



Limagrain

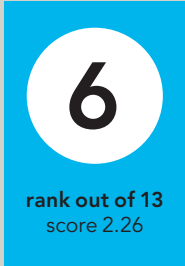
Corporate data

Headquarters: Saint-Beauzire, France
Ownership type: Cooperative/listed
Group revenue (2017): EUR 1,852,100,000
Seed revenue (2017): EUR 1,362,000,000

www.limagrain.com

Access to Seeds Index

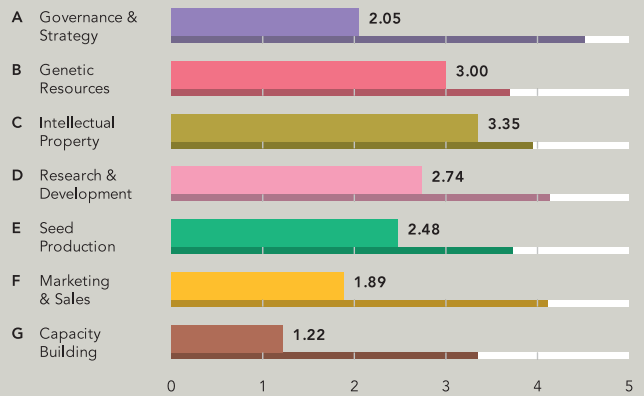
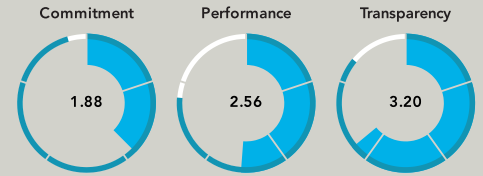
Limagrain is an international cooperative group specialized in seed and cereal products. The history of the company dates back to 1965, when French seed growers, who had been producing seed since 1942, established a research facility to develop maize varieties. In 1975, Limagrain purchased Vilmorin, a vegetable seed company. In the decades that followed, Limagrain gradually became one of the largest players in the seed industry through Vilmorin & Cie, a holding listed on the Paris stock exchange, grouping all field crops and vegetable seed activities. In index regions, the company operates through different business units (Hazera, HM Clause, Vilmorin-Mikado, Limagrain Africa, Limagrain Asia Pacific, Limagrain South America). It also has a 30.2% share in Seed Co, active throughout Africa. Limagrain is now present in 56 countries and employs over 10,000 people worldwide.



2019 Index - Global Seed Companies

Limagrain ranks sixth out of 13 index companies. The company has made significant progress across all measurement areas compared to the 2016 Index. It scores very well in Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, thanks to a comprehensive approach to and ongoing efforts that favor smallholder farmers in

these measurement areas. In Research & Development, it ranks in the top three, thanks in part to a high number of local crops in its breeding program. Although the company reports providing extension services, a lack of transparency on the nature of these activities means it performs relatively poorly in Capacity Building. The company has a wide distribution network in index regions but a relatively weak commitment to reaching smallholder farmers, resulting in an average performance in Marketing & Sales.



Leading practices

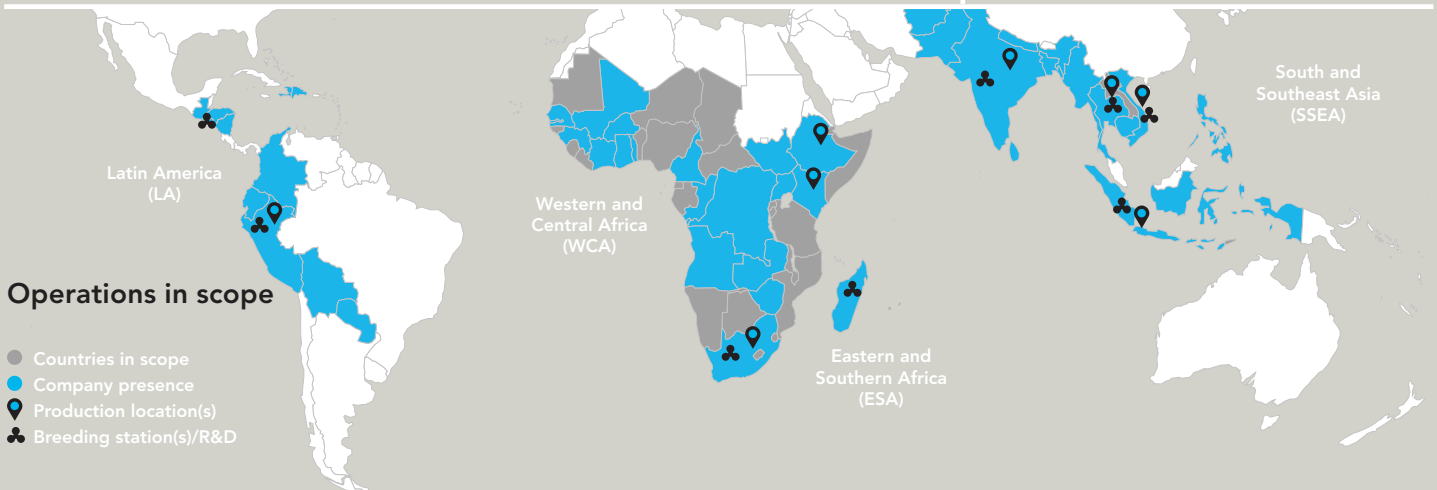
■ Limagrain shows leadership in its efforts to secure buy-in from the seed industry for a workable 'subscription-only model' for access and benefit-sharing (ABS). Instead of making one-off payments for each use of a genetic resource, companies would contribute a small percentage of their annual seed sales and licensing turnover for so-called 'Annex 1' crops as listed under the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), ensuring an ongoing and consistent contribution to ABS.

■ The company has breeding programs for local crops in three index regions. It develops an extensive range of local crops in South and Southeast Asia, Latin America and Eastern and Southern Africa, and has breeding programs that address traits important for smallholder farmers such as shelf life and abiotic stress resistance. These local crops include tinda, choisam, komatsuma, mizuna, mustard, tomatillo and yardlong bean.

Areas for improvement

■ Limagrain reports that while smallholder farmers are an important client group in many countries, it aims to serve all types of agriculture. The company is encouraged to develop and disclose a strategy – with measurable targets – for making seeds accessible to smallholder farmers in the countries where it is active.

■ Through its subsidiary Hazera, Limagrain reports that it offers extension services in several countries in Africa such as Sierra Leone, Angola and Cote d'Ivoire. However, the nature and extent of these activities are unclear. The company is encouraged to disclose additional information on these extension services.



Index crops in portfolio

	Sales				Seed type		
	LA	WCA	ESA	SSEA	Hybrid	OPV	GM
Field crops							
Chickpea							
Maize			●	●	●		●
Millets				●	●		
Rice, paddy				●	●		
Soybean			●			●	●
Sunflower			●	●	●		
Wheat							
Vegetables							
Cabbage	●	●	●	●	●		●
Carrot	●	●	●	●	●		●
Cauliflower	●	●	●	●	●		
Cucumber	●	●	●	●	●		●
Eggplant	●	●	●	●	●		●
Gourd				●	●		
Green bean	●		●	●			●
Green pea	●		●	●			●
Lettuce	●	●	●	●			●
Melon	●	●	●	●	●		
Okra		●	●	●	●		●
Onion	●	●	●	●	●		●
Pepper (hot)	●	●	●	●	●		●
Pepper (sweet)	●	●	●	●	●		●
Pumpkin	●		●	●	●		●
Squash	●	●	●	●	●		●
Tomato	●	●	●	●	●		●
Watermelon	●	●	●	●	●		●

Local crops in portfolio

Choisam	Komatsuma	Mizuna	Mustard
Tinda	Yardlong bean	Tomatillo	

Notable findings

■ Limagrain is the only company in the 2019 Index with a cooperative structure. Its shareholders comprise around 2,000 farmers. The chairman is an elected farmer and co-manages the group with the CEO, an employee appointed by the board of directors.

■ The company reaches around 1.6 million smallholder farmers, who make up 81% of its total clientele. At a regional level, the percentage is highest in South and Southeast Asia, particularly in field crops, where around 97% of the company's clients are smallholder farmers. In contrast, in Eastern and Southern Africa, 70% of its vegetable seed clients are smallholders but most of its field crop customers are large-scale farmers.

■ The company reports that it sees the creation of local subsidiaries and the subsidiaries' subsequent membership of associations as crucial in determining and influencing national policy in index countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Guatemala, Peru, Indonesia and India. The company also reports that through this strategy, it incorporates local values and cultures into the organization.

■ The company contributes financially to the Fair Planet initiative in Ethiopia, which engages with smallholder farmers to improve their access to and use of high-quality vegetable seed while respecting their traditional production methods.

■ The company reports that all of its commercial varieties are available for further research and development via the breeders' exemption of the 1991 UPOV Convention, a cornerstone of the Plant Breeders' Rights system and a tool for benefit-sharing and open innovation. In addition, in 2016, the company made voluntary contributions to the Benefit-sharing Fund of the ITPGRFA through the European Seed Association.

■ Limagrain is one of four companies to focus strategically on open-pollinated varieties (OPVs) in addition to hybrids. It states that farmers can use the seed from their own harvest for the next sowing season but that they have to compensate seed companies when they benefit from the use of such genetics. However, the company also states that the smallest farmers are exempt.

■ The company states that it is company policy to address local customers' needs and feedback through tight and 'closed loop' relations between breeders, local product development teams and local sales teams.

■ The company monitors its policy on labor standards all over the world. Regarding child labor and minimum wages, its subsidiary HM Clause has two staff members in India dedicated to carrying out internal audits of company farm networks and third parties involved in its seed supply chain.

■ The company is present in 43 out of 65 index countries and has distribution channels in 39 countries. It reports that it also reaches smallholder farmers in remote areas in these countries.

■ Limagrain is the only index company that reports sales activities in Guinea.

■ Through its subsidiary Hazera, Limagrain is the only index company that reports offering capacity building activities in Sierra Leone. Hazera held three training sessions in different locations throughout 2017, demonstrating the added value of its hybrid seed alongside training in nursery preparation and best agronomic practices for the climatic situations in each location.