

Turkey Launches New Rules for Local Seed Varieties

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Turkey has introduced The Regulation on Registration, Production, and Marketing of Local Varieties ("**Regulation**") aiming to protect field crops, vineyard/garden plants and other plant varieties and to prevent genetic erosion for those. The new Regulation outlines procedures and principles for registering local seed varieties as well as producing, marketing, on-site maintenance, and sustainably usage. Furthermore, the Regulation includes rules for trading, production, launching seeds on the market and audits.

The Regulation was published in Official Gazette number 30877 on 3 September 2019, entering into effect on the same date. [The Regulation on Registration, Production and Marketing of Local Varieties](#) which was published on 19 October 2018 in Official Gazette number 30570, was abolished on the Regulation's date of entry into force.

In this context, "local plant varieties" means:

- Traditionally grown seeds in a specific geographical region, and
- Clones and population groups of plant varieties that adapted to the geographical conditions of the region where they grow.

Transactions regarding registered local varieties can be authorized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry ("**Ministry**"). Local seeds shall be considered as public goods. However, there is no requirement for the Ministry's authorization for real persons' seed production up to their needs and seed exchange between natural persons, provided that these transactions are established in the region of the origin.

Application and examination process

Real or legal persons shall apply to the nearest provincial directorate, district directorate or research institute with a pre-application form and a sample of local seed.

- Registration applications cannot be made for:
 - Varieties included in the registers published as per the Regulation on Registration of Plant Varieties and included in the Ministry's register list or removed from these lists
 - Varieties whose plant breeders' rights are protected or applied for under the Law on Protection of Breeders Rights for New Plant Varieties.
- The registered local varieties shall be produced and marketed by the Ministry's relevant institution or research institute in the region of the origin.
- Third parties can oppose new registrations within 30 days of announcement in the Local Variety Register List. The decision made upon the examination by the Committee on Registration of Local Varieties is the final decision.

Seed production

- The production of local seeds shall be made in compliance with TAGEM's practice directions.
- Seeds of local varieties registered for a particular region of origin can only be produced in that region.

Labeling and marketing

- The seeds on the Local Variety Register List shall be produced in the region of origin in packaged and labeled form and marketed with a local variety certificate.
- The Ministry's relevant institution and TAGEM shall sign a protocol for marketing.
- Packaging of packaged seeds or the labels of non-packaged seeds must:
 - State "*This is a local variety*", and/or
 - Include a logo designed by the Ministry.
- Labels must state, among other things:
 - Parcel number
 - The producer's name, address or identifier logo
 - Seed type
 - Region of origin
 - Variety name
 - Parcel number given by the producer
 - Net or gross weight or number of seeds
 - For species subject to plant passport rules, labels must contain the passport's mandatory information.
- All revenues gained from the sales of the local seeds produced by the local variety owner research institute will be transferred to the research institute's circulating capital.

Audit

- Seed Inspectors determined by the Directorate General of Plant Production will check compliance of seeds which are produced and marketed in accordance with the Regulation.
- If the local varieties produced under the Regulation are determined to be under other registration lists such as National Variety List, Sub-list, Standard Seed Variety List, Fruit, and Grapevine List, Ornamental Plants List, the subject matter variety shall be removed from the Local Variety Registration List.

The full text of the Regulation is available at this [link](#) (only available in Turkish).

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