

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

Seed Enterprises Management Institute

VARIETY RELEASE, SEED CERTIFICATION, IMPORT AND EXPORT

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INTRODUCTION

- Variety release procedures, certification and distribution (export and import) are in various Seed Laws
- What is a variety:
 - a) Line or clone which is sufficiently homogeneous and can be differentiated from another Of same kind or one or more characteristics which are capable of definition and recognition; and reasonably uniform and stable after repeated production/propagation
 - b) Hybrid
 - c) Multi-line including Composite, synthetics or populations
- After variety development and satisfactory test results from National performance Trials (NPT) or Value for cultivation and use (VCU), Distinctiveness, uniformity and Stability (DUS), the variety is released by designated authority
- The data for release is submitted to National Variety Release Committee (NVRC) composed of selected representatives
- NVRC makes decision to release or to reject new variety based on data
- Frequency of NVRC meetings vary: most are annual, Uganda twice, Malawi special meeting can be called after annual
- Does your country have NVRC and how many times do they meet?
- What is the Name?
- In Malawi, Nigeria, TZ, UG, Ghana, Zambia, S. Sudan, Kenya

INTRODUCTION cont'd

- Seed laws in Africa vary: some laws conform to International Union for protection of new varieties (UPOV) and International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) protocols as well as Organization for economic Cooperation Development (OECD)
- UPOV protects new plant varieties with intellectual property rights including plant breeders' rights
- ISTA sets standards for seed testing and certification for use in transnational seed trade.
- OECD seed schemes is one of international frameworks for certification of seed to assist in International trade
- Being a member of these facilitate International seed trade
- Do you have a seed law in your country
- Is your country a member of UPOV, ISTA or OECD?

VARIETY RELEASE

- Variety release is perceived by some developers as cumbersome. They say it delays release of new varieties
- Some say it is expensive and in some countries guidelines are not transparent and NVRC rarely meets
- There are complaints that new variety must be tested each time it is to be marketed in respective countries even if it is developed to sell across a wide range of agro-ecologies.
- Private sector complain that NVRC is dominated by public sector which has no direct investment and don't feel pain when a variety release is delayed or rejected
- Do you think the NVRC adds value to your company?

VARIETY RELEASE cont'd

- We agree that:-
 - Each government develop transparent variety release guidelines in those countries that don't have to ensure fairness in the process
 - Regional Governments (eg COMESA, SADAC, West African, EAC) should harmonize seed policy and laws to ease variety release. Variety released in one country should be automatically marketed in the next.
 - Data collected from similar agro-ecology should be accepted across countries
 - Breeder multilocation data should be accepted for release instead of using more time testing in NPT leaving regulator to conduct DUS
- Who must then care?

SEED CERTIFICATION, IMPORT AND EXPORT

- Certification is done by regulator and was explained in details in a previous discussions.
- Certification includes:
 1. Field inspection
 2. seed Loading and transportation,
 3. sampling,
 4. lab testing,
 5. lot numbering,
 6. labelling and
 7. packaging:
 8. Post control monitoring.

Importation & exportation of seeds

- The regulator prevents introduction into a country any harmful foreign weeds-noxious, pests and diseases through adherence to strict quarantine regulations and procedures
- The regulator inspects and grades agricultural produce for import and export to ensure that these are of high and acceptable quality
- To import and export agricultural inputs including seed, all must register or apply to designated regulator
- Regulator must have authority and control to ensure that what may be released under harmonized regulations and seed produced in other countries is healthy
- Importer must apply for seed or plant import permit from regulator whereas application shall be done to Plant quarantine service

SEED CERTIFICATION, IMPORT & EXPORT cont'd

- All imported seed must be accompanied by phytosanitary certificate and ISTA certificate
- Imported seed besides label on origin, is labelled with analysis
- In Kenya, seeds of all crop are subjected to lab quality tests upon arrival and must meet gazetted minimum standards being offered for sale
- Similarly all seed for export must meet the minimum quality standards and be accompanied by country of origin phytosanitary certificate and export permit plus ISTA certificate
- Each country has restrictions on export and import of seeds of varieties as spelt out in Seed Acts.
- Does your country have seed import and export regulations?
- How effective are they in your opinion?

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