



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

T:  
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk  
[www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

Your ref:  
Our ref:  
Date:

Dear Consultee,

## Consultation on the review of fees for seeds marketing in England and Wales

I am writing to invite participation in the consultation on proposed fee increases for seeds marketing in England and Wales, which the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is carrying out together with the Welsh Government. The deadline for responses is **6 September 2013**.

The consultation will be primarily of interest to companies involved in the marketing and testing of seed and their customers, although comments are welcomed from other interested sectors and the general public.

The following documents may be found on Defra's website: [www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

- Consultation letter
- Consultation document
- Impact Assessment
- List of consultees

We welcome your views, comments and additional evidence, and would be grateful if you could submit this to [SMFC@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SMFC@defra.gsi.gov.uk) or send to the address below no later than **6 September 2013**.

Alison Conder,  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,  
Eastbrook  
Shaftesbury Avenue  
Cambridge,  
CB2 8DR



## Background

EU Directives and resulting English and Welsh regulations prescribe a quality assurance process for marketed seed. This includes specifying which activities can be carried out under licensing by seed company employees, independent individuals, and seed testing laboratories. The main requirements for marketing are:

- The variety must be on a National List or the Common Catalogue.
- Seed must be produced through a generation system and meet minimum quality standards.
- Seed must be packaged, sealed and labelled in accordance with prescribed rules, to preserve its integrity and to give specific information.

## Issue under consideration

The issue under consideration is achieving full cost recovery for seeds marketing services in England and Wales, removing the current under recovery. It is Government policy to achieve where possible full cost recovery for publicly provided services and to transfer the cost from the taxpayer to the users who benefit directly. This gives fairer distribution of public resources and lowers public expenditure. The main purpose of this consultation is to explain the options for fee increases to achieve full cost recovery for this service and to seek further information on their impacts. This is explained in the consultation document and associated Impact Assessment.

## Consultation Criteria

This consultation is in line with the principles set out in the Code of Practice on Consultations, see <http://www.berr.gov.uk/policies/better-regulation/consultation-guidance>. When this consultation ends, Defra will retain a copy of the responses, which may be requested by the public under Freedom of Information legislation. If you do not want your response (including your name, contact details and any other personal information) to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, that will not count as a confidentiality request. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under Freedom of Information Legislation, but, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

We will place a summary of all responses on our website at [www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra). This summary will include a list of names of organisations that respond but not personal names, addresses or other contact details. If you have any queries, comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to the contact details in this letter.

Thank you for your participation.

Yours faithfully

Andy Mitchell  
Head of Varieties and Seeds Policy