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PROCEDURE FOR CONSIDERING CERTIFICATION CONTROLS FOR NEW SEED PRODUCTION METHODS

OECD SEED SCHEMES

<https://www.oecd.org/agriculture/seeds/>

1. PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING APPROPRIATE STANDARDS AND CONTROL METHODS

1.1 The following points set out **areas** for consideration in such a generalised approach highlighting **the secondary effects** of some measures, which might be taken and suggesting **possible limitations**, which might apply.

1.2 Where **novel methods** of seed production are introduced it may be necessary to have a **period of assessment** for the multiplication methods and to assess **the reasonable purity levels** which can be achieved. The assessment period should be long enough to permit **full cycles** of the seed production methods and include **a plan for checking** the appropriateness of the proposed standard including **the effectiveness of control measures** in ensuring the seed is true to variety.

1.3 The time allowed for assessing the effects of new standards or procedures should be adequate to **permit the examination of the control measures and quality of seed produced**. This period should have a stated **end date** for the arrangements when review and decision are scheduled. This date can be **re-scheduled by agreement** of the Annual Meeting.

1.4 Crop inspection for **hybrid production** examines plants, which are **parental types** and not the final variety. **Descriptions** of each parental line involved **must be available** to all NDAs where multiplication is taking place, crop inspection, and control plot work.

1.5 Control plots **should be grown** in the country producing seeds of a hybrid or the parental components used to produce a hybrid.

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1.6 Where the lines of parental seed for sowing are **mixed** in one country before it is delivered to another country to produce the seed crop, **pure samples** of each parental line should be provided to the NDA **in the country of multiplication** for use in simultaneous control plots.

1.7 Where an **obligatory post-control standard** is in place, final certification of the hybrid lines should be withheld until **the successful completion** of post-control testing.

1.8 Parental components **failing standards** applied through post-control plots **will lead to the failure of crops sown with any technical mixture, in which the failed component is included.** If the seed crops of the technical mixture are sown at the same time as the post-control plot, the failure of one of the components in the control plot could lead to large proportions of the seed production of a variety failing, thereby disrupting orderly commercialisation of that variety.

1.9 Not all characters used for establishing DUS can be used **to distinguish** individual plants of a variety or parental component under field conditions due to variations in expression caused by growing conditions, e.g. varieties distinguished by their plant height.



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2.1 Normal, **existing standards** for the seed production of a species **will be in force** until a change is agreed upon. Considering a new varietal seed production technique, OECD seed schemes invite information under the following categories:

A

Information on **new seed production systems** at an early stage of development or **testing** presented as an **opportunity** for the OECD to consider the potential for certification.

B

Requests for certification procedures to accommodate new seed production systems necessary to produce varieties **recently released or nearing market release.**

2.2 An NDA notified of or requested to certify crops using **a novel system of production must notify the OECD Secretariat and then prepare a short descriptive paper** for discussion at the next meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG). Input from commercial organisations concerned may be included in this paper.

2.3 The TWG will consider the information and the proposed **approach to handle the certification requirements** against the baseline for “normal” seed production of the species.

2.4 If appropriate, **an Ad Hoc Working Group** will be established to collect data and gather experience of the new method. The ADWG will present papers to the TWG regularly **to refine proposals for changes or additions to the Rules** if deemed necessary.

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2.5 Commercial entities must be prepared to share **sufficient detail of the proposed production process** to allow for an accurate assessment of the feasibility of control of the certification process by the TWG, and ultimately the Annual Meeting. Examples of necessary information include, but are not limited to:

A

Breeding scheme of the varieties with a new seed production procedure

C

Steps in the production process that involve a **blending of two or multiple components or other mechanical processes**

E

Production and control of **Basic seed** and maintenance of preceding generations

F

Thorough identification of components that will be subject to **pre- or post-control testing**

G

Expected seed production areas (countries) and anticipated target countries of final use.

H

Results from sufficient testing to promote **confidence** that the seed production procedure produces certified seed of **reliable quality**. Ideally, these should be tests conducted in cooperation with **at least one NDA**.

B

Description of the production process:

- **Production** of each appropriate category of seed
- Cultivation and traceability of all **genetic material** involved

D

Properties of the **certified seed** of the variety that will be sold to **end-users:**

- Key characteristics of the variety plus, in the case of hybrids, the parental components
- Expected varietal purity
- Variation expressed in terms of its variety description
- Any characteristics that would be part of a variety description that would rely on a laboratory test and sufficient information about the test to allow independent verification

I

An indication of **changes** that may need to be made to existing standards.

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2.6 Representations from the commercial entities involved **should be directed to the NDA** to present to the TWG at the NDA's discretion. Commercial entities could be the company that intends to market the resulting seed or the technology developer. In some cases, this will be **the same entity**, but in some instances, **multiple entities** may be collaborating on the technology development.

2.7 Recognizing that some aspects of the above information may be subject to pending intellectual property protection, or may be proprietary, NDAs or the Seed Schemes **may be asked to maintain a certain level of confidentiality regarding information provided by the commercial entity**, at least during the developmental phase (**see Annex A**).

2.8 These steps will likely be an **iterative process** as the TWG identifies gaps in the proposed certification process, to which the proposing NDA or observer organisation responds.

2.9 If there are proposed changes to procedures or standards, **the need for an initial limited period for temporary operation**, whilst information is being gathered, will be established by the TWG for approval by the Annual Meeting.

2.10 The Technical Working Group will recommend to the Annual Meeting whether the proposed process requires a **new rule or a modification to an existing rule**.

2.11 The Annual Meeting **may adopt the changes on a temporary or permanent basis** according to the evidence presented.

2.12 In the case of **temporary approval**, periodic reports of the progress and effects of the new arrangements will be presented to the TWG; **additional recording or scrutiny** may be required during the assessment period.

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