Rules are unique in the use of the multiple species classification system to define the crop types under test to determine the classification of contaminating species

as either other crop seed or weed seed. This type of system is not used by the ISTA Rules or the Federal Seed Act Regulations to segregate agricultural seed from revegetation and rangeland or turf type seeds. The Canadian seed grading system does segregate crops into a variety of crop groups based on use, however, the AOSA Rules and the Canadian seed grading systems serve different purposes for assessing marketable seed.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE:

The purpose of the proposal is to better define the species classes of agricultural (A), revegetation and rangeland (R), and turf (T) so that species listed in Volume 3 and species to be added to Volume 3 can be appropriately assigned to one or more species classes. The proposed changes attempt to incorporate information from the United States Environmental Protectional Agency and the United States Department of Agriculture regarding rangeland, pastures, and turf.

The following descriptions are taken from EPA (2023).

“Rangelands are those lands on which the native vegetation (climax or natural potential plant community) is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, or shrubs suitable for grazing or browsing use. Rangelands include natural grassland, savannas, many wetlands, some deserts, tundra, and certain forb and shrub communities.”

“Pastures are those lands that a primarily used for the production of adapted domesticated forage plants for livestock.”

“Other grazing lands include woodlands, native pastures, and croplands producing forages.”

“The major differences between rangelands and pastures are the kind of vegetation and level of management that each land area receives.

- Rangeland:
 - Supports native vegetation.
 - Includes areas that have been seeded to introduced species (e.g., crested wheatgrass), but which are extensively managed like native range.
- Pastures:
 - Lands that have been seeded, usually to introduced species (e.g., tall fescue) or in some cases to native plants (e.g., switchgrass).
 - Are intensively managed using agronomy practices and control of livestock.”

The following definitions are taken from USDA-NRCS (2022):

“Introduced species - A species not a part of the original fauna or flora of the area in question.”

“Ensile - (1) To preserve a forage crop as silage. (2) The act of placing a forage crop in a silo.”

“Forage crops - (Specific) Forage plants mechanically harvested before being fed to animals. These crops are fed to animals primarily as hay, haylage, fodder (stover), silage, or green chop. (General) A crop of cultivated plants, whose plant parts, other than separated grain, are produced to be grazed or harvested for use as feed for animals.”

“Hay - The herbage of grasses, legumes, or comparatively fine-stemmed forbs cut and cured (dried) to preserve forage for later use as livestock feed.”

“Improved pasture - Grazing land permanently producing introduced or domesticated native forage species that receives varying degrees of periodic cultural treatment to enhance forage quality and yields and is primarily harvested by grazing animals.”

“Naturalized pasture - Naturalized pasture is cleared, converted, past cultivation, and “old-field” or “go-back land.” It is forestland and cropland that primarily contain introduced species that are largely adapted and have become established without agronomic and cultural inputs, persist under the current conditions of the local environment, and are stable over long time periods.”

“Open range - (1) Rangeland that has not been fenced into management units. (2) All suitable rangeland of an area upon which grazing is permitted. (3) Untimbered rangeland. (4) Rangeland on which the livestock owner has unlimited access without benefit of land ownership or leasing.”

“Pasture/Pastureland - Land composed of introduced or domesticated native forage species that is used primarily for the production of livestock. Pastures receive periodic renovation and cultural treatments, such as tillage, fertilization, mowing, weed control, and may be irrigated. Pastures are not in rotation with crops.”

“Range - Land on which the historic and/or introduced vegetation is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs or shrubs managed as natural ecosystem. Range land may include natural grasslands, savannas, shrublands, tundra, alpine communities, marshes and meadows.”

“Rangeland - Rangeland is a land cover or use composed of grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, shrubs, and trees that is typically unsuited to cultivation because of physical limitations such as low and erratic precipitation, rough topography, poor drainage, or cold temperatures. Rangeland can include the following: (i) natural lands that have not been cultivated and consist of a historic complement of adapted plant species; and (ii) natural (go-back lands, old-field) or converted revegetated lands that are managed like native vegetation. Note: The USDA-NRCS rangeland Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) includes this designation in their definition of rangeland. In assessing rangeland

conditions and health, keeping these designations separate would provide for more detailed information about rangeland trends and health.”

“Silage - Forage preserved in a succulent condition by organic acids (lactic acid primarily) produced by partial anaerobic fermentation of sugars in the forage.”

“Sod - Vegetation that grows to form a mat of soil and vegetation. (Syn.) turf.”

“Sod grasses - Stoloniferous or rhizomatous grasses that form a sod or turf.”

“Turf - (Syn.) sod.”

REFERENCES

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 2023. Agricultural Pasture, Rangeland and Grazing <https://www.epa.gov/agriculture/agricultural-pasture-rangeland-and-grazing> [Accessed October 2, 2023].

United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS). 2022. National Range and Pasture Handbook. Handbook Number 645. Subpart N – Glossary of Terms, 645.1402 Definitions of Terms. <https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=48448> [Accessed October 3, 2023].

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