

CERTIFICATION OF SEEDS TO BE MADE MANDATORY TO STEP UP FARM OUTPUT

Prelims: Governance- Policies, Economics- Agriculture

Mains: GS-II- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

- ▶▶ **Context:** The Centre is planning to mandate uniform certification by pushing through a replacement to the Seeds Act, 1966.

Background:

- ▶▶ More than half of all seeds sold in India are not certified by any proper testing agency, and are often of poor quality.
- ▶▶ The existing legislation that was enacted over half a century ago and therefore there is a need for revival.

Proposed Changes in The New Bill:

- ▶▶ The 1966 Act starts with these words: “An Act to provide for regulating the quality of certain seeds for sale...” The new Bill removes the word “certain”, and aims to regulate the quality of all seeds sold in the country, as well as exported and imported seeds.
- ▶▶ The new law will also raise the stakes by increasing penalties for non-compliance. Currently, the fine ranges from ₹500 to ₹5,000.

Significance:

- ▶▶ New changes could increase overall agricultural productivity by up to 25%.
- ▶▶ It will also bring uniformity to the process of quality regulation.