



Lecture 02: SEED POLICY

National Seed Policy, 2002

The Seed Act, 1966, seed control order 1983 and New Policy on Seeds Development, 1988, from the basis of promotion and regulation of the Indian Seed Industry.

The “New Seed Policy” of 1988 ushered in a new area of growth and phenomenal development. Because, it allowed limited import of commercial seed, remove curbs on imports of seeds of vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants and even allowed import of seed of course cereals, pulses and oilseeds for a period of two years.

The important constraints were

- Non existence of National Seed Policy
- IPR laws
- Restrictions and licenses on seed exports and imports
- Lack of incentives for the public and private seed sectors of the country

India later developed the National Seed Policy in 2002. The main objectives are the provision of an appropriate climate for the seed industry to utilize available and prospective opportunities, safe guarding of the interests of Indian farmers and the conservation of agro-biodiversity.

Thrust Areas

1. Varietal Development and PVP
2. Seed Production
3. Quality Assurance
4. Seed Distribution and Marketing.
5. Infrastructure facilities
6. Transgenic Plant Varieties
7. Import of seeds and planting material
8. Export of seeds
9. Promotion of Domestic Seed
10. Strengthening of monitoring system



1. Varietal Development and PVP

To stimulate investment in research and development (R&D) new varieties an effective *sui generis* system for IPR will be implemented.

- Establishment of PVPFRA (Plant Varieties Protection and Farmers Rights Authority, to implement PVPFR Act, 2001).
- Under this Act, Plant Varieties will be registered based on Novelty, Distinctness, Uniformity and Stability (DUS) characters.
- Farmers Rights: Farmers can save, use, exchange, share or sell seeds of protected variety but not under the brand name.
- Researchers Rights: Seed / planting material of protected varieties can be used for research and breeding new varieties.
- Breeders Rights: Benefit arising out of use of varieties upon commercialization of seeds of new variety, will be shared with the respective breeder.
- Community Rights: Benefit sharing with Farmers / Village communities will be ensured for contributing in evaluation of plant variety upon registration.

2. Seed Production

India seed programme will adhere to generation system of multiplication namely nucleus, breeder, foundation and certified seed.

Public seed sector will be restructured and will continue to have free access to breeder seed, while Private Seed Sector will have conditional access. Seed village scheme will be facilitated to upgrade the quality of farmers saved seeds. Seed Replacement will be raised progressively, National Seed Map will be prepared to identify potential areas of seed production, seed banks will be established with cold storage facilities, seed mini kits will be supplied for popularizing new varieties and will Seed Crop Insurance will be encouraged.

3. Quality Assurance

1. New Seed Act will be enacted.
2. National Seed Board will be established as apex body in place of existing Central Seed Committee to implement New Seed Act.
3. National Seeds Register will be maintained varieties will be registered based on "Value for Cultivation and Usage". (VCU).
4. Farmers will retain rights to save, use, exchange, share or sell seeds of any variety but not under the brand name.



4. Seed Distribution and Marketing.

- Seed Distribution and Marketing of any variety will be subject to registry in NSB.
- National Seed Grid will be established as a data base on seed requirement, production, distribution and farmers preference.
- Access to finance from commercial banks will be facilitated.
- Availability of high quality seed will be ensured through improved distribution system and efficient marketing set up.

5. Infrastructure facilities

- National Seed Research and Training center (NSRTC) will be set up.
- Seed processing and storage faculties will be augmented.
- Computerized National Seed Grid will be established to provide information on seeds marketing.

6. Transgenic Plant Varieties

1. All GM crops will be tested for environment and bio safety before commercial release as per EPA (1986).
2. Seeds of GM crops will be imported only through NBPGR as per the EPA (1986).
3. Required infrastructure will be developed for testing, identification and evaluation of transgenic planting material.

- **Import of seeds and planting material**

Provision will be made to make available best planting material from anywhere in the world to Indian farmers without any compromise on quarantine requirements.

- **Export of seeds**

Long term policy will be evolved to exploit varied agro climatic condition of India and strong seed production system, to raise seed export from present level of less than 1% to 10% by 2020.

1. Seed export promotion zones will be established and strengthened.
2. Data Bank on International Market will be created.



- **Promotion of Domestic Seed Industry**

It will be facilitated by providing incentives to domestic seed industry, financial support through NABARD, commercial and co-operative banks, considering tax rebate / concessions for R&D, reduction of import duty on machines and equipment used for seed production and encouragement of membership in National and International organization related to seed.

- **Strengthening of monitoring system**

Strengthening of Department of Agriculture and Co-operation (DAC) will supervise the implementation of National Seed Policy.

National Seed Policy will be vital in doubling food production of India