

# IGTC Policy Team on Plant Breeding Innovation



**IGTC**  
International Grain Trade Coalition



Briefing Document  
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Most international trade of grains, oilseeds and other agri-bulks is subject to compliance with regulations and customer requirements tied to the use of technology in plant production and protection as well as handling and storage of plant products. International trade in these plant products used food, feed and further processing relies on global sourcing.

The IGTC Plant Breeding Innovation Policy Team addresses the constantly evolving ideas and practices which enhance the field of plant breeding. Today's innovations in plant breeding are developed using sophisticated science and technologies including cell biology, gene mapping and marker-assisted breeding. All of these plant breeding innovations result in disparate compliance requirements for the international trade of plant products.

Four pillars of the IGTC policy on Plant Breeding Innovation are:

1

**SAFETY OF THE PRODUCT** - The safety of plants obtained through the application of breeding techniques must be ensured. Any plant variety derived from the introduction and use of plant breeding innovation placed on the market must be safe and must not pose risks to human and animal health or to the environment.

2

**REGULATORY COHERENCE** - Incompatible and trade distortive regulatory measures related to Plant Breeding Innovations have emerged. International alignment of regulatory and labelling policies on new plant breeding tools is an immediate need that includes:

- A** Legal certainty as a goal.
- B** Consistent policy outcomes across relevant global, regional, national and local jurisdictions;
- C** Regulatory approaches that are comparable, compatible, and recognized as acceptable by government authorities in key import and export markets to minimize or avert the risk of costly trade disruptions;
- D** Support for the least trade-distortive commercial and public measures for both imports/exports and provision for fungibility throughout the supply chain, which is a critical component of agricultural commodities trading.

## 3

**CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE AND TRUST** – Effective and trustworthy communication is essential to gain consumer acceptance and trust, both of which are fundamental to market access. Developers and users of plant breeding innovations are best positioned to lead broad industry efforts to build public confidence thereby providing for acceptance across the value chain.

## 4

**INFORMED MARKETS** - The successful introduction of plant breeding innovation must include a high level of transparency regarding technology safety and use. In order to comply with customer as well as regulatory requirements, grain handlers, exporters and importers need readily available and sometimes highly detailed information. An absence of mandatory reporting, voluntary transparency starting with technology users through seed production and use is needed to support compliance in grain marketing. Whether transparency is achieved by official mandate or otherwise it is vital that the breeding and seed industry collaborates with the grain production and marketing value chain to identify and implement pragmatic, achievable, and effective information-sharing solutions.

IGTC took action to broaden and increase information sharing to advance its Plant Breeding Innovation policy and provide solutions to facilitate trade. We are increasing efforts to share insights on national and regional developments.

A focus on monitoring of regulatory developments and nexus with LLP has emerged.

Discussions with the International Seed Federation (ISF) on information sharing are ongoing. Reports and analyses of consumer perceptions are under scrutiny. We are reviewing and contributing to the development of several efforts to improve transparency and inform markets.

## REFERENCES

1. IGTC policy document: <https://bit.ly/3PpHz5P>
2. Presentations made by Bayer Crop Science on consumer perceptions of plant breeding innovations: <https://bit.ly/3NIMlPI>
3. IGTC comments on the EU's New Genomique Techniques(NGTs): <https://bit.ly/3s2g7R0>
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