



National Seed Policy 2002

Objectives of the Policy

- ▶ Globalization has opened up new challenges and opportunities, hence a need for efficient regulatory policy
- ▶ Provide for provisions of an appropriate climate for the seed industry to utilize available options while safeguarding the interests of Indian farmers
- ▶ Policy encompassing quality assurance mechanisms

Thrust Areas

- ▶ *varietal development and Protection*
 - ▶ *Intellectual property protection and stimulate investment in R&D*
 - ▶ *Plant varieties & Farmer's Rights Protection (PVP) Authority to be established*
 - ▶ *The rights of farmers to save, use, exchange, share or sell farm produce of all varieties will be protected with the provision that farmers shall not be entitled to sell branded seed of a protected variety under the brand name*

Varietal Development and Protection

- ▶ Farmers/village communities will be rewarded for significant contribution in evolution of a plant variety subject to registration
- ▶ Contribution of traditional knowledge to be highlighted through suitable incentives
- ▶ If required, the PVP can resort to mandatory licensing of a protected variety in public interest, if the propagating material of a variety is not meeting the requirements of the farming community

Seed Production

- ▶ Public sector Seed Production Agencies to have free access to breeder seed under the National Agriculture Research System
- ▶ State Agril universities/ICAR institutes to have the primary responsibility for production of breeder seed
- ▶ Special attention to be given to upgrade the quality of farmer's saved seeds through interventions such as the Seed Village Scheme

Seed Production

- ▶ Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DAC) in consultation with ICAR and states will prepare a National Seed Map for identifying potential areas for seed production of specific crops
- ▶ Seed Banks will be set up in non-traditional areas to meet the demands during calamities
- ▶ Seed minikits of pioneering seed varieties to be supplied to the farmers

Quality Assurance

- ▶ The Seeds Act to be revised to regulate the sale, export, and import of seeds
- ▶ The National Seeds Board (NSB) to be established in place of the existing Central Seed Committee and Central Seed Certification Board
- ▶ The board to undertake registration of kinds/varieties of seeds that are to be offered for sale in the market on the basis of parameters for establishing value for cultivation and usage (VCU) through testing

Quality Assurance

- ▶ The NSB will prescribe minimum standards for: germination, genetic characteristics, physical purity, seed health
- ▶ Seed Testing facilities to be established to meet the quality assurance requirements for export of seeds in conformity with ISTA (International Seed Testing Association) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) seed certification programmes

Seed Distribution and Marketing

- ▶ A National Seed Grid to be established as a data-base for monitoring of information on requirement of seed
- ▶ Distribution and marketing of seed of any variety for the purpose of sowing and planting will be allowed only if the said variety has been registered by NSB
- ▶ NSB can direct a dealer to distribute seeds in a specified area in the interest of the public

Infrastructure Facilities

- ▶ National Seed Research and Training Center will be set up to impart training and build a knowledge base in various disciplines of the seed sector
- ▶ State Govt or NSB in consultation may establish Seed Certification Agencies
- ▶ Appropriate systems to be established for effective execution and implementation of the Objectives and provisions of the Seeds Act

Transgenic Plant Varieties

- ▶ All bioengineered varieties will be tested for environment and biosafety before commercial release as per Environment Protection Act (EPA) 1986
- ▶ Seeds of transgenic plant varieties for research purposes will be imported only through National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) as per EPA, 1986

Transgenic Plant Varieties

- ▶ The performance of the transgenic plant variety will be monitored for at least 3-5 years by Ministry of Agriculture/State Govt
- ▶ Transgenic varieties can be protected under PVP legislation
- ▶ Transgenic material can be imported only with the approval of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) set up under EPA, 1986

Import of Seeds and Planting Material

- ▶ Objective of the import policy is to provide superior planting material
 - ▶ Strict quarantine procedures to be followed while importing to prevent the entry of exotic pests diseases
 - ▶ Permit to be granted by the Plant Protection Advisor to GOI

Import of Seeds and Planting Material

- ▶ Seeds and planting material imported will have to meet minimum seed standards of seed health, germination, genetic and physical purity
- ▶ A small sample of the imported seed to be made available to the Gene Bank
- ▶ Consignments will go through quarantine checks which include visual inspection, laboratory inspection, fumigation and grow out tests

Export of Seeds

- ▶ Export policy to encourage custom production of seeds for export
- ▶ Establishment and strengthening of Seeds Export Promotion Zones
- ▶ Creation of data bank to provide information about the international market and on export potential
- ▶ Testing and certification facilities will be established in conformity with international standards

Promotion of Domestic Seed Industry

- ▶ Incentives given to the seed industry for producing superior quality seeds
- ▶ Specific efforts to be directed towards improving the quality of farmers seeds
- ▶ Financial support through NABARD, Commercial Banks, and Cooperatives
- ▶ Tax rebates on the expenditure incurred for in-house R&D of new varieties

Strengthening of Monitoring System

- ▶ The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC) will supervise the overall implementation and monitoring of the National Seeds Policy
- ▶ Physical infrastructure and technical capacity to be augmented for implementation of Seeds Act, PVP&FR
- ▶ Capacity building including National and International training and participation in seminars/workshops