

Guidelines for Release, Release/Notification, Provisional Notification and De-notification of Cultivars

The object and scope of the Seeds Act is to provide for regulating the quality of certain notified seeds for sale and for marketing and for the matters connected therewith. Coming within the range of the Act and Rules go on to make specific to such seeds as have been notified, i.e., where the determination has been made to control their quality.

Purpose of Release

The purpose of Release of cultivars is to introduce the newly evolved varieties to the public for general cultivation in the region in which it is suitable. It enables the farmers to choose cultivars for cultivation in a region. In other words, release of a cultivar is in the nature of a recommendation to the farmers for its adoption. Therefore, notification of a variety is linked to the release of a variety, though the release process itself does not have statutory cover.

Official Release of the Cultivars at Central and State Levels

The practice of official release of cultivars started in October, 1964 with the formation of the Central Variety Release Committee (CVRC) at the Central level and State Variety Release Committee at State level. The Central Variety Release Committee functioned up to 1969 when its functions were taken over by the Central Seed Committee (CSC) established under the Seeds Act, 1966. The Central Seeds Committee constituted a Central Sub-Committee on Crop Standards Notification & Release of Varieties for Agricultural Crops and Horticultural Crops to discharge the functions of release/notification, provisional notification and de-notification of cultivars at Central level, while State Seed Sub-Committee (SSSC) were asked to discharge similar functions for release at State level.

Notification of Cultivars

After official release (at State as well as Central levels), the cultivars are notified under the Seeds Act so that the quality of seeds can be regulated. The main purpose of notification is to bring the seeds of a particular crop/variety under the purview of Seed Law Enforcement, mainly to empower the Seed Inspectors to verify the quality of its seeds by sampling and analysis. The notification is made by the Central Government on the recommendation of the Central Seed Committee.

The proposals for notification of a State-important variety are forwarded in the prescribed format by the State government after its release in that State to the Central Seed Committee for consideration .

Difference between Release and Notification

The Release is not a statutory function. Its main purpose is to make known the details of the newly evolved cultivar to the public and also the areas for which it is found suitable for cultivation. The Notification is a statutory function performed under the Seeds Act so that the provisions of the Seeds Act could be applied to regulate the quality of seeds during sale.

Advantages of Notification

Under the Seeds Act, certified seeds can be produced only of notified varieties and thus, notification precedes the certification. Therefore, notification is compulsory for production of certified seeds. Unless the variety is notified, the seed cannot be certified. Seed Law Enforcement agency notified under the Seeds Act can draw and test samples of seeds of notified varieties. Therefore, for regulation of the quality of seeds, notification is a precondition. The farmers benefit from the notification of varieties because they get seeds of assured quality of notified varieties. As specified under the

Seeds Act, seeds of notified varieties can be sold after proper labeling and packing indicating the minimum specified standards.

Once the variety is notified, in general, it becomes government of India asset. The morphological character of notified varieties are documented by the Central Seed Committee so as to curtail the bio-piracy. The notification of the varieties will help to trace out its genesis. Subsidies are being considered basing on the notification status. Seed planning/programmes are being undertaken basing on the notification statistical data.

Procedure for Release of Cultivars

The cultivar which performs only in one State will be treated as 'State variety', which has been evolved either by State Agricultural University, individual, organization or ICAR institutes. Such varieties have to be considered by the State Seed Sub-committee of that particular State for release. The sponsoring authority intended to release the variety should furnish the relevant information in the prescribed proforma given below and submit to the co-convener of the State Seed Sub-committee for consideration and release of cultivar.

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL OF RELEASE OF CROP VARIETY TO CENTRAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON CROP STANDARDS, NOTIFICATION AND RELEASE OF VARIETIES (CENTRAL VARIETIES)

1.	Name of the species	
2.	(a) Name of the variety under which tested. (b) Proposal name of variety.	
3.	Sponsored by	
4.	(a) Institution or agency responsible for developing variety (with address). (b) Name of the persons who helped in the development of variety.	
5.	(a) Parentage with details of its pedigree. (b) Source of material in case of introduction IC/EC No./ Designation of parental lines should be clearly mentioned. In case the variety has been developed from local landrace/traditional variety its source (village, district, State, be given. (c) Breeding method used. (d) Breeding objective.	
6.	State the varieties which most closely resemble proposed variety in general characteristics.	
7.	(a) Whether recommended by seminar/conference/workshop/SVRS. (b) If so, its recommendations with specific justification for the release of proposed variety. (c) Specific areas of its adaptation.	

8.	Recommended Ecology	
9.	<p>Description of variety/hybrid.</p> <p>(a) Plant height</p> <p>(b) Distinguish morphological characteristics.</p> <p>(c) Maturity group.</p> <p>(d) Reaction of major diseases (under field and controlled conditions).</p> <p>(e) Reaction to major pests (under field and controlled conditions including store pests).</p> <p>(f) Agronomic features (e.g. Resistance to lodging, shattering, fertilizer responsiveness, suitability for early or late sown conditions, seed rate etc.).</p> <p>(g) Quality of produce of grain, forage/fibre including nutritive value wherever relevant.</p> <p>(h) Reaction to stresses.</p>	
10.	In case of hybrid, description of parents.	
11.	<p>(a) Yield data in regional/inter-regional/district trails year wise (levels of fertilizer application, density of plant populations and superiority over local/standard varieties to be indicated).</p> <p>(b) Yield data from national conditions demonstration/large scale demonstrations.</p> <p>(c) Average yield under normal conditions.</p>	

12.	(a) Agency responsible for maintaining breeder seed. (b) Quantity of breeder seed in stock.	
13.	Information on acceptability of variety by farmers/consumers/industry.	
14.	Specific recommendations, if any for seed production.	
15.	Any other pertinent information.	
16.	Acknowledgement particulars about the submission of germplasm samples with NBPGR.	

Signature of Head of Institution

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL FOR RELEASE AND NOTIFICATION OF FLOWERS CROPS AND ORNAMENTALS TO THE CENTRAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON CROP STANDARDS, NOTIFICATION AND RELEASE OF VARIETIES FOR HORTICULTURAL CROPS (CENTRAL VARIETIES).

1.	Name of the crop with scientific name	
2.	Code designation under which tested	
3.	Proposed name of the variety/hybrid.	
4.	Sponsoring Institution	
5.	(a) Institution or agency responsible for development for the variety with complete address. (b) Name of the persons responsible for development of the variety.	
6.	(a) Breeding method (introduction, selection hybridization etc. (b) Source material in case of introduction/selection. (c) Percentage with details of its pedigree for hybrids only.	
7.	State the name of varieties along with description of the trials for each variety which closely resembles the proposed variety based on morphology.	
8.	(a) Whether recommended by AICRP Group meeting/workshops. (b) If so, State recommendation of the group meeting in brief with specific justification of release. (c) Recommended ecology (i.e. suitable for out door/indoor/pot culture/controlled conditions or other culture.	

9.	<p>Description of parents in case of hybrids.</p> <p>a) Distinguishing morphological characters.</p> <p>i) Plant height (cm) (average with range)</p> <p>ii) Foliage (Specific colour with range of shades, Pubescence, Thom Characteristics).</p> <p>iii) Flower (specific colour with range shades and other sharply identifiable characters).</p> <p>iv) Seed shape & colour (for seed propagated material).</p> <p>v) Shape, thickness & size of vegetatively propagated material along with other identifiable morphological characters.</p> <p>b) Maturity in number of days (seed to seed for annuals only).</p> <p><u>Seed propagated varieties</u></p> <p>c) - Age at first flowering - Days to 50% if of flowering. - Days from flowering to harvest.</p> <p>d) Maturity Group (early, medium or wherever such classification exists).</p> <p>e) Reaction to major diseases under field and controlled conditions.</p> <p>f) Reaction major pests (under field and controlled conditions including storage pests).</p> <p>g) Reaction to abiotic stresses (specify critical stage when stress is more pronounced).</p> <p>h) Agronomic features, resistance/susceptibility. Fertilizers responsiveness, seed rate etc.</p>	Female	Male
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10.	<p>Description of variety/hybrid (please see Table 1 for crop specific descriptors)</p> <p>a) Plant height (cm).</p> <p>b) Foliage (specific colour with range of shades and other sharply identifiable characters).</p> <p>c) Seed shape & colour with for seed propagated material.</p> <p>d) Shape, thickness & size of vegetatively propagated material along with other identifiable morphological characters.</p> <p>e) Annuals (seed to seed).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Days at first flowering. - Days to 50% flowering. - Days from flowering to harvest. - Stage of harvest. <p>f) Perennial (Vegetatively propagated).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age of maturity at which planting stake/ tuber/ bulbs/ rhizome/corm etc. could be used for propagation with morphological identification. - Kind of rootstock to be used for vegetative propagation. <p>g) Reaction to major disease under field and controlled conditions.</p> <p>h) Reaction to major pests (under field and controlled conditions including storage pests).</p> <p>i) Reaction to abiotic stresses (specify critical stage when stress is more pronounced).</p> <p>j) Agronomic features resistance/susceptibility to lodging and shattering, fertilizer responsiveness, seed rate etc.</p>	
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11.	Comparative yield data in AICFIP trials/on-farm trials center-wise and year-wise agronomic/breeding/plant pathology/entomology and physiology.	
12.	Purpose for which recommended (specify the purpose and situation).	
13.	a) Agency responsible for producing breeder seed (stock/parental line). b) Quality of breeder seed sufficient to plant ¼-2 ha in stock with source of availability.	
14.	Specific recommendations for seed production/nursery maintenance.	
15.	Any other pertinent information not covered above. Use separate sheet if space is not sufficient.	

Signature of Head of Institution

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR NOTIFICATION OF CROP VARIETIES OF VEGETABLE CROPS UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE SEEDS ACT 1966 (STATE VARIETIES)

1.	State	
2.	Name of the crop with scientific name	
3.	Name of the variety under which released or known	
4.	Year of Release	
5.	(a) Parentage with detail of its pedigree. (b) Source of material in case of introduction. (c) Breeding method (d) Breeding objectives.	
6.	State the varieties, which most closely resemble the proposed variety in general characteristics.	
7.	(a) Breeder/Institute responsible for maintaining breeder's stock. (b) Quantity of breeder's seed of the variety available (in Kgs).	
8.	Description of variety/hybrid (Crop specific descriptors given in Table 1).	
9.	Description of the parents of the hybrid. Is there any problem of synchronization, if yes, methods to overcome it.	
10.	Describe at least two identifiable and distinguishable morphological characteristics of the variety. In case of hybrid please describe at least two identifiable morphological characteristics of both the parents.	
11.	Specify kind of rootstock to be used for vegetatively propagated crops or otherwise used.	
12.	Specific recommendations for	

	seed production/nursery maintenance.	
13.	Maturity Group (early medium and late, where over such classification exist).	
14.	Disease & pest resistance (Give details of any resistance to pests or diseases including races.).	
15.	Recommended ecology	
16.	Yield (in kg/ha) (a) Commercial product (b) Seed	
17.	Acknowledgement particulars about the submission of germplasm samples with NBPGR.	
18.	Current approximate percentage of area of the crop (kind) in the State.	
19.	Approximate area to be covered by this variety in the state and/or demand for export for its seeds.	
20.	Recommendation of All India Workshop about the variety. Please enclose a certificate in this effect obtained from Project Director/Coordinator concerned of ICAR.	

**Signature of the Chairman/
Co-convenor State Seed Sub-Committee**

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL OF RELEASE OF CROP VARIETY TO STATE SEED SUB COMMITTEE

1.	Name of the crop and species	
2.	(c) Name of the variety under which tested. (d) Proposal name of variety.	
3.	Sponsored by	
4.	(c) Institution or agency responsible for developing variety (with address). (d) Name of the persons who helped in the development of variety.	
5.	(d) Parentage with details of its pedigree. (e) Source of material in case of introduction IC/EC No./ Designation of parental lines should be clearly mentioned. In case the variety has been developed from local landrace/traditional variety its source (village, district, State, be given). (f) Breeding method used. (d) Breeding objective.	
6.	State the varieties which most closely resemble proposed variety in general characteristics.	
7.	(d) Whether recommended by seminar/conference/workshop/ SVRS. (e) If so, its recommendations with specific justification for the release of proposed variety. (f) Specific areas of its adoption.	
8.	Recommended Ecology	
9.	Description of variety/hybrid. (h) Plant height	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Range (j) Distinguishing morphological characteristics. (k) Maturity (range in number of days) Seeding/transplanting to flowering, seed to seed (l) Maturity group (early, medium and late – wherever such classification exists) (m) Reaction of major diseases (under field and controlled conditions). (n) Reaction to major pests (under field and controlled conditions including store pests). (o) Agronomic features (e.g. Resistance to lodging, shattering, fertilizer responsiveness, suitability for early or late sown conditions, seed rate etc.). (p) Quality of produce of grain, forage/fibre including nutritive value wherever relevant. (h) Reaction to stresses. 	
10.	Description of parents.	

11.	(d) Yield data in regional/inter-regional/district trails year wise (levels of fertilizer application, density of plant populations and superiority over local/standard varieties to be indicated. (e) Yield data from national demonstration/large scale demonstrations. (f) Average yield under normal conditions.	
12.	(c) Agency responsible for maintaining breeder seed. (d) Quantity of breeder seed in stock (in kg).	
13.	Information on acceptability of variety by farmers/consumers/industry.	
14.	Specific recommendations, if any for seed production.	
15.	Any other pertinent information.	
16.	Vivid presentation with the help of photographs of the variety is to be submitted by the breeder	
17.	National identity number	

Signature of Head of Institution

**PROFORMA FOR DENOTIFICATION OF CROP/VARIETIES UNDER SECTION 5 OF
THE SEEDS ACT, 1966.**

1. State
2. Crop
3. Variety
4. Year of Notification
and S.O.No.
5. Name of the Organising
Breeder/Institute of the variety
6. Reason for
denotification
7. Name of the variety which
has replaced/will replace the
denotified variety.
8. Recommendation of the All
India Workshop about the variety
9. Acknowledgement particulars
about the germplasm samples
with NBPGR.

**Signature of the Head of the Institute/
Co-convenor of the State Seed Sub Committee.**

F.No. 17-12/2007-SD.IV
Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture and Co-operation

Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated the 29th May, 2008

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

In pursuance of the meeting held in the Ministry of Commerce on 6th December, 2007 on matters relating to basmati, a reference was made to the Central Sub-committee on Crops Standards Notification and Release of Varieties for Agricultural Crops constituted by the Central Seed Committee established under Section 3 of the Seeds Act, 1966 to define the standards and delineate the qualifications of the rice varieties to qualify as basmati. The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has accepted the recommendations of the Sub-committee and approved the following standards to determine the eligibility of any rice variety as basmati:

1. The variety should be either traditional known basmati or evolved through breeding process. It has to be tested and evaluated through **National Basmati Trials (NBT)** of All India Coordinated Rice Improvement Project, Hyderabad, ICAR and released/notified under the **Seed Act 1966** of India (54 of 1966) and amendment made therein.
2. The variety should be suitable to be grown in the Indo-Gangetic Plains of India of **Geographical Indication (GI)** of Basmati growing areas, recommended for cultivation, for its denomination as a basmati variety.
3. The variety should possess all primary basmati quality characteristics as stated below:

S.No.	Parameter**	Value
1	Minimum average precooked milled rice length (mm)	6.61
2	Average precooked milled rice breadth (mm)	≤2.00
3	Minimum length/breadth ratio of precooked milled rice (L/B Ratio)	3.50
4.	Minimum average cooked rice length (mm)	12.00
5.	Minimum cooked rice length /precooked rice length ratio OR Minimum elongation ratio	1.70
6.	Average volume expansion ratio	>3.5
7.	Aroma	Present (Qualitative sensory analysis as Panel Test*)
8.	Texture of cooked grain for high integrity (without bursting the surface), non-stickiness, tenderness, good taste and good mouth feel	Present (Qualitative sensory analysis as Panel Test*)

**The grain sample for analyses will necessarily have to be 'aged' for three months at under protected conditions at normal room temperature as milled kernel

* As per standardized protocol (Directorate of Rice Research, Hyderabad)

4. The variety should be evaluated under NBT for quality parameters with a minimum aging of three months after milling by the identified laboratory/ies, as an integral data component involved in decision making. The sample for the testing would be direct harvest from the current seed batch being used for the corresponding trial from the location specified by the Directorate of Rice Research within the Geographical Indication area. During evaluation and decision making for promotion and identification/release, the quality standards will have to be met and supported by desirable range of expression of other ancillary characters as given below:

S. No.	Parameter**	Value
1	Amylose content range	20-25%
2	Alkali spreading value range (ASV)	4.0-7.0
3	Minimum brown rice recovery (%)	76%
4	Minimum milled rice recovery (%)	65%
	Minimum head rice recovery (%)	45%

**The grain sample for analyses will necessarily have to be 'aged' for three months at under protected conditions at normal room temperature as milled kernel

5. It should fulfill the quality parameters of primary and ancillary characters as a prerequisite as mentioned above that has to be verified by one or more laboratories identified by the Directorate of Rice Research, Hyderabad ICAR for the purpose.
6. The variety should be proposed for release/notification with the term "**Basmati**" in the body of denomination, along with its initial evaluation trial (IET) number in parenthesis

Besides, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has also approved the following with regards to notification of the Basmati:

- i) The Central Sub-committee on Crop Standards, Notification and Release of Varieties will be deciding whether a particular basmati variety is a traditional variety or an evolved variety developed through breeding process. What constitutes the breeding process will be for the Sub-committee to decide.
- ii) Notification of rice varieties as basmati (or otherwise) will be the sole responsibility of the Central Seed Committee/DAC as is provided in the Seeds Act, 1966.
- iii) No change will be made in the *status quo* as regards 11 varieties already notified by Commerce Ministry as basmati under the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act, 1963.
- iv) Commerce Ministry will again be advised that notification of a particular variety of rice as super basmati has no sanctity under the Section Act, 1966.

- v) It has to be ensured that there is linkage between the variety and the Geographical Indication, which would in other words mean that only basmati varieties with prescribed characteristics grown in Indo-gangetic region will qualify for such description.

S.K. Pattanayak
(S.K. Pattanayak)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India

To,

Secretary,
Ministry of Commerce and Industry,
Department Commerce,
Udyog Bhwan,
New Delhi.

Copy to:

1. Director General, ICAR, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi.
2. Chairman, Central Sub-committee on Crop Standards, Notification and Release of varieties for Agricultural Crops.
3. Chairman, APEDA, New Delhi for information.
4. Secretary, Central Seed Committee and Member Secretary, Central Sub-committee on Crop Standards, Notification and Release of varieties for Agricultural Crops.
5. Chairman of State Seed Sub-committees of all States Governments/UTs'.
6. Project Coordinator(Rice), DRR, Hyderabad.
7. Director of Agriculture of All State Governments/UTs.
8. Co-convener of State Seed Sub-committee of all States Governments/UTs'.
9. Director of All State Seed Certification Agencies of all States Governments/UTs'.
10. Managing Directors of All State Seeds Corporations including NSC/SFCI.