

EXPORT/IMPORT POLICY ON SEED AND PLANTING MATERIAL

The export/import of seeds and planting material is governed by the Export and Import Policy, 2002-07.

Restrictions on export of all cultivated varieties of seeds, except:

- (i) breeder or foundation or wild varieties;
- (ii) onion, berseem, cashew, nux vomica, rubber, pepper cuttings, sandalwood, saffron, neem, forestry species and wild ornamental plants;
- (iii) export of niger which is canalized through TRIFED, NAFED, etc.
- (iv) groundnuts, exports of which is subject to compulsory registration of contract with APEDA;

have been removed w.e.f. 01.04.2004.

The export of these seeds is restricted and is only allowed on case-to-case basis under licence issued by DGFT on the basis of the recommendations of DAC.

The provisions regarding import of seeds and planting material are:

- (a) import of seeds/tubers/bulbs/cuttings/saplings of vegetables, flowers and fruits is allowed without a licence in accordance with import permit granted under Plant Quarantine Order, 2003 (PQ Order).
- (b) import of seeds, planting materials and living plants by ICAR, etc. is allowed without a licence in accordance with conditions specified by the Ministry of Agriculture;

- (c) import of seeds/tubers of potato, garlic, fennel, coriander, cumin, etc. is allowed in accordance with import permit granted under PQ Order, 2003 and amendments made their under.
- (d) import of seeds of wheat, rye, barley, oat, maize, rice, millet, jowar, bajra, ragi, other cereals, soybean, groundnut, linseed, palmtree, cotton, castor, sesamum, mustard, safflower, clover, jojoba, etc. is allowed without licence subject to the New Policy on Seed Development, 1988 and in accordance with import permit granted under PQ Order, 2003 and amendments made their under.

The Policy reiterated that all imports of seeds and planting material would be regulated under the Plant Quarantine Order 2003 and amendments made their under, Import licences would be granted by DGFT/PPA on the recommendations of DAC. A small quantity of seeds sought to be imported would be given to ICAR, or farms accredited by ICAR, for trial and evaluation for one crop season. On receipt of applications for commercial import, DAC would consider the trial/evaluation report on the performance of the seed and their resistance to seed/soil borne diseases. DAC is required to either reject or recommend the application to DGFT for grant of import licence within 30 days of receipt. All importers have to make available a small specified quantity of the imported seeds to the ICAR at cost price for testing/accession to the gene bank of NBPGR.

The import of seeds has to be cleared/rejected by PPA after quarantine checks within three weeks. The rejected consignment has to be destroyed. During quarantine, the imported consignment is kept in a bonded warehouse at the cost of the importer. While importing seeds and plating material, it has to be ensured that there is absolutely no compromise on plant quarantine procedures. Every effort has to be made to prevent the entry into India of exotic pests, diseases and weeds that are detrimental to the interests of the farmers.

The EXIM Committee was constituted in the Seeds Division to deal with application for exports/imports of seeds and planting materials in accordance with the New Policy on Seed Development and EXIM regulation. The composition of the Committee is as under:

- (i) Secretary (A&C) - Chairperson
- (ii) Agriculture Commissioner
- (iii) DDG (CS), ICAR
- (iv) DDG (Hort.), ICAR
- (v) JS (IC)
- (vi) JS (PP)
- (vii) Horticulture Commissioner
- (viii) Animal Husbandry Commissioner, Deptt. of Animal Husbandry & Dairying
(proposed to incorporate by the 94th Exim Committee)
- (ix) Director, National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR)
- (x) Plant Protection Adviser
- (xi) Economics and Statistical Adviser
- (xii) JS (Seeds) - Member Secretary

The functions of the EXIM Committee are to analyze applications and furnish recommendations to PPA/DGFT for issue of licence for import/export of seeds and planting material.

The EXIM Committee meets every month subject to tendency of proposals for import/export of seeds and planting material. Exporters/importers are required to submit 20 copies of applications for export/import in the prescribed formats. The minutes of the EXIM Committee are approved by Secretary (A&C) after which letters recommending exports/imports of seeds and planting material are sent to DGFT and PPA for necessary action.