

VARIETAL LISTING (Recognition of varieties)

Definition and use of a varietal list

The South African varietal lists are maintained in terms of Section 15 of the Plant Improvement Act, 1976 (Act No. 53 of 1976), and have been instituted for most of the important Agricultural, Vegetable and Fruit crops. The implementation and maintenance of a varietal list regulates the supply of high quality propagating material. It also enables the Republic of South Africa to comply with the provisions of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) seed certification schemes, which are accepted in the European Community (EC) countries. Such schemes facilitate the marketing of seed internationally.

For crops declared as a kind of plant in terms of the Act, recognition of a variety and its inclusion in the variety list is compulsory before propagating material of such a variety may be sold in South Africa. If the list indicates "all varieties" of a plant, then propagating material of any variety of that crop may be sold *provided* it is sold under a specific denomination and complies with the purity and germination requirements of the Act.

Propagating material of crops that have not been declared as a kind of plant for purposes of the Plant Improvement Act, are not regulated by the Act and therefore do not have to conform to any requirements of this Act.

Requirements for the recognition of a variety

A variety can be recognised and included in the variety list if it complies with the following DUS (distinguishability, uniformity and stability) requirements.

- It must be clearly distinguishable from other varieties of the same kind of plant already listed in the variety list
- It must be uniform in the expression of its characteristics
- It must be stable, i.e. remains unchanged after repeated propagation
- It must have an acceptable denomination

After a variety has been listed, trade and or post control tests are performed regularly to ascertain whether the variety still complies with the original description.

Application for the recognition of a variety

Any person or institution may apply for the recognition of a variety and its inclusion in the variety list. Such an application must be accompanied by the following duly completed and signed forms:

- Application form
- Technical questionnaire
- The prescribed application and examination fee
- Written permission from the owner, if the application is submitted on behalf of the owner
- The prescribed quantity of seed or propagating material

There are prescribed dates by which the documents and propagating material must be submitted to the Registrar. These dates, the applicable fees, as well as the quantities of propagating material to be submitted and where the material must be delivered are available upon request from the Registrar of Plant Improvement.

Further information can be obtained from:

The Registrar for Plant Improvement
Directorate Plant Production
Private Bag X250
PRETORIA 0001
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