

The particulars of any arrangement that exists for consultation with, or representation by, the members of the public in relation to the formulation of its policy or implementation thereof.

[in pursuance of section 4(1)(b) (vii) of The Right to Information Act, 2005]

The following arrangement exists in this Department to promote participation of the members of public in formulation of policy in the agriculture sector and its implementation:

1. SEEDS DIVISION

1. The Seeds Grower's Association of India is represented on the EXIM Committee which has been constituted for the purpose of advising the Government on matters relating to export and import of matters relating to import of seeds and planting materials.

2. "The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001" provides, inter alia, for establishment of the Protection for Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority. The Authority has since been established and is entrusted with the duty to promote, by such measures as it thinks fit, the development of new varieties of plants and protect the rights of the farmers and breeders. The Authority has been provided to consist, inter alia, of one representative each from a National or State level Farmers' Association, a Tribal Organisation, Seed Industry, and a National or State level Women's Organisation associated with agricultural activities.

3. Central Seed Committee constituted under Section 3(1) of the Seeds Act, 1966 consists, inter alia, of two representatives of growers of seeds nominated by the Central Government. The functions assigned to the Committee are to advise:

- (a) the Central Government and the State Governments on matters arising out of the administration of the Seeds Act, 1966 and to carry out the other functions assigned to it by or under this Act;
- (b) the Central Government whether a particular kind of variety of seed should be declared as a "notification kind of variety" (by notification in the Official Gazette) in order to regulate the quality of seed of the kind/variety and for which State(s) and or for which areas thereof;
- (c) the Central Government in regard to the minimum limits of germination and purity with respect to any seed of any notified kind or variety and the mark or label to indicate that such seed conforms to the minimum limits of germination and purity specified and the particulars which such mark or label may contain;
- (d) the Central Government whether a particular Seed Certification Agency established in any foreign country should be recognized as an agency for the purpose of this Act.

2. PLANT PROTECTION DIVISION

In the matter of placing restrictions/ban on use of pesticides as also on policy issues connected with phyto-sanitary regime, the comments and objections are formally invited, inter alia, from the members of the public.

3. RAINFED FARMING SYSTEM DIVISION

The Central Steering Committee on Watershed Development Fund constituted for the purpose of integrated watershed development includes representatives from Non-Governmental Organizations.

4. EXTENSION DIVISION

The Department periodically organizes brainstorming sessions, workshops and seminars to which non-officials are also invited. This serves as a forum for consultation and policy formulation and its implementations. The involvement of these non-officials is as specified in the respective scheme/programme.

5. MECHANISATION AND TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

The Minimum Performance Standards Committee for the Evaluation of Testing Reports of Tractors and Power Tillers set up in this Department, inter alia, prescribes the minimum performance standards of tractors and power tillers for grant of financial assistance through NABARD. The members appointed to this Committee include a representative from the Tractor Manufacturers Association.

6. INM DIVISION

An Empowered Technical Committee, under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary, DAC has been constituted for execution and advice on various aspects of promotion of Organic Farming in the country. Three experts on Organic Farming have been included as non-official members in the Committee.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

1. The Department annually holds two Conferences, one for launching the Kharif Campaign and the other for launching the Rabi Campaign. The experts from Agricultural Universities are invited to attend these Conferences so as to help the Government to devise suitable strategies to launch Kharif and Rabi Campaigns.

2. The various associations of farmers as also other stakeholders bring to the notice of the Government, from time to time, the issues confronting the agriculture sector. These suggestions are duly considered and serve as an aid for policy formulation.

3. A Public Grievances Cell has been set up in the Department to consider the grievances received from the members of the public and to take corrective action. This arrangement helps not only in the redressal of the grievances but also in streamlining the functioning of the Department.
