

# Ethiopia



**Region**  
Eastern and Southern Africa

**UPOV membership status**  
No

**Participation in OECD Seed Schemes**  
No

**ISTA accredited member laboratories**  
No

**GM crop approval for cultivation (domestic or non-domestic use)**  
Cotton

**Law on Plant Variety Protection**  
Seed Proclamation No. 782/2013 (2013);  
Plant Breeders' Right Proclamation  
481/2006 (2006)

## The seed sector in Ethiopia

Smallholder farmers dominate the agricultural sector in Ethiopia, with 90% of farms smaller than two hectares. Farm-saved seeds is the prevailing system of seeds used for 85% of these smallholder farmers. In general, most seeds formally produced and distributed in Ethiopia come from the public sector. Agricultural production follows traditional farming systems, with low use of inputs and rain-fed farming. Since the Growth Transformation Program (parts one and two) was implemented in 2011, agricultural productivity has increased 8% for seven consecutive years. In 1992, the Ethiopian government created a National Seed Policy to create an supportive enabling environment that would encourage seed production and marketing from the private sector. The policy further allows private foreign seed companies to undertake crop research activities on non-restricted crops.

Following the National Seed Policy, several additional developments enhanced Ethiopia's enabling environment: the 2013 Ethiopian Seed Proclamation No. 782; 2015 Ethiopian Seed Regulation No. 375; 2000 Plant Breeders' Right Proclamation 481 (under amendment); 2001 National Variety Release Guideline; and seed standards for more than 74 specific crops. Currently, seed certification is compulsory in Ethiopia, and the Ethiopia Seed Association, established in 2006, carries out seed quality inspections and certification.

The government is working to harmonize Ethiopia's seed laws with COMESA regulations. As such, the Ethiopia Seed and Other Agricultural Inputs Authority, a semi-autonomous agency, was established to handle seed issues in the country. To become operational, it needs approval from the Minister of Agriculture.

## Observations

There are 17 index companies with a presence in Ethiopia, highlighting the country as one of the most populated in the region and its status as a seed hub. The Ethiopian Agricultural Business Corporation (EABC) is a newly established public corporation that was formed through the merger of five giant state-owned enterprises, one of which is the Ethiopian Seed Supply Sector (formally known as the Ethiopian Seed Enterprise). The company is the only one among seven with a full seed value chain that encompasses the entire range of activities. According to reports, it has four seed multiplication farms and six distribution operation areas and produces seeds for both large-scale and smallholder farmers. It also carries out extension services, maize maintenance breeding and applied research as supplementary activities. Syngenta is the only other company breeding in Ethiopia.

Corteva Agriscience is another significant player. It has a 30% market share in maize and is the only other company alongside EABC that processes seed in Ethiopia. It is one of only three companies (EABC and Seed Co being the others) to engage smallholder farmers in seed production, and one of four (along with Bayer, EABC and Pop Vriend Seeds, which is based in the Netherlands but has a strong regional presence) that provides extension services. Corteva Agriscience's hybrid maize adoption program (AMSAP), in collaboration with USAID, is a leading capacity building program across the entire region.

A number of companies with vegetable-only portfolios (Bejo, Enza Zaden, Known-You Seed and Rijk Zwaan) only report on sales activities in Ethiopia.

## Company activities identified in Ethiopia

Company Companies selected for the Access to Seeds Index	Crops in Portfolio		Company activities in country					
	Field crops	Vegetables	Breeding location	Testing location	Seed production	Processing location	Sales	Extension services
Advanta	●	●		●			●	
Bayer	●	●		●			●	●
Bejo		●					●	
Corteva Agriscience	●				●*	●	●	●
East African Seed	●	●					●	
East-West Seed		●		●			●	
Ethiopian Agricultural Business Corporation**	●	●	●	●	●*	●	●	●
Enza Zaden		●					●	
GAWAL	●						●	
Known-You Seed		●					●	
Limagrain	●	●			●		●	
Pop Vriend Seeds		●		●	●		●	●
Rijk Zwaan		●					●	
Sakata		●					●	
Seed Co	●	●		●	●*		●	
Syngenta	●	●	●				●	

Other index companies are also active in the country. However, country-specific information for these companies is not available or was provided under a non-disclosure agreement.

\* Company involves smallholder farmers in seed production activities  
\*\* Company headquartered in Ethiopia

## Other companies identified in the regional landscaping study and their activities

Company Companies selected for the Access to Seeds Index	Crops in Portfolio		Company activities in country		
	Field crops	Vegetables	Breeding location	Testing location	Sales
Oromia Seed Enterprise	●				●
South Seed Enterprise	●	●			●
Nono Agricultural Development PLC	●				●

