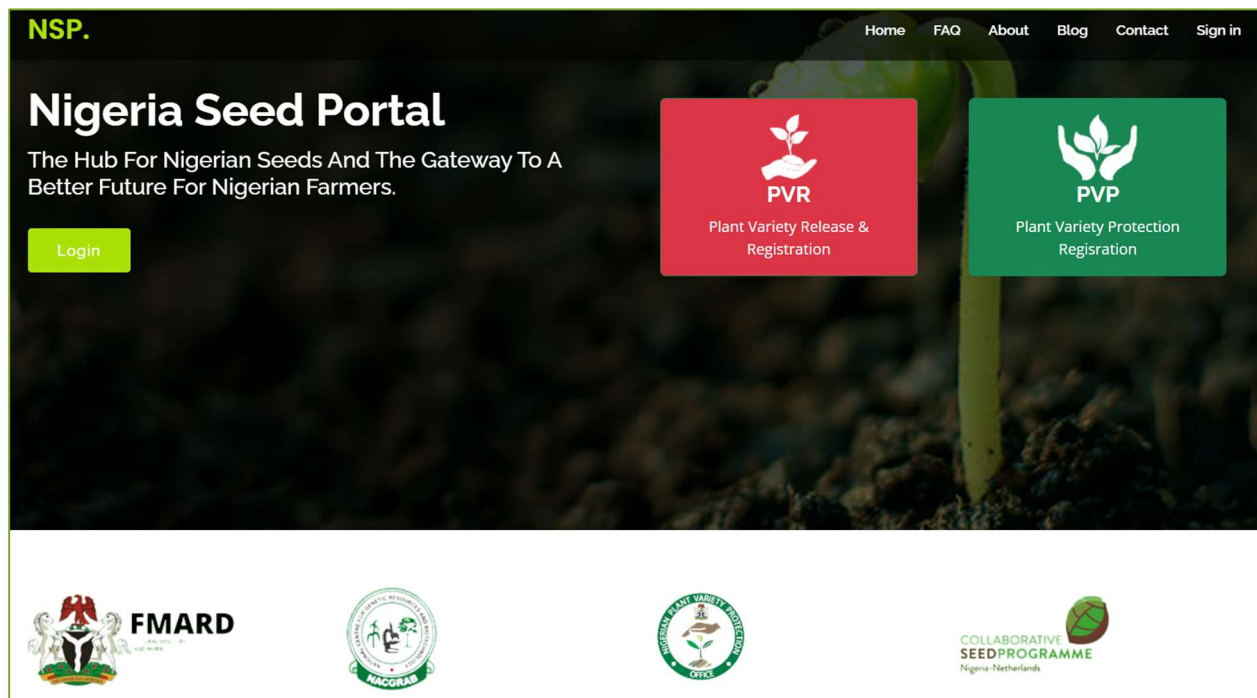


Nigeria Seed Portal

User Manual



Introduction

The Nigeria Seed Portal is a digital platform that facilitates plant variety protection and release of new crop varieties in Nigeria. It consists of two main portals – the Plant Variety Protection Portal and the Plant Variety Release & Registration Portal.

1. Plant Variety Release & Registration Portal

Organization Responsible: **National Centre for Genetic Resources and Biotechnology (NACGRAB)**: This organization handles the release of new crop varieties in Nigeria. It is responsible for receiving variety registration applications, scrutinizing them, and granting certificates.

2. Plant Variety Protection (PVP) Portal

Organization Responsible: **National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC)**: This council operates under the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in Nigeria. It is responsible for the protection of plant varieties. Under this, the Nigeria Plant variety Protection office (NPVPO) explicitly handles the functions and the implementation of the PVP Portal

Collaborative Efforts:

- **Collaborative Seed Programme (CSP Nigeria):** Run by Wageningen Center for Development Innovation (WCDI) and Sahel Consulting, with NASC and NACGRAB as the apex decision-making body. It addresses the implementation of an online digital portal for plant variety protection and variety release.

This user manual provides instructions on how to use the key features of the Nigeria Seed Portal as a breeder, applicant, or general user.

1. The Nigeria Seed Portal consists of a public front-end and a restricted back-end system.
2. The front-end can be accessed by all users without login to get information, search varieties etc.
3. The back-end system is for authorized users only to process applications, make approvals etc.

This manual provides instructions for:

- Breeders
- Administrators
- Registrars (of both PVR and PVP portals)
- General users

For General Users

General users can access information, read news and search varietal information, and provide feedback and objections to varieties due for protection (vide Part V Sections 24-26, Nigeria Plant Variety Protection Act of 2021).

Accessing Information

- Go to the Nigeria Seed Portal website.
- Click on Portals to view procedures and regulations.
- Access training materials
- Read news blogs
- Go to your relevant websites from the Useful links page

Searching Varieties

- Use search bars on the front-end to find varieties.
- Filter and view variety details and documents.

Providing Feedback

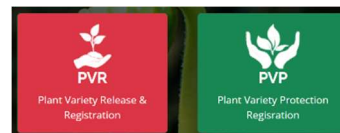
- Click on Feedback link and fill form to submit comments/queries.

For Breeders

Breeders can use the Portals to apply for variety protection or release.

Accessing the Portals

- Choose the right portal (**PVR** or **PVP**)
- Go to the Nigeria Seed Portal website.
- Click on **Plant Variety Protection Portal** or **Plant Variety Release Portal**.
- Alternatively, bookmark the direct portal URLs for easy access.
- You need to register yourself first to be able to use the portal. Click the "Register" button and fill out the details and click "Submit". The request will be reviewed by NASC or NACGRAB and you will receive a confirmation email that you have been authorized.



Applying for Plant Variety Release

- Click on "New Application" and fill the online application form.
- Upload trial reports and other documents.
- Make online payment of fees.
- Track status of your application online.
- Respond to any queries on time from the "notifications" tab.
- Login to account to download release certificate.



Applying for Plant Variety Protection

- Click on "Apply for PVP" button and fill the online application form.
- Upload relevant documents such as DUS test reports.
- Make online payment of fees.
- Track status of your application online.
- Respond within specified time to any objections raised.
- Login to your account to view updates and download certificate.



Searching Protected/Released Varieties

- Use the front-end search option to find varieties.
- View details and access documents.

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are 50 FAQs with answers covering various aspects of the Nigeria Seed Portal:

1. What is the Nigeria Seed Portal?

The Nigeria Seed Portal is an online platform developed to digitize and streamline the variety release and plant variety protection application processes.

2. Who has developed this portal?

The portal is developed jointly by the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC), National Center for Genetic Resources and Biotechnology (NACGRAB) and Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation under the Collaborative Seed Programme for Nigeria.

3. How do I access the portal as a new user?

Go to the portal website and click on 'Sign Up' to create your user account by filling in your details. Registered users can then login to access the secure sections.

4. Is there a mobile app for the portal?

Currently there is no mobile app. The portal is web-based and mobile-responsive, so it can be accessed on smartphones and tablets via the browser.

5. What are the benefits of using the portal?

Key benefits include centralized online system, easier application submission, tracking applications, quicker review process, digitized records and data exchange across systems.

6. What should I do if I forget my login password?

Use the 'Forgot Password' option on the login page to reset your password via a reset link sent to your registered email.

7. How do I submit an application on the portal as a breeder?

Login to your account, go to 'Submit Application' page, fill in details and upload required documents. Applications can be submitted for both variety release and PVP.

8. What is the application fee for submitting through the portal?

The application fees remain the same as the manual process. You can pay online through the portal via cards/bank transfer.

9. Can I save and complete a partially filled application later?

Yes, you can save your application at any stage and login later to complete and submit it.

10. What are the major application steps on the breeder side?

Major steps are – prepare application by entering trial data, submit full application, track status, get notifications, provide feedback if needed.

11. How do I know if my application was successfully submitted?

You will get a notification upon successful submission. You can also check status to ensure it reflects as 'Submitted'.

12. How long does it take to process the submitted applications?

Applications are scrutinized within 30 days. Overall process may take 2-3 months. The portal aims to reduce application processing timeline.

13. What information do I get as a breeder once my application is approved?

You will receive registration number for variety release and grant of protection certificate for PVP approval via notifications.

14. How can I communicate with the officials if I have any doubts?

You can use the Feedback/Complaints section on your portal account to send your queries which will be responded.

15. What details are required for filling the DUS descriptors on the portal?

You need to provide detailed phenotypic data for your variety as per the provided DUS guidelines and descriptor list.

16. Do I need to conduct fresh DUS tests if I have already done it for variety release?

Earlier DUS data can be reused if it meets the criteria. Some additional tests may be required based on regulator's discretion.

17. Can online training be provided on using the portal functionalities?

Yes, training manuals and videos will be made available on the portal for assisting new users and applicants.

18. What is the typical workflow for an admin user on the portal?

Key steps include – review applications, compare varieties, accept/reject applications, publish notifications, grant certificates.

19. How does the system perform variety comparison with the existing database?

The system automatically matches the descriptor values entered for new variety with those in the database to generate similarity matches.

20. Is the system integrated across variety release and PVP workflows?

Yes, the portals are integrated for data exchange. Variety release number is required for PVP to enable linking information.

21. What protocols are in place for data security on the portal?

Encrypted connections, firewalls, role-based access control and other security measures are implemented for data protection.

22. What is the procedure for another breeder to submit objections on a PVP application?

Objections can be submitted digitally within 30 days of gazette notification. The admin will review objections and communicate decision.

23. How long is the protection provided for new varieties registered through the system?

For PVP applications, protection is provided for 20 years for annual crops and 25 years for perennial species after approval.

24. Will renewals for variety protection also be handled by the portal?

Currently, the portal covers only new PVP applications. Renewals may be added in future versions.

25. Is any additional software needed to use the portal?

No, you only need an internet browser. Portal works seamlessly on Firefox, Chrome, Safari, Internet Explorer.

26. What should I do if I face technical issues on the portal?

Report problems through the feedback section. You can also email the developer team at [email address] or call [helpline].

27. Can I view reports on the variety release and protection trends through the system?

Yes, aggregated variety release and protection trends can be viewed by both admin and public users via reports on the portal.

28. How frequently are new enhancements made to the portal?

Upgrades are made periodically based on user feedback. Users are notified of new features/version upgrades.

29. Is the source code for the portal available for custom enhancements?

No, currently the source code is not open for public access. You can send feature requests to the development team.

30. What is the average uptime for the portal over a month?

The portal uptime is over 99% per month through robust servers and infrastructure. Downtimes if any are notified.

31. Does the portal provide a comparison of my new variety with all existing ones globally?

The system provides comparison against national database initially. Links with international databases can be enabled in the future.

32. What is the protocol for grievance redressal if I face challenges with my application?

You can register your grievance via the feedback section. The administrator is required to provide resolution as per defined SLAs.

33. How do I deregister a variety if I choose not to continue protection?

Submit a written request for de-registration to the administrator providing the variety details. The status will be updated.

34. Is there an expiry period for applied varieties if the registration process is not completed?

Currently there is no expiry for submitted applications. But regulators can stipulate a timeframe for completing the process.

35. Can I transfer/sell my variety protection rights to someone else?

Yes, the rights can be legally transferred to another entity by initiating a transfer request through the administrator.

36. Can I get customized reports on my submitted applications from the portal?

You can download your application history and status reports. Custom reports can be enabled based on feedback.

37. Does the system provide analytics on field performance of released varieties?

No, currently the system focuses on application processing. Performance tracking can be considered in future.

38. What protocols are followed for testing submitted varieties?

Testing follows standardized protocols issued by NACGRAB and NASC for DUS and VCU testing requirements.

39. How is transparency and information access ensured through the system?

Protection details and release data is made public for all registered varieties. Gazette notifications are published.

40. Does the portal provide any advisory or information services to breeders?

Relevant guides and best practices are provided on the portal for reference. Additional services can be introduced.

41. What is the scope for integrating blockchain technology with the portal in future?

Blockchain can enable traceability and enhance trust. It will be valued based on regulatory policies.

42. What performance metrics are tracked for the portal systems?

Key metrics like user traffic, application volumes, processing times, uptime etc. are monitored regularly for enhancements.

43. What is the roadmap for next-generation upgrades to the platform?

Prioritized upgrades planned include – mobile app, analytics, international data connections, blockchain modules etc.

44. Does the portal ensure protection against any biopiracy threats?

By maintaining digital records and public accessibility of varieties, the portal enhances transparency and traceability to address biopiracy concerns.

45. How can the portal be leveraged to enhance access to high quality seeds across Nigeria?

Faster registration and protection will motivate more breeders to release climate-resilient and biofortified varieties benefitting farmers.

46. Does the portal provide access to genomic or phenotypic data associated with released varieties?

No, currently It focuses on application processing. Links to genomic databases can be enabled in the future based on regulatory policies.

47. What global best practices were considered for designing the portal functionality?

Global systems like EU CPVO, India's PPV&FRA were studied to incorporate international best practices into the Nigeria Seed Portal.

48. How does the portal enhance productivity of crop breeding programmes?

Automation of application processing reduces breeders' administrative workload allowing greater focus on core research activities.

49. What security measures are undertaken during field trials of applied varieties?

Breeders are required to follow defined protocols for conducting secured field trials and data recording as per regulator's guidelines.

50. How can users contribute to the portal design and development?

We welcome ideas and suggestions from all users through the feedback section. Users can help shape the portal evolution.