

Keep seed vigour questions distinct from a germination percentage

A germination percentage and a seed vigour assessment answer related but different questions. For retailers, the practical issue is not how to relabel a familiar figure, but how to match each piece of information to the customer's actual growing or sourcing decision. This guide provides a framework for identifying the question, reviewing the available evidence and documenting what remains unresolved.

1. Start with the decision the buyer needs to make

A request for "high vigour" is not specific enough to determine which evidence is relevant. The buying conversation may concern establishment under challenging conditions, storage planning or uniform emergence, but the intended crop and use must be clarified first. Once the question is defined, the retailer can ask whether the information addresses that question and whether the report covers the relevant lot. Keep general education about vigour separate from statements about material intended for purchase or packing.

2. Match the assessment to the question

NIAB describes vigour testing as considering performance beyond a normal germination assessment, including response under unfavourable conditions. USDA also lists vigour and germination as distinct testing services. These descriptions help explain why similar germination figures do not settle every question about establishment. They do not, however, provide a vigour result for a particular lot. Any lot-specific statement must remain linked to the exact reference, relevant lot information and source document supplied for that material.

3. Preserve the method and its limits

Test names should not be treated as universal measurements. NIAB notes that vigour methods can be species-specific and have limitations. Retain the method and report context whenever they are available, and clarify the scope before converting a result into a broad customer promise. The existence of a test does not establish what every future growing outcome will be. Where information is missing, record the unanswered question rather than completing the record with an assumption.

4. Keep visual evidence separate

A photograph of healthy-looking seedlings can illustrate an observation, but it is not automatically a formal vigour assessment. Record the conditions of the local example and describe only what was observed. Do not extend that observation into a lot-wide technical claim based on the appearance of one tray under a particular setup. Likewise, preserve a germination percentage as the measure it actually is. If another characteristic matters to the purchase, request it as a separate information requirement rather than renaming or extending the existing figure.

5. Build a clear retail record

Where product information or a comparison table includes both types of information, give vigour and germination separate fields. Retain relevant method context so a reviewer can see which question each result addresses. Avoid combining unlike measures into one ranked score, and use technical language only when its connection to the actual material is clear. Store the approved wording, source references and any unresolved questions with the article, then review those items whenever the source reference changes. This keeps a concept, a documented assessment and a future growing outcome distinct.

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