

SEED CERTIFICATION: A CRUCIAL TOOL FOR TACKLING PLANT DISEASES AND SAFEGUARDING FOOD SECURITY IN CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA.

Seed quality lies at the heart of all sustainable agricultural production. In a context where plant diseases are increasingly threatening food and cash crops, seed certification is an essential tool for securing production. In Central and West Africa, this approach is reinforced by reference institutions such as the WAVE Regional Centre of Excellence, whose expertise and network of laboratories play a strategic role.

Certification and Rapid Responses

To plant infectious disease
Incursions in Central and West Africa



Certification: much more than just a stamp — a guarantee of quality

So, what does '**certifying a seed**' actually mean? It is a rigorous process that guarantees producers that what they are planting is healthy and high-performing. It ensures the purity of the variety, its good germination capacity and, above all, that it is free from diseases or pests. How? Through field inspections, laboratory analyses, and strict monitoring of storage conditions. By preventing the spread of infected seeds, certification helps to fight the spread of plant diseases caused by viruses, bacteria and fungi, which can destroy entire crops.

A bulwark against the spread of disease

Using uncertified seeds is a risky gamble. A disease can be transmitted from one season to the next simply through a batch of contaminated seeds, leading to dramatic yield losses and a decline in quality.

Certification therefore acts as an essential health filter. It enables the early detection of pathogens and the removal of high-risk seed batches. In the case of strategic crops such as cassava, maize and rice, this regulatory framework is crucial for safeguarding food security and producers' incomes.



The key role of the WAVE Regional Centre of Excellence

At the heart of this initiative, the WAVE Regional Centre of Excellence has become a leading organisation in the field of plant health in Central and West Africa. Specialising in the study and management of plant diseases, WAVE is actively improving seed quality. Its work is based on three pillars:

- Cutting-edge scientific research using advanced diagnostic tools to quickly identify plant diseases ;
- Capacity building: training technicians, researchers, and stakeholders in the seed sector in good practices for certification and phytosanitary surveillance ;
- Supporting agricultural policies by helping state authorities to develop robust and appropriate seed standards.



A network of cutting-edge laboratories ready to provide practical support for seed certification.

WAVE has a network of **17 cutting-edge laboratories** spread across **10 countries** in Central and West Africa, ready to provide practical support for seed certification and strengthen seed certification in these countries.

Our laboratories offer:

- reliable and rapid seed analysis;
- Large-scale epidemiological surveillance;
- Harmonisation of certification practices across countries.

This regional network promotes the circulation of healthy, certified seeds while limiting the cross-border spread of diseases.

Seed certification : A vital investment

Seed certification is not an option, but a vital investment to ensure the health of our crops and, ultimately, our food security. Supported by institutions such as WAVE, this approach offers a concrete and effective response to health challenges that threaten agriculture.

Investing in certified seeds means investing in the long-term sustainability of farms, stable harvests, and the future of food in Central and West Africa.

