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(For Internal circulation)

**NATIONAL SEEDS CORPORATION LTD.,**  
Beej Bhawan, Pusa Complex  
New Delhi-110012

No. 8(Misc)/10-11-CS/NSC

Dated : 18/02/2011

CIRCULAR

**Sub: Procedure for Redressal of Quality Complaints of consumers:**

It has been observed that the numbers of consumer cases are increasing every year which is a matter of great concern for the Corporation. Such cases relate to the quality complaints received from the distributors, dealers, farmers / seed purchasers or public institutions directly or through their advocates seeking compensation for the losses incurred by them on account of the poor seed quality. Increase in cases in various consumer forums has been partly due to the fact that complaints are sometimes not being attended/ investigated timely and promptly as per the procedure in vogue. Procedure for attending such complaints are already specified through QC Circulars, from time to time, and also included in ISO 9001:2000 procedure. In order to streamline the process, an effective mechanism is hereby reiterated for dealing with such complaints in future;


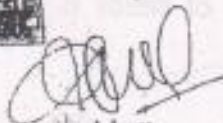
- 1) Complaints can be received by any of the offices i.e. Area Office, Regional Office or Head Office. On receipt of the complaint, the same shall be recorded in a complaint register maintained at each of these offices (in the format no. F/QC/F/05/01 attached as Annexure-I). An acknowledgement shall be given, by the office receiving the complaint, within seven days of receipt of the complaint. If the complaint is received at Area Office, Area Manager shall inform the concerned Regional Manager within 7 days. Similarly, if complaint is received at HO, it shall be forwarded to the concerned RO within 7 days. Complaint shall be forwarded by AO / HO to Regional office with complete details along with copy of the same in same format as entered in the register.
- 2) The complaint shall be reviewed and classified in four categories i.e. Germination, Physical, Seed Health or Genetic,. RO shall nominate an officer or constitute a team to investigate the complaint by undertaking field visit, if required, to draw samples and collect all required details related to seed lot, purchase etc. and verification of the bag, tag, cash memo / bill etc. In case the complainant fails to produce any of the evidences as detailed above, the complaint shall be closed indicating non-production of evidence and the

complainant would be informed accordingly. In case of establishment of first evidence, further verification should include validity period of seed, moisture level in the field, storage conditions at the farmer's end and performance of the seed of same lot in other fields etc. and if the complainant is satisfied with the explanation given by the investigating officer (IO), a closure report shall be prepared by the IO, duly signed by the complainant, and the status of the complaint shall be recorded in the register and report shall be sent to Regional Manager.

- 3) In case the complaint is of minor nature limited to few farmers and investigating officer is satisfied that the complaint is genuine and is due to poor seed quality, the IO shall submit his findings with his recommendations for corrective action including compensation if any (which will be limited to seed cost or replacement of seed) through concerned Regional manager.
- 4) In case the complaint is found to be of major nature involving larger area, RM will review the report of IO and depending upon the findings and the nature of the complaint, the Regional Manager, with the approval of Head office may constitute an Inspection Team consisting of representatives from the concerned Regional office, Head Office, Concerned breeder and a representative of the complainant for further investigation. This team will visit the field, inspect the affected areas, draw seed samples and send the same to designated laboratories for testing and prepare a report on its findings. The report, signed by all the members of the team, shall be submitted to the concerned Regional Manager within one week from the date of inspection who in turn will submit the same to Head Office with his recommendations considering findings of the team and subsequent test results of the laboratory.
- 5) On receipt of the report of the inspecting team along with recommendation of Regional Manager, Head office will take appropriate decision for compensation/ settlement and convey the same to concerned Regional Manager. In case the complainant agrees with the decision taken by NSC, the settlement should be done expeditiously. In case the complainant does not agree with the decision of NSC and decide to file a case in the consumer forum, NSC may have to defend the case in the consumer forum with the help of advocate from the panel so as to safeguard the interest of the corporation.

The Dealers, growers, farmers and public institutions who are the buyers of seeds from NSC should be adequately informed of the above grievance redressal mechanism through leaflet inserted in the seed bags along with the Phone No. of the Regional Manager of the concerned Region, so that the complaint, if any, is attended promptly and also the process of redressal is initiated to ensure that the complaints are not pending for investigation with an objective to redress the genuine complaints of the buyers in time and minimize the cases in consumer forums.



 Approved by: 	Format of complaint register	Doc. No.: FIQC/F/05/01
		Issue No.: 02 Page: 01 of 01 Page Rev. No.: 00 Effective Date: 5 OCT 2006

Area Office

Regional Office

Complaint no.

Complaint Details & Status:



S.No	Description	Details	Remarks
1	Name & Address of complainant		
2	Nature of complaint:	Generic Germination Physical Seed Health	
3	Details of seed Purchase	a) Seed purchased from NSC Dealer NSC Sale counter	
		b) Details of seed purchase: Crop Variety Class Qty purchased Cash Memo & date Bill no & date (Enclose the copy) Purchase cost Farm area involved	
4	Action taken on complaint /Status		
	Date & progress		

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**Guidelines for Investigation into complaints related to Quality of Seeds.**

1. Complaints related to poor germination should not be entertained if the seed has not been sown within 30 days of purchase or within 15 days of sowing, whichever is earlier. In case of non compliance of above condition, the same shall be recorded in the investigation report and signature of the complainant shall be obtained. However, in case of complaints of varietal admixture, complaints shall be entertained till flowering stage by that time almost all physiological characters gets expressed.
2. In the case of the complaint related to poor germination than the prescribed standard or total germination failure, details as per the Format F/QC/05/02 should be collected and conclusion should be drawn based on information so collected.
3. In case of complaints relating to admixture in seed, it should be investigated as to which crop/variety was sown in the same field in the previous season/year. If the crop sown was the same but with a different variety and if the percentage of admixture is less, the committee may take a view whether the off-types are the voluntary plants from the previously sown variety. If the admixture is more than 10%, the team including a Breeder shall investigate to assess as to whether the plant character expressed in the field is due to the change in the varietal behaviour as influenced by the photo-sensitive nature of the crop or due to any other extraneous factors like, rain-fall, cloudy weather, frost etc.
4. Sample should be drawn by the team from the left over stock available with complainant. If there is no stock available with the farmers, samples will be drawn from the guard sample of STL/ QCL NSC. The samples drawn for such test shall be signed and sealed by both NSC's official as well as complainant. In the case of complaint of poor germination, sample shall be sent to the STL, of the concerned state wherefrom complaint has originated, for assessing the germination percentage. In case of complaint of admixture, the samples shall be sent for grow-out test/DNA finger printing test to the designated laboratory.
5. IO or the Investigating team during their field visit or discussion with complainant should not make any commitment about settlement of complaint before conclusion of investigation and decision of the competent authority.

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  Approved by:	Complaint of low germination	Doc. No.: F/QC/05/02
		Issue No.: 02 Page: 01 of 01 Page Rev. No. 00 Effective Date: 15 OCT 2007

Date of Receipt of Complaint \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Inspection \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name and address of the complainant
2. Details of the seed purchased
  - a) Crop
  - b) Variety
  - c) Lot No.
  - d) Whether Foundation or Certified
3. Date of receipt of seed at the supply point
4. Date of purchase
5. Quantity purchased
6. From where/whom purchased
7. How and where the seed was kept by the complainant until planted
8. Information from the tags of used seed bags:
  - a) Date of test/revalidation
  - b) Present germination
9. Area planted (Acres/Hectares)
10. Date of planting
11. Type of soil in which planted (clay, loam, sand etc.)
12. Condition of the seed bed (fine, smooth, cloddy, weedy, etc.)
13. Level of the field (flat, sloping, undulating, depressions, etc.)
14. Is the field well drained?
15. Is the stand uniformly poor in the whole field or there are patches of good or poor stand?
16. How and when was the fertilizer applied?  
Was it applied with the seed to one side and below the seed or before sowing but mixed thoroughly in the soil?
17. What was the moisture situation in the seed bed?
18. What was the source of moisture – irrigation or rain? If rain, was it sufficient?
19. Was there any rain after planting but before the seed germinated? If so, how many days after planting?
20. Did the rain cause any hard crust on the surface of the seed bed?
21. Depth of seed in the soil (as actually checked by digging)
22. Did the seed sprout but could not come out of the soil?
23. Was the seed rotten, damaged by soil insects and/or microorganisms?
24. What is the moisture condition of the field at the time of inspection?
25. Concluding remarks of the inspecting officer.

Dated, the \_\_\_\_\_ Inspecting Officer

NB: If there is any left-over seed with the complainant, the same is to be collected and sent to Quality Control Lab. for testing.

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