

## 'At Risk Crops' FAQ [Frequently Asked Questions]

- ❖ **What are 'At Risk Crops'?** There are some crops finished by growers that have some inherent risks that growers need to manage to successfully finish the crop.
- ❖ **What is an example of an 'At Risk Crop' I produce?** Poinsettias is an excellent example of a crop that growers know can have whitefly, Pythium and botrytis problems. Growers need to manage and control these pests if they want a marketable crop. *'At Risk Crops' are those crops where growers need to have a strong preventative program in place to control the potential problems that might show up.*
- ❖ **Are there any crops that aren't defined as 'At Risk'?** The majority of the crops produced by growers have few or no disease or insect problems. The majority of growers will produce crops without problems for years and seldom have issues with 'At Risk Crops' because of good cultural practices, sanitation protocols or just good luck!
- ❖ **What is an example of the current 'At Risk Crops'?** Some growers are starting to see more bacterial and fungal disease problems with Impatiens, Peppers, Tomatoes, Zinnia elegans, Basil and 'Bor-type' Kale.
- ❖ **Why are they considered 'At Risk'?** We know that under some cultural or environmental conditions, bacterial or fungal diseases will kill the crops when growers don't produce the crops using good sanitation and appropriate chemical control strategies.
- ❖ **What are seed suppliers doing to minimize seed-borne diseases?** Ball Seed has committed to testing the seed of 'At Risk Crops' to be free of specific diseases. We require our seed suppliers to provide a certification from an accredited lab that uses internationally acceptable standards for testing.
- ❖ **Does this mean that if a seed lot is tested that it is 'clean'?** Unfortunately just because a seed lot is tested it does not guarantee that the entire lot is disease free. The protocol for testing is to take a sample of approximately 20,000 seeds and determine if the sample is free of a specific disease. This doesn't guarantee that the other 1,000,000 seed in the lot is also negative. We can usually assume that if the 20,000 is clean the rest is but there is no guarantee. This is why growers need to be vigilant and treat 'At Risk crops'.
- ❖ **If I grow 'At Risk Crops' what should I do?** The attached documents provide recommendations on good sanitation practices and cultural practices that minimize infection of the 'At Risk Crops'. Growers who use good cultural practices regularly grow disease free crops.
- ❖ **Why do I still have problems when I use the best cultural practices?** Bacterial and fungal diseases can easily spread from other crops with no symptoms to susceptible crops like the list of 'At Risk Crops'. The spread can be through wind, water splashing or people moving the diseases within the production areas. This is why you need to also use good sanitation practices.
- ❖ **How clean do I have to be, does this have to be 'hospital' clean?** Good sanitation is about controlling the potential for disease spread. Making sure you don't re-use trays, disinfect areas where disease plants were discovered and using tested seed inputs are all good sanitation practices to prevent the spread of diseases to clean plants.