

The Seed Industry through NSAI and FSII reached a consensus on commercialization framework for new traits for development of superior plant varieties by plant breeders which will benefit the farmers

This is a landmark for the Indian Seed Industry and agriculture and can lead to sustained development of traits and new plant varieties making the Indian agriculture competitive and can significantly contribute to doubling the farmers income.

New Delhi, July 08, 2021: The Seed Industry through NSAI and FSII reached a consensus on commercialization of framework for new traits for development of superior plant varieties which will benefit the farmers. This consensus developed through consultations and discussions among the industry players is significant, putting an end to the fears of monopoly or restricted access to the traits by the plant breeders and at same time providing assurance to the trait developing companies of reasonable return on their investments. This optimization of interests of different stakeholder groups including farmers will also lead to clarity to the regulatory agencies in future to evaluate and approve the new traits or plant varieties.

The senior officials of Agriculture Ministry and the regulatory authorities were briefed on the salient features of the framework by the industry associations who have further requested for making the regulatory and approval process predictable and seamless.

Mr Prabhakar Rao, President, NSAI said, “This framework ensures that interests of all parties including farmers are taken care of and we are happy that the main concerns of the small and medium companies regarding monopoly of trait leading to excessive trait pricing is fully addressed. The non-discretionary access to traits on the principles of FRAND and trait value fixation by an Industry body having presence of eminent agricultural experts will address the fears of the farmers and industry players of the excessive trait pricing.”

Dr M Ramasami, Chairman, Rasi Seeds and Chairman, FSII said, “Illegal use of unapproved technologies is fraught with dangers to the environment, to the legally operating seed industry and eventually to the farmers themselves. This framework will be very beneficial to the Indian farmers who have been waiting for new technologies for more than 10 years. The two Associations believe that new technologies will improve farmers’ incomes, increase the international competitiveness of the Indian farmers and provide better quality food to the consumers. There is a huge felt need for the traits among the farmers which should be met through legal approval and commercialization of new technologies. This framework enables such process for release of new technologies.”

The highlights of the Commercialization framework are:

1. An Industry Governing Body (IGB) to be formed with representatives from both the associations, an independent scientist and an independent expert to chair it. The Chair and the Scientist will take impartial view of the matters and ensure that concerns and interests of all parties including farmers are taken care of.
2. Some basic criteria including technical and financial capacity to handle technology and readiness to follow stewardship guidelines are identified to determine the qualifications of the seed company for giving access to the trait through an Access Agreement.
3. The IGB determines trait value within a range of 5 to 20% of the seed value and a gradual reduction in trait value over a defined period. This ensures that the technology remains affordable for the farmer while the technology developers are provided with adequate return on their investment.



About FSII and NSAI

FSII is an association of research-based seed and technology companies. NSAI is an apex organization representing Indian seed industry and aims to meet farmer's requirement and contribute to sustainable growth of Indian agriculture.
