



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Elliptical Road, Diliman
1100 Quezon City
+63(2) 8928-8741 to 64
and +63(2) 8273-2474

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

No. 24
Series of 2023

SUBJECT : GENERAL GUIDELINES ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF QUALITY SORGHUM SEEDS

Sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor* (L.) Moench) ranked fifth among the major staple cereals in the world such as rice, corn, wheat and barley. It is mostly used as an energy source and is a good feedstuff for poultry, swine and ruminants. It is also used as source of food, alcoholic beverages, fodder, fuel and building materials.

PSA data from 2018-2021 reveals that on the average, 95.5% of total demand of sorghum is imported and only 4.6% were locally produced. In order to prevent further decrease in local production, assurance of ample supply of good quality and high germinating seeds must be guaranteed. Production of good quality seeds acceptable to both farmers and institutional buyers should be continually produced as well.

A. General Implementation Guideline

1. The farmer beneficiary (FB) must be registered in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) and bona fide member of a farmer cooperative/association (FCA);
2. One-time distribution of quality seeds shall be done through the active farmer organization (FO);
3. National Seed Industry Council (NSIC) registered sorghum varieties with tannin content of not more than 0.25% will be distributed by the DA-RFO;
4. Quality seeds will be distributed at a ratio of one (1) hectare is to 10 kilograms to increase the number of FBs;
5. FBs shall return the same volume of seeds to Farmer Organization (FO) after harvest. The FO shall diligently collect, store, and notify DA-RFO (thru Regional Sorghum Focal Person) to retrieve the same volume of seeds received;
6. In case of crop failure due to natural calamities, the FBs are not obliged to return the volume of seeds formerly received from DA through the FO provided proofs were diligently submitted within ten (10) working days. The FBs will be assisted in his/her farm rehabilitation under a seed reserve program and/or indemnification claim with the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC).

B. Roles and Responsibilities


I. National Corn Program (NCP)

1. Oversee the proper implementation of the seed assistance project;
2. Conduct regular operational monitoring and evaluation on the status of implementation; and
3. Provide periodic reports to higher management.

II. Department of Agriculture – Regional Field Office (DA-RFO)

1. Produce open pollinated varieties (OPV) sorghum at regional research stations intended for distribution to farmers and reserve for calamity purposes;
2. Procure and distribute NSIC registered sorghum varieties from seed companies and accredited growers in accordance with the Republic Act 9184, Government Procurement Reform Act and compliant to seed importers and/or feed manufacturers' quality requirements. OIC Regional Executive Directors must have authority to perform the functions, duties and responsibilities inherent to the designation including authority to sign and approved contracts procured under R.A.9184 and its IRR and such others as directed through Special Order by the Senior Undersecretary;
3. Responsible in storing and monitoring the viability of roll-over seeds (returned by FBs through FOs) and its fitness for redistribution to other eligible FBs;
4. Conduct quality and quantity tests on newly acquired seeds to be distributed and harvested by FBs to ensure conformity with the existing and prescribed quality standards;
5. Facilitate the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between the DA-RFO and FO for the effective implementation of the project to ensure that quality seeds will be distributed and planted by the FB;
6. Undertake inspection, close monitoring and regular reporting of the project implementation;
7. Coordinate with Provincial/Municipal/City Local Government Unit (P/M/CLGU) in positioning and distribution of seeds to the farmer organizations;
8. Facilitate the availment of FBs in PCIC's crop insurance coverage;
9. Coordinate with P/M/CLGU the FBs who are claiming damages from PCIC, and;
10. Shall provide the NCP monthly status reports and the list of beneficiaries by FO.

III. Farmer Organization (FO)

1. Provide P/M/CLGU and DA-RFO the list of FBs who will be the recipients of the seeds allocated to the FO;
 2. Responsible in the distribution and collection of seeds from FBs;
 3. Ensure the varietal integrity of seeds received at all times. Will not mix one variety with other varieties during storage, planting, harvesting, transport, and when selling;
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4. Provide monthly report and other pertinent documents (e.g. acknowledgement receipts, client satisfaction feedback form) on the status of seed distribution and collection on the cost of seeds to P/M/CLGU and DA-RFO;
5. Allow DA-RFO to conduct safety and quality tests on harvested seeds;
6. Allow DA-RFO and P/M/CLGU to visit the production areas in order to assess the performance of the project;
7. Provide support in the marketing of seeds produced by the FB.

IV. Farmer-Beneficiary (FB)

1. Insure his/her farm with PCIC within ten (10) days after planting;
2. Must maintain varietal integrity of seeds at all times. Will not mix one variety with other varieties during storage, planting, harvesting, transport and when selling;
3. Allow DA-RFO technical staff to visit production areas, conduct inspection and take seed samples for laboratory analysis;
4. Protect and will not alter the results of laboratory analysis;
5. Plant the seeds and follow the recommended production practices, and;
6. Return to concerned FO the volume of seeds equivalent to the planting material provided by DA-RFO.

V. Funding

The DA-RFO's Work and Financial Plan approved by the National Corn Program shall be the source of fund of the project guided by existing accounting and auditing rules and regulations and other statutes.

VI. Supplemental Guidelines

DA-RFOs shall prepare and submit supplemental guidelines addressing flexibility and suitability concerns to the DA Senior Undersecretary for approval. It shall not deviate from the general guidelines. The NCP Central Office shall be given a copy of the approved supplemental guidelines.

VII. Separability Clause

In any clause, sentence, or provision of the Memorandum Circular shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

VIII. Repealing Clause

All other previous orders, issuances, rules and regulations inconsistent to this Memorandum Circular are hereby repealed and revoked.



IX. Effectivity Clause

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect upon signing and shall remain valid until revoked by subsequent written Circulars.

Done this 26th day of June, 2023.

DOMINGO F. PANGANIBAN
Senior Undersecretary



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