

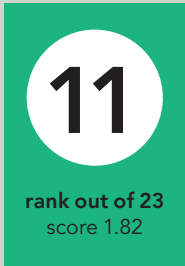


Premier Seed

Access to Seeds Index

Corporate data
Headquarters: Zaria, Nigeria
Ownership type: Private
Group revenue (2017): USD 4,115,226
www.premierseed.org

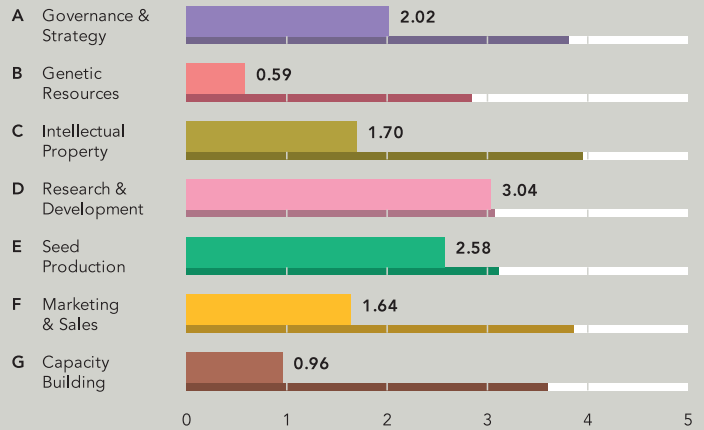
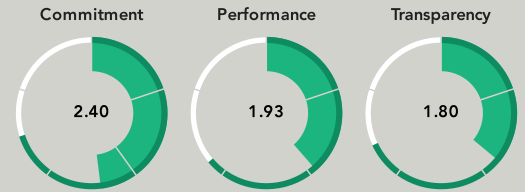
Premier Seed Nigeria Ltd (Premier Seed) was founded in 1984, initially as Agricultural Seed Ltd (AgSeed) owned by the Multinational Leventis Group of Companies. AgSeed was later acquired by Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed International and renamed Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed Nigeria Ltd. In 1994, it became a limited liability company and officially became Premier Seed Nigeria Ltd, now one of the largest seed businesses in Nigeria. It is a subsidiary of the conglomerate Obasanjo Holdings Ltd. It is involved in breeding and seed production activities. Maize, sorghum and rice are its main crops.



Western and Central Africa

Premier Seed ranks 11th in the 2019 Index for Western and Central Africa. The company demonstrates strengths in Research & Development, marketing sorghum and maize varieties from its own breeding program throughout Nigeria, and Governance & Strategy, setting targets for improving access to

seeds for smallholder farmers. The company involves smallholder farmers in its seed production activities and has demonstration and promotion strategies in place for smallholder farmers, earning it points in Marketing & Sales. With limited activities reported around the conservation and use of Genetic Resources, this is a clear area for improvement for the company. It can further improve its Transparency score by clarifying the scope of its Capacity Building activities, the quality assurance of its products and its position on Intellectual Property.

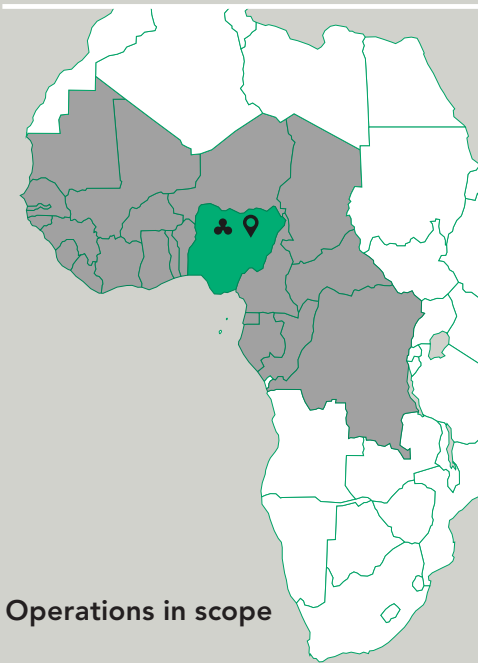


Leading practices

- Premier Seed has an extensive mission statement outlining its commitment to developing new varieties and testing varieties appropriate to the local conditions and preferences of smallholder farmers. The company develops varieties that are suitable for either machine or hand planting and ecologically adapted to grow in various parts of Nigeria. The company also states that it recognizes the importance of hybrids for large and small-scale farmers alike.
- Premier Seed's seed production activities are noteworthy, particularly its production scheme for rice, known as the Rice Special Program. The program organizes area meetings three times each year to engage and train smallholder growers employed by the company in Nigeria.

Areas for improvement

- While it assigns responsibility for its policies and targets related to access to seeds for smallholder farmers at the CEO/board level, Premier Seed can improve its Transparency and Commitment scores in Governance & Strategy by sharing policy statements on its codes of business conduct and formulating its commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Regarding genetic resources, the company could improve alignment with international treaties, and increase integration and collaboration with other partners. This would contribute to the conservation and use of genetic resources of crops, both the ones in its own portfolio and in general.
- The company could improve its intellectual property strategy, with specific attention paid to the affordability of its products through tailored pricing strategies for smallholder farmers.
- The company has seed production activities in Nigeria and engages smallholder farmers through outgrower schemes. It is encouraged to clarify how it ensures fair social and labor standards for these farmers and how it monitors compliance with these standards to ensure that minimum conditions regarding child labor, forced labor, health and safety, living conditions and minimum wages are met.
- The company could improve public disclosure of its capacity building activities, including its programs targeting women and next-generation farmers.



Operations in scope

- Countries in scope
- Company presence
- 📍 Production locations
- ☘ Breeding station/R&D

Notable findings

- Premier Seed is a member of seed associations and is engaged in seed policy reforms and advocacy as a member of the Seed Entrepreneur Association of Nigeria and the Africa Seed Trade Association.
- The company refrains from using contractual clauses or other provisions to prohibit the use of commercial genetic material for further breeding as well as mechanisms that prevent the practice of farm-saved seed by smallholder farmers.
- The company develops its own proprietary lines of maize and sorghum, with a focus on breeding for drought tolerance, biotic stress tolerance, shelf life and local tastes and cultural preferences in Nigeria. This has resulted in the release of three hybrid maize varieties, of which two were registered as quality protein maize (QPM), which in contrast to regular maize are high in lysine and tryptophan, amino acids that are essential for humans and monogastric animals. The company has also developed a quality protein open-pollinated maize variety.
- The company states that it has various collaborative experimental and on-farm trials, which aim to give farmers a direct opportunity to identify preferred varieties. Collaborative partners include national agricultural development programs, Sasakawa Africa Association, the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the West Africa Rice Development Association and the Nigerian Institute for Agricultural Research. Collaborations also cover genetic improvement of crops, multiplication of foundation seed and the company being supplied with breeder seed and parental lines of improved hybrid varieties developed by research institutes.
- The company's portfolio consists of field crops and vegetables, with many varieties younger than two years old that are sourced from public research institutes. The company markets seeds of maize and sorghum varieties treated with fungicides and insecticides in addition to other seed protection coatings.
- The company states that it has over 1,000 registered distributors and a minimum of three distributors in each of the 774 local government areas in Nigeria. It also states that it is collaborating with the National Agricultural Seed Council to include barcodes on the seed packages it distributes.
- The company reports that it actively involves youth in its seed production activities in Nigeria, as a way to engage this group in agriculture.

Portfolio information

Index crops in portfolio	Seed type			Source		
	Hybrid	OPV	GM	Own breeding program	Public research institute	Licensed from other company
Field crops						
Cowpea		●			●	
Groundnut		●			●	
Maize	●	●		●	●	
Rice, paddy						
Sorghum	●	●		●	●	
Soybean		●			●	
Vegetables						
Cabbage		●			●	
Carrot		●				
Cucumber		●				
Lettuce		●				
Melon		●				
Okra		●				
Onion		●				
Pepper (hot)						
Pepper (sweet)		●				
Tomato		●				
Watermelon		●				

Local crops in portfolio

Jew's mallow