

National Seed Policy 1999 (2056 BS)

1. Background

The effective distribution mechanism of high quality seeds has immense contribution in achieving the targeted outcome of increased agricultural production. Although technical activities are available to provide appropriate seeds in a proper manner, those activities could not engender stipulated outcomes.

The Seeds Act 1988 has been promulgated to fulfil the necessity of strengthening the services and economic situation of common people by making the availability of good quality seeds efficient through the arrangement of production, processing and testing of high quality seeds.

Under the provision of this Act, the Seeds Rules, 2054 has also been publicly executed. The Agriculture Perspective Plan (APP) has accepted that this aspect falls under the technical area and the contribution of seeds is especially important. It is necessary to make these realizations practically effective through proper management of institutions and programmes.

Considering the needs mentioned above, this seed policy has been presented with the aim of attaining economic prosperity according to the agricultural development goal set by the Agriculture Perspective Plan.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 Availing required quantity of good quality seeds of various crops in efficient manner.
- 2.2 Promoting export by producing good quality seeds.
- 2.3 Making seed business effective considering the existing world trade.
- 2.4 Conserving and maintaining the genetic characteristics of indigenous speciality seeds of Nepal and coordinating concerned organizations to protect the rights over them.

3. Policies

3.1 Varietal development and maintenance

- 3.1.1 Involve NGOs and private sector in future to perform the varietal development and maintenance work, which has been done by the public sector so far.
- 3.1.2 Arrange the involvement of agencies to be engaged in varietal development only after providing the details of infrastructure and needs.
- 3.1.3 Before the distribution of new varieties developed by agricultural research among farmers, the work of variety approval, release and registration will be done by the National Seed Board (hereinafter called "the board" in this policy).
- 3.1.4 If any variety is found technically unsuitable, its name will be deleted from the list of registered varieties and the Board will manage to inform farmers about it.
- 3.1.5 There is great importance of local land races in variety development. Therefore, agro-biodiversity will be conserved and ownership rights of plant varieties will be established.
- 3.1.6 Public and private sectors will be encouraged to work in collaboration with national or international seed entrepreneurs for the development of seeds and increase production.

3.2 Seed multiplication

- 3.2.1 Seed production system or the system of producing nucleus/ pre-basic, breeder, foundation, certified and improved seeds will be continued to fulfil farmers' demand on quantity and time of availability.
- 3.2.2 Export promotion will be done by producing high value seeds.
- 3.2.3 The responsibility of maintaining the quality and producing the quantity of nucleus / breeder seeds goes to breeder. The planning of maintaining the quality and producing the quantity of seeds will be arranged by the board.
- 3.2.4 Arrangement will be made to produce foundation seeds at the Government as well as non- government and private sectors. A quantitative seed balance sheet will be prepared by the board and the arrangement of distributing seeds on the basis of it will be made for the producers of breeders' and foundation seeds to provide breeders' seeds required to produce foundation seeds.
- 3.2.5 The demand for breeders' seeds will be made available in advance to the National Seed Board by concerned agency. The work plan for this will be prepared by the board.

- 3.2.6 Similarly, concerned agency will inform the quantity of foundation seeds required to produce certified and improved seeds well in advance to the National Seed Board and the board will manage accordingly.
- 3.2.7 If a proposal is submitted to conduct the seed multiplication programme at the local level by the Government and non-government agencies with the feasibility report to produce improved seeds, the NSB will manage source seed for it.
- 3.2.8 While producing seeds, priority will be given to the entrepreneurs, who are receiving seeds in contract basis from registered seed growers developed in declared agro-ecological zones suitable for the types of crops and varieties.

3.3 Quality control

- 3.3.1 In addition to seed certification and truthful labelling, which have been used as seed quality control measures so far, quality declared seed system will also be adopted to control the quality of seeds now onwards.
- 3.3.2 To maintain the quality of seeds, different works such as seed testing, seed analysis, seed sampling, and seed crop inspection have been done by the Government, non-government, and private sectors as per the standard set by the Government of Nepal. Arrangements will be made to monitor these works by the Seed Quality Control Centre.

3.4 Increased involvement of private sector in seed business

- 3.4.1 Processing units and seed storage facilities owned by different Government and semi government organizations will be made available to the private sector as per their demand. Service charge will be levied for using such facilities.
- 3.4.2 Government registered seed producers and seed entrepreneurs spend large amount of money on interest during pledging of good quality seeds. Consequently, farmers are unable to use such seeds due to high price. There is existence of such situation at present. Seed pledging system must be strengthened for the maximum use of improved seeds to ensure the national food security situation by ending the existing situation. Therefore, some proportion of the interest incurred during pledging of good quality seeds in the storage will be borne by the Government of Nepal.
- 3.4.3 Local taxes and custom duties will be subsidized in seed business.
- 3.4.4 Training and other skill development opportunities will be made available to private entrepreneurs.

- 3.4.5 Seed industries fall under other priority areas or registered like agricultural industries will also receive subsidies according to the provision of Industrial Development Act, 2038 as per the recommendation of the National Seed Board.
- 3.4.6 As per the recommendation of the National Seed Board, Government of Nepal will provide necessary help in advertisement, if private sector is interested to advertise in different communication means for the publicity of good quality seeds.

3.5 Supply arrangements

- 3.5.1 Maintain up-to-date record of seed demand, supply, and production through private and public sector and work effectively to disseminate information from the board to the farmers' level.
- 3.5.2 Seed buffer stock will be kept at the national level to maintain continuity in supply situation.
- 3.5.2 For the promotion of seed business, subsidy will be provided to construct and operate cold storages.
- 3.5.4 Emphasis will be given to use modern biotechnology, such as tissue culture to produce disease free seeds and seedlings by Government, non-government, and private sectors.
- 3.5.5 In addition to the production and distribution of seeds of crops related to food security, emphasis will be given to produce seeds of forage, flower and other crops.
- 3.5.6 Following arrangements will be made to strengthen the seed supply situation in areas where transport facility is yet to be developed (hilly region):
 - 3.5.6.1 Considering the geographical remoteness, programmes to supply seeds will be expanded through the involvement of private sector's producers and retailers.
 - 3.5.6.2 For smooth functioning of seed programmes in remote hilly areas, an operational fund will be established by forming farmers' groups.
 - 3.5.6.3 To run this programme, subsidy will be provided to transport seeds from resource centre to production sites and arrangements will be made to provide technical services.

3.6 Institutional strengthening

- 3.6.1 Required manpower and other resources will be managed to strengthen the secretariat of the National Seed Board.

- 3.6.2 To conduct quality control works, Seed Quality Control Office will be established and required human resources will be managed.
- 3.6.3 Permission will be given to establish seed testing laboratories in non-government or private sectors along with Government laboratories for seed testing.
- 3.6.4 Institutional arrangements will be managed to keep the seed pledging system functional.
- 3.6.5 Semi-government agencies involved in seed business will be gradually commercialized.
- 3.6.6 Institutional capacity of Government agencies involved in seed research and seed production will be strengthened.

3.7 Bio/modern technology

- 3.7.1 Sophisticated technologies have been developed on seeds and are used in the world. Therefore, study and research will also be carried out in Nepal on Bio-technology or Genetic engineering, which produces GMO, transgenic plants and tissue culture.
- 3.7.2 While importing seeds and seedlings from abroad to Nepal produced by using above mentioned technologies, study and research will be carried out under the supervision of competent Government agencies and will be permitted for normal consumption only when the results of study or research prove that those materials do not harm living things and environment.
- 3.7.3 Considering the welfare of common people, bio-safety rules suitable for Nepalese condition will be developed and executed.
- 3.7.4 Human resources and physical infrastructure will be made ready in stepwise manner for the development of sophisticated technologies in Nepal.