

Central Draft Seeds Bill 2025

Proposed Amendments in the Sections and Provision for Additional Sections

The long-awaited Central Draft Seeds Bill 2025 has been introduced by the Government of India after more than two decades of farmers seeking relief from issues related to seed failures, spurious seeds, and quality concerns. The draft bill has been uploaded on the Ministry's website, inviting comments and suggestions as part of the pre-legislative process.

The Government of India has stated that the Draft Seeds Bill, 2025 has been formulated in alignment with current agricultural needs, with its primary focus on regulating the quality of seeds and planting material. However, after a detailed examination of the provisions in the bill, it appears that the bill does not fully safeguard farmers' rights.

Furthermore, under the Constitution of India, the subjects of agriculture and farmers' welfare fall within the jurisdiction of the State Governments. The draft bill, however, contains several provisions that substantially override state powers, raising significant concerns.

In this context, Professor Jayashankar Telangana Agricultural University conducted extensive consultations with various stakeholders at both district and state levels, involving farmers, farmers' societies, officials from the Department of Agriculture, NGOs, civil societies, seed companies, and scientists. A state-level consultation meeting on the Draft Seeds Bill was organized on 28th November 2025, with participation from the Hon'ble Agriculture Minister, senior officials of the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments, and Sri Vadde Shobhanadreeswara Rao, former Agriculture Minister of the erstwhile United Andhra Pradesh. Based on these consultations, the following amendments to existing sections and proposals for additional sections were suggested for inclusion in the bill.

Proposed amendments in the Central Draft Seeds Bill-2025:

1. The Central Government may prepare the Draft Seeds Bill as a Model Act and send it to all State Governments, enabling them to modify or amend it according to the specific needs of their farmers, which would greatly benefit the farming community.
2. The Bill currently empowers the Central Government to issue directions to the States and to require State authorities to act upon such directions. While introducing the Bill, the Central Government should ensure that the rights and powers of the States are adequately protected.
3. **Provision in Section 13:**

Before any agricultural seed is released for sale to farmers, prior registration with the Central Seed Committee shall be mandatory.

Suggested Amendment:

If a State intends to independently register a seed variety, it should obtain approval from the Central Seed Committee. Hence, it may be amended like “The State Seed Committee should be empowered to register varieties that are specific to the State, as the State is better aware of the suitability and requirements of seed varieties for its farmers.

4. Provision in Section 16(1):

The Central Seed Committee may register a seed variety based on performance evaluation data generated by accredited ICAR/SAU research centres as well as other approved agencies.

Suggested Amendment:

When seed varieties developed by other agencies are considered for registration, their seeds must be tested for at least one season at an accredited ICAR/SAU research centre, rather than relying solely on data generated by other agencies.

5. Provision in Section 17(3):

No individual, seed-producing agency, or seed processing plant shall sell or distribute seed unless the producer or processing plant is registered with the respective State Government.

Suggested Amendment:

Every seed producer should possess a minimum educational qualification of either a degree or diploma in agriculture, or should have completed at least a three-month certificate course in a Government-recognized institute.

6. Provision in Section 18(1):

Seed dealers and distributors must register with the State Government before commencing seed sales.

Suggested Amendment:

Seed dealers and distributors should also meet the minimum educational requirement of either a degree or diploma in agriculture, or a certificate course in seed production from a Government-recognized institute, to qualify for registration.

7. Provision in Section 21 (1d):

When any registered variety seed is intended for sale, it must meet the Indian Minimum Seed Certification Standards. The producer should clearly display the seed standards on the container and include a QR code issued through the Central Government Portal. This QR code will provide information about whether the seed is certified by an authorized certification agency or self-certified by the producer.

Suggested Amendment:

Although all varieties must be registered before sale as per the Draft Seeds Bill, self-certification by producers is currently allowed. Many complaints of seed failure in farmers' fields have arisen due to such self-certification. Therefore, all seeds intended for marketing must be certified by a recognized certification agency, and self-certification should not be permitted.

8. Provision in Section 22:

Central government may regulate the seed prices during emergent situations.

Suggested Amendment:

Empower state governments to regulate seed prices when farmer grievances arise. Allow the State Seed Committee to review seed prices and recommend rational price ceilings.

9. Provision in Section 33

Import of seeds is permitted based on the multilocation trials conducted in the exporting country.

Suggested Amendment:

Imported seeds may perform poorly under Indian agro-climatic conditions if local adaptability is not tested, potentially causing crop losses. Therefore, it is essential to mandate multi-location trials at ICAR/SAU centers for all imported seeds in the regions where they are intended for commercialization at least for two (02) years.

10. Provision in Section 34

The sale of seed without registration, the supply of spurious or sub-standard seed, or the sale of seed without proper labelling will attract penalties ranging from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 30 lakhs, along with imprisonment for up to three years, as included in the Bill.

Suggested Amendment:

In addition to the above penalties and punishments for offences committed by the producer, the seed producer or company should be debarred from seed production and sales for a minimum period of five years.

Additional Sections to be included in the Draft Seeds Bill 2025

- 11. Issue:** Absence of a mandatory compensation mechanism for farmers affected by spurious or substandard seed.

Proposed Section:

Introduce a dedicated section in the Act establishing a statutory, time-bound compensation mechanism for farmers who incur losses due to spurious or substandard

seeds. Compensation should be calculated based on the highest achievable yield that the farmer could have obtained under normal circumstances. The claims should be processed and settled within 60 days of the complaint being filed by the farmer.

- 12. Issue:** There is no provision in the draft bill to safeguard seed-producing farmers. Seed-producing farmers often face exploitation in contractual agreements with seed companies.

Proposed section:

A separate section should be included to protect the seed producing farmers rights, duly incorporating the following guidelines:

- a. A tripartite agreement shall be established among the seed-producing farmer, the seed company, and the Department of Agriculture.
- b. Seed-producing farmers should have insurance coverage for their seed production fields, with the insurance premium borne by the concerned seed company.
- c. Elimination of the organizer system to prevent long-term exploitation of seed-producing farmers.
- d. The entire quantity of seed produced by the farmer must be procured by the seed company at the price specified in the agreement.

- 13. Issue:** Irregularities in issue of license to seed companies

Proposed Section:

Guidelines for Granting License to Seed Companies:

1. Licensing Committee Composition: The committee responsible for granting licenses should include at least one scientist from ICAR or a State Agricultural University (SAU).
2. Research Requirements: Seed companies must maintain a dedicated research section, including a research farm of at least 5–10 acres, as a prerequisite for obtaining a license.
3. Educational Quota: A provision should be made to grant licence to the graduates / post graduates in agricultural sciences under special category.
4. Buffer Period for Variety Registration: After obtaining a license, seed companies should observe a minimum buffer period before registering new varieties:
 - Self-pollinated crops: 8–10 years
 - Cross-pollinated crops: Minimum of 3 years

All the above suggested section-wise amendments to the provisions of the Central Draft Seeds Bill 2025, along with the additional sections, will regulate seed quality, protect farmers from spurious seeds, and safeguard the interests of seed-producing farmers and seed companies. The Government of India has invited suggestions on Draft Seed Bill – 2025 by placing official website (<https://agriwelfare.gov.in>) of Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare. The Agricultural University is requesting all the farmers to download the same from the above website and go through it thoroughly and e-mail your suggestions / opinion on or before 11.12.2025 to jsseeds-agri@gov.in.