

SEED PRODUCTION

To meet the Nation's food security needs, it is important to make available to Indian farmers a wide range of seeds of superior quality, in adequate quantity on a timely basis. Public Sector Seed Institutions will be encouraged to enhance production of seed towards meeting the objective of food and nutritional security.

The Indian seed programme adheres to the limited three generation system of seed multiplication, namely, breeder, foundation and certified seed. Breeder seed is the progeny of nucleus seed.

Nucleus seed is the seed produced by the breeder to develop the particular variety and is directly used for multiplication as breeder seed.

Breeder seed is the seed material directly controlled by the originating or the sponsoring breeder or Institution for the initial and recurring production of foundation seed.

Foundation seed is the progeny of breeder seed. Foundation seed may also be produced from foundation seed. Production of foundation seed stage-I and stage-II may thus be permitted, if supervised and approved by the Certification Agency and if the production process is so handled as to maintain specific genetic purity and identity.

Certified seed is the progeny of foundation seed or the progeny of certified seed. If the certified seed is the progeny of certified seed, then this reproduction will not exceed three generations beyond foundation stage-I and it will be ascertained by the Certification Agency that genetic identity and genetic purity has not been significantly altered.

Public Sector Seed Production Agencies will continue to have free access to breeder seed under the National Agriculture Research System. The State Farms Corporation of India and National Seeds Corporation will be restructured to make productive use of these organisations in the planned growth of the Seed Sector.

Private Seed Production Agencies will also have access to breeder seed subject to terms and conditions to be decided by Government of India.

State Agriculture Universities/ICAR Institutes will have the primary responsibility for production of breeder seed as per the requirements of the respective States.

Special attention will be given to the need to upgrade the quality of farmers' saved seeds through interventions such as the Seed Village Scheme.

Seed replacement rates will be raised progressively with the objective of expanding the use of quality seeds.

DAC, in consultation with ICAR and States, will prepare a National Seed Map to identify potential, alternative and non-traditional areas for seed production of specific crops.

To put in place an effective seed production programme, each State will undertake advance planning and prepare a perspective plan for seed production and distribution over a rolling (five to six year) period. Seed Banks will be set up in non-traditional areas to meet demands for seeds during natural calamities.

The 'Seed Village Scheme' will be promoted to facilitate production and timely availability of seed of desired crops/varieties at the local level. Special emphasis will be given to seed multiplication for building adequate stocks of certified/quality seeds by providing foundation seed to farmers.

For popularising newly developed varieties and promoting seed production of these varieties, seed minikits of pioneering seed varieties will be supplied to farmers. Seed exchange among farmers and seed producers will be encouraged to popularise new/non-traditional varieties.

Seeds of newly developed varieties must be made available to farmers with minimum time gap. Seed producing agencies will be encouraged to tie up with Research Institutions for popularization and commercialization of these varieties.

As hybrids have the potential to improve plant vigour and increase yield, support for production of hybrid seed will be provided.

Seed production will be extended to agro-climatic zones which are outside the traditional seed growing areas, in order to avoid unremunerative seed farming in unsuitable areas.

Seed Banks will be established for stocking specified quantities of seed of required crops/varieties for ensuring timely and adequate supply of seeds to farmers during adverse situations such as natural calamities, shortfalls in production, etc. Seed Banks will be suitably strengthened with cold storage and pest control facilities.

The storage of seed at the village level will be encouraged to facilitate immediate availability of seeds in the event of natural calamities and unforeseen situations. For the storage of seeds at farm level, scientific storage structures will be popularised and techniques of scientific storage of seeds will be promoted among farmers as an extension practice.

Seed growers will be encouraged to avail of Seed Crop Insurance to cover risk factors involved in production of seeds. The Seed Crop Insurance Scheme will be reviewed so as to provide effective risk cover to seed producers and will be extended to all traditional and non-traditional areas covered under the seed production programme.