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## Cambodia's Draft Seed Regulations Awaiting Final Approval

### Report Categories:

Planting Seeds

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### Report Highlights:

This report provides an overview of Cambodia's existing and proposed seed regulations.

### General Information:

Agricultural sector plays an important role in the Cambodian economy which employs nearly 64.6 percent of the country's labor force and contributes about 31.6 percent to the gross domestic product.

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) is determined to improve farming productivity and diversification, in which, seed is a vital input for gaining higher yield and crop quality. At present, seed production and trade are governed by the following law and regulations:

1. **The Law on Seed Management and Plant Breeder's Right (Seed Law):** ratified by the Senate in April 2008 to regulate production and trade of seeds, and protect breeders' rights.
2. **Sub-decree 69** which is identified as Legal Framework for Agricultural Materials and Products

in Trade: to ensure high quality agricultural material inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, feedstuff... to enhance agricultural productivity.

3. **Sub-decree 15** on phytosanitary inspection: aims to prevent the introduction of quarantine and dangerous pest into the country through plants or parts of plant, plant products, seed and seed materials...
4. **Sub-decree 118** assigned responsibilities for seed management to the General Directorate of Agriculture (GDA) under the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

However, experts confirmed that the seed sector in Cambodia needs a clearer policy <sup>(1)(2)</sup>, including:

- A better translation of the seed law and regulations to implement them;
- A program to ensure continuity of new variety creation and foundation seed production;
- The need for private sector to produce rice seeds at higher quality and affordable prices. *Note: Only the Cambodia Agriculture and Rural Development Institute (CARDI) is authorized to produce foundation seed for rice, which is then multiplied by licensed seed multipliers to produce certified seed.*
- The need for seed quality standards and enforcement mechanisms to control seed quality. *Note: Over 90 percent of rice seed is saved from previous season or traded between farmers leading to low quality seed.*

In the past years, MAFF, with support from USAID and other donors, has worked on draft policies and regulations to supplement the existing insufficient legal framework governing the seed sector, including:

1. **The Cambodian Seed Policy:** provides long-term vision and framework for seed sector development to ensure food security and agricultural productivity. The primary objective of this policy is to ensure that farmers have access to high quality seeds and a range of varieties through the most reliable and economic supply channels. MAFF will establish a Seed Management Committee (SMC) to oversee and monitor the development of the seed sector.
2. **The National Seed Standards:** set the minimum standards required for the certification of seeds for genetic purity and identity of the variety, with a focus on standards of rice, maize, mungbean, soybean, pumpkin seeds. This document will cover the requirement, conditions and procedures of seed production and seed certification.
3. **Prakas on Procedure for Providing Seed Quality Certification:** aims to provide the procedure for granting certification of seed quality for any varieties, including existing and new varieties of crops that are subject to quality control for the purpose of management and marketing of seed production in order to protect agricultural production and increase agricultural productivity.

According to USAID Cambodia, the above drafts are ready to go forward to the final stage of approval. Current and proposed seed regulations do not hinder importation of seeds as long as the imported seeds meet the requirements of phytosanitary and quality standards set by RGC. There are no tariffs on imported agriculture materials such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticide, and agricultural equipment <sup>(2)</sup>. While rice is the highest priority because of its supreme importance in the economy, all crop seeds and other planting materials are within the scope of the existing and draft regulations.

FAO reports that rice paddy, cassava and maize are the top three commodities in terms of production in Cambodia (2012 statistics) <sup>(3)</sup>. The RGC has demonstrated growing support to commercial agricultural

production, especially rice, which has been incorporated into the promulgated rice policy and drafted seed regulations. The Rice Export Policy adopted in 2010, which was an ambitious plan to expand rice production and boost export, highlighted using higher yield seeds as a way to raise productivity.

### Seed Imports

As of August 2014, the government reports that there were 32 active import permits, seven of which were held by CARDI for the import of rice seed for experimental purposes <sup>(4)</sup>. Of the remaining 25 import permits, 14 are held by private sector companies, eight of which have permits for importing maize seed. Maize is the most widely traded seed type, and maize seed is imported primarily from Vietnam and Thailand. Rice seed seems to be widely traded, though largely informally. Currently, Thailand is the largest seed exporter to Cambodia.

<b>Planting Seeds Exported to Cambodia</b> (Source: BICO)								
Thousands United States Dollars								
Reporting Country	Calendar Year					Year To Date		
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	10/2014	10/2015	%Change
Thailand	1433	2397	2170	2909	2949	2384	1255	-47.36
Brazil	7	36	41	22	17	17	18	9.52
Malaysia	0	0	18	11	8	8	n/a	n/a
South Korea	0	0	0	11	4	4	0	-97.3
Australia	8	0	0	5	0	0	0	
China	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	
Cote d Ivoire	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	
India	25	0	0	0	2	2	n/a	n/a
Indonesia	0	4	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
Japan	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	

### U.S. Planting Seeds Exported to Cambodia

(Source: BICO)  
Thousands United State Dollars

Partner	Product	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Jan - Oct 2014	Jan - Oct 2015
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value
Cambodia	Planting Seeds	70	16	0	0	0	0	0
Cambodia	0713391000 - BEAN SD, OTHER	70	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cambodia	1209918055 - PUMPKIN SEED	0	16	0	0	0	0	0
	Grand Total	70	16	0	0	0	0	0

For more information on this matter, please contact the Foreign Agricultural Service Office in Ho Chi

Minh City, Vietnam at: [Atohochiminh@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Atohochiminh@fas.usda.gov).

**Reference:**

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<http://www.fao.org/3/a-at004e.pdf>
- (2) Analysis of Three Commodity Value Chains in Cambodia  
<http://acdivoca.org/sites/default/files/attach/2015/04/LEO-Cambodia-Value-Chain-Assessment.pdf>
- (3) FAO Country Fact Sheet on Food and Agriculture Policy Trends  
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/field/009/i3761e/i3761e.pdf>
- (4) Assessment of the Enabling Environment for Cross-border Trade of Agricultural Inputs in Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia  
[http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00K99V.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00K99V.pdf)