

# SEED INDUSTRY NEEDS ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

The current size of the seed industry is close to \$3.8 bn. It is growing at around 5-6% CAGR. There is mix of Indian corporates and MNCs in the sector occupying leading positions for different crops. The investment in R&D varies from 8-15% of the turnover, depending on breeding and technologies interventions. Market share of the private sector is more than 70% by value in most of the crops where hybridisation is established.

The performing and new seeds are regularly delivered to the farmers by these companies. Since there are no entry barriers to establish a seed company, many fly by night players entered the market with products from other companies and sell products with poor quality. The seed industry needs a system of checking these players by an accreditation system. All R&D-based and trading companies should be registered under set parameters.

The seed industry must have predictable policies which will encourage them to invest. Most of the seed laws presently prevailing are old. They do not address the issues faced by the present-day seed industry. New tech-

nologies and methods are emerging. We must have revisions and creating new laws to handle these new situations.

The new Seed Bill 2020 is the revised version of the seed bill framed in 2004. This bill addresses most of the issues. Some of the suggestions offered by seed industry are also being considered. The public sector and also the private sector have the same objective of providing good seed to the farmers. There should be trust in each other while handling issues of the farmers.

Sometimes a wrong notion is created that private sector is for profit only. Profit is not a bad word, provided you assure value of seed to the farmer. In the

name of profit, we are creating wealth which invested and re-invested in R&D to create new innovations. Private sector has created good infrastructure for not only R&D but also for production, processing & packing, quality checks and delivery of seed in good and viable condition. So we are reliable partners in the growth of agriculture in India.

We also have to improve our IP laws to facilitate innovators to protect their innovations and recover value for their investment.

## Complicated bio-diversity laws

Our biodiversity laws are complicated and add no value for the agri-biodiversity. India is a signatory of ITPGRFA and there are 64 crops under Annex 1 of the treaty. The germplasm of these crops are shared under the multi-lateral system with SMTA. The seed industry is willing to share benefits under the subscription model offered internationally. All R&D based companies are creating diversity in breeding by crossing and selection, and present day selection pressure. We are equally concerned about the loss of biodiversity. So we have to segregate bio-prospecting from agri-biodiversity and encourage open exchange of germplasm through systems created under ITPGRFA.

The seed industry is ready to face the challenges of climate changes or shifts and also biotic factors. If conducive policy environment is created, seed companies can increase their investments for R&D to deliver stable and performing products for the future.

**fun FACT**



**I love cooking (Asian cuisine veg & non veg) and I am cleaning freak. I keep my home spic and span and I do this myself**



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Arvind Kapur is Managing Director, Acsen HyVeg Pvt Ltd. His journey from Pioneer, Proagro, Proagro-PGS joint venture, Nunhems and now Acsen HyVeg has been full of challenges and achievements. He calls himself a People Manager, and develops and creates performing teams to build the business.