

Afghanistan enacts a seed law



The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has enacted a Seed Law published by the Ministry of Justice in official Gazette 1005 of 16 December 2009. This new Seed Law covers true agricultural seeds as well as vegetatively propagated planting materials. Comprising 4 Chapters and 29 Articles, the Seed Law will regulate seed production and marketing, seed trade (import and export) as well as all seed-related research activities in the country.

FAO through financial support of the European Union has worked collaboratively with the Ministry of Agriculture for several years in developing the Seed Law and produced a final draft in August 2006 for submission to the Ministry of Justice after intensive consultations with stakeholders nationwide and inputs by international experts.

Final official publication of the Seed Law is welcome news for seed producers and farmers across Afghanistan with the hope that it will bring better organization and positive changes in the seed industry and attract foreign investment into the country's agricultural sector together with modern technology and improved knowledge. The law is also expected to put important institutional arrangements in place including a National Seed Board, an independent Seed Certification Agency and a Variety Release Committee.

A strong foundation has already been laid for the Seed Law including a rapidly growing private seed sector, an active National Seed Association, a quality control system with international standards, and a functional National Seed Secretariat. With these developments, Afghanistan's seed industry is surely heading in a positive direction in which the Seed Law now serves as the formal guide and reference for all stakeholders and other relevant parties to follow.