

# Technical Working Party for Fruit Crops

TWF/56/2

## Fifty-Sixth Session

Bursa, Türkiye, June 23 to 26, 2025

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## REPORTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION FROM MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS

*Document prepared by the Office of the Union*

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1. The Technical Committee (TC), at its forty-seventh session, held in Geneva from April 4 to 6, 2011, agreed to request the Office of the Union to invite experts to submit written reports to the Office of the Union in advance of the Technical Working Party (TWP) sessions in order that a document containing those reports could be prepared by the Office of the Union. The TC noted that TWP experts would be invited to make a brief oral summary of their written report at the session and would also be encouraged to make reports under the agenda item “Experiences with new types and species”, as appropriate. The TC also noted that TWP experts would have an opportunity to raise questions concerning matters of interest (see document TC/47/26 “Report on the Conclusions”, paragraphs 9 and 10).

2. Written reports were invited by the Office of the Union in Circular E-25/031 of May 6, 2025. The following reports were received by June 6, 2025 (in alphabetical order):

- ✓ Members of the Union: Annexes I to V: Germany, Japan, Morocco, Netherlands (Kingdom of the) and New Zealand

[Annexes follow]

ANNEX I

GERMANY

In 2025, the Bundessortenamt started DUS examinations for 49 new varieties of fruit species. In total, 172 candidate varieties of 6 fruit species are currently under examination at the testing station Wurzen of the Bundessortenamt; the most important of which are raspberry (57 candidate varieties under examination in 2025), blackberry (42), apple (32), and strawberry (29). The majority of examinations of fruit varieties are carried out on behalf of other PBR authorities, mainly for the Community Plant Variety Office of the European Union (CPVO).

[Annex II follows]

## ANNEX II

## JAPAN

## 1. Number of applications in 2024

Year	Total number	(2024/2023)	Fruits	(2024/2023)
1978 to 2024	37805	-	2315	-
2023	591		44	
2024	599	(101%)	48	(109%)

Top 3 of application for Fruits in 2024

Strawberry 22, Grapevine 6, Chestnut 3, Japanese Pear 3, Total: 48

## 2. Number of granted in 2024

Year	Total number	(2024/2023)	Fruits	(2024/2023)
1978 to 2024	30538	-	1858	-
2023	497		24	
2024	703	(141%)	52	(217%)

## 3. National test guidelines harmonized with UPOV TGs in 2024

Common name of plants (4)
Beetroot, Bottle Gourd, Pea, Zinnia

## 4. National test guidelines developed for new type of species in 2024

Genera or Species (5)
<i>Anemone coronaria</i> L., <i>Arthropodium candidum</i> Raoul, <i>Cleyera japonica</i> Thunb., <i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L., <i>Lachenalia</i> Jacq. f. ex Murr.

Web-site: [https://www.maff.go.jp/j/shokusan/hinshu/info/sinsa\\_kijun\\_jp.html](https://www.maff.go.jp/j/shokusan/hinshu/info/sinsa_kijun_jp.html)

## 5. Other

✓ Japan continuously provides other UPOV members with examination reports under the Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC). Japan had provided 51 DUS examination reports in total to other countries in 2024. MAFF and Dirección Técnica de Semillas, Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario (ICA) had signed MOC for cooperation in DUS examination in 2024. We have also signed the MOC with the Plant Variety Rights Office for the United Kingdom this February.

✓ Since 2016, based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Center for Seeds and Seedlings, NARO (NCSS) and Naktuinbouw have established Calibration Manuals for DUS technical harmonization. "Calibration manual for Celosia" was finalized in 2025, and it will be published through both of websites. With addition of this, a total of 12 Calibration Manuals will be available for third country.

✓ In addition, a three-year extension of the MOU between Naktuinbouw and NCSS, which expired in March 2024, was concluded up to March 2027 in order to contribute international harmonization in cooperation with Naktuinbouw. In extending the MOU, it was newly agreed to provide technical cooperation on DNA analysis for disease resistance in DUS test, DNA variety identification techniques for plant variety protection.

## MOROCCO

Since the entry into force of Law 9/94 on the protection of plant varieties in Morocco on October 28, 2002, the date of publication of its implementing texts in the Official Bulletin, the situation regarding the protection of plant varieties is as follows:"

Status of Plant Variety Protection in Morocco

Species	Applications	Protected Varieties	Varieties Under Examination	Additional Notes
Fruit Trees	350	263	64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection expired for 8 varieties</li> <li>• Protection abandoned for 7 varieties</li> <li>• 4 applications withdrawn</li> <li>• 4 applications rejected</li> </ul>
Field Crops	121	68	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection expired for 38 varieties</li> <li>• Protection abandoned for 4 varieties</li> <li>• Protection terminated for 4 varieties</li> </ul>
Potato	78	35	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection expired for 29 varieties</li> <li>• Protection abandoned for 2 varieties</li> <li>• 8 applications rejected (incomplete files)</li> </ul>
Grapevine	98	61	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 applications withdrawn</li> <li>• 12 applications rejected (incomplete files)</li> </ul>
Vegetables	287	162	85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 applications withdrawn</li> <li>• Protection abandoned for 13 varieties</li> <li>• 1 application rejected (heterogeneous variety after DUS test)</li> </ul>
Strawberry	169	118	33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection abandoned for 10 varieties</li> <li>• 6 applications withdrawn</li> <li>• Protection expired for 2 varieties</li> </ul>
Blueberry	145	75	69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 application withdrawn</li> </ul>
Raspberry	111	53	44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection abandoned for 5 varieties</li> <li>• 9 applications withdrawn</li> </ul>
Mulberry	28	8	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 applications withdrawn</li> </ul>
Prickly Pear	9	-	9	-
Rose	3	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 application withdrawn</li> <li>• Protection abandoned for 2 varieties</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.399</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>206 cases with additional remarks</b>

[Annex IV follows]

## NETHERLANDS (KINGDOM OF THE)

Naktuinbouw Variety Testing developments

- The Unit Variety Testing includes a DUS team of 40 employees, one unit manager, and 4 employees specialized in disease resistance. Also a support team, a trial management team with 2 cultivation managers and a project team. In total there are 70 employees and supplemented with temporary (circa 18) staff in summer. The unit works together with the teams of the unit Identity and Quality (laboratories) especially with Molecular Marker team and team Bioinformatics.
- In 2024 facilities for resistance testing have been expanded and a new drying and storage room has been built for onions.
- The Variety Testing Unit yearly offers a number of courses on Plant Breeders' Rights and/or Listing. In 2025 many courses could be organised again in person.
- Applicants more and more use the online systems of UPOV and CPVO for filing their applications for listing and/or Plant Breeders' Rights. Nowadays it is possible to apply in the Netherlands (Kingdom of) for Plant Breeders' Rights as well as for Listing for all species using UPOV PRISMA.

Number of applications received

In 2024, 2514 applications were received for testing for the first year for National listing, and for National or European Plant Breeders' Rights. Applications of the same variety for Listing as well as PBR, in vegetables and in agricultural crops are split in this table.

2024	NL listing	NL PBR	EU PBR	TOTAL
Agriculture	247	54	13	320
Vegetable	757	622	72	1487
Ornamental (incl. trees)		124	625	794
TOTAL	1004	800	710	2514

DUS projects

## Digitisation

- Naktuinbouw continues to work on the expansion of the Naktuinbouw Academy: a digital training platform.
- Databases: Naktuinbouw develops SNP-databases in French bean, Hemp, Tomato and Lettuce. Some databases are developed nationally, others in international projects (e.g. IMODDUS). The projects are funded by amongst others the Dutch board for plant varieties and CPVO.

## Projects

- Harmorescoll: in this project the reference material for obligatory disease resistance tests is harmonized. We expect that this work will be continues in 2025 and further.
- The EU project INVITE on the improvement on DUS and VCU. Naktuinbouw is one of the partners in this program. 2024 was the last year of this project. Naktuinbouw will continue with follow up project to get usable tools for Analysis with drones in Ryegrass, to use an app for some characteristics in tomato and to continue the work on common databases.
- Naktuinbouw continues to support IP Key projects.
- CPVO funds a project to develop a disease resistance test for ToBRFV in tomato and for *Aphis gossypii* in cucumber. Another project is to develop SNP marker set for lettuce together with Germany, Spain and France.

#### Other projects

Methodology projects that are funded by the Board for plant varieties in the Netherlands (Kingdom of the) are e.g.

- Marker development for fusarium (FOC1) resistance in brassica,
- Verification research on DNA combined with morphology in tomato and onion,
- Selecting similar varieties with image analysis and AI.

#### International cooperation 2025

- Since 2021, Naktuinbouw has participated in the Collaborative Seed Program in Nigeria. One of the project's goals is to set up a PVP system in the country.
- In 2024 a project with Suriname has been started by the Makandra Program.
- We are participating in Advisory Committee for India – Bangladesh – Netherlands Seed Partnership. These two partnerships are initiative of SeedNL. Under India-Netherlands Seed Partnership, a delegation will visit Naktuinbouw in May. The focus of the visit is PBR and Inspections in the Netherlands. The visit is still being planned so dates are not final yet.
- Together with CPVO a visit to Netherlands (Kingdom of the) for the Bosnia and Herzegovina will be started (funded by TAIEX).

#### PVP Development Program (Toolbox)

- This tool helps countries develop, improve, and implement their Plant Breeders' Rights system. In 2024, different PVP projects were carried out in 11 countries and 12 projects were granted in 2025: Argentina, Armenia, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Peru, PVP Toolbox Evaluation 2021-24, UPOV PRISMA support and Viet Nam.
- More info: PVP Development Program – PVP Toolbox | Naktuinbouw or contact: [PVPToolbox@naktuinbouw.nl](mailto:PVPToolbox@naktuinbouw.nl)

#### Plant Breeders Rights training course.

- In Jan-March 2025, the training course on Plant Breeders Rights has been presented as an e-course with weekly online plenary sessions where the contents were discussed. This edition was attended by 9 students from Nigeria, Suriname and the Netherlands (Kingdom of the).
- In the remainder of 2025 and onwards, the course can be followed as an e-learning with tutoring per e-mail. Participants can register and start at any time throughout the year. The study load is around 80-100 hours, depending on prior knowledge.
- A hybrid version of this course (e-learning + 1 week practical training in the Netherlands (Kingdom of the)) may be organized in spring 2026, provided there is sufficient interest.
- More information: <https://www.naktuinbouw.com/knowledge-education/training-courses/plant-breeders-rights-for-food-security-and-economic-development> or contact [l.pinan.gonzalez@naktuinbouw.nl](mailto:l.pinan.gonzalez@naktuinbouw.nl)

[Annex V follows]

## NEW ZEALAND

Application numbers for fruit varieties in the 2024/25 period (1 July to 1 May) have reduced in comparison with the same period in 2023/2024, with 31 new fruit applications accepted. These included eighteen (18) apple varieties, four (4) sweet cherry, four (4) strawberry, two (2) cherry rootstocks and one (1) each of grape, raspberry and peach. At the time of writing there were 141 fruit varieties under examination.

Apple varieties made up 58% of 2024/2025 fruit applications in New Zealand. Applications for strawberry and blueberry varieties have decreased significantly in the last 12 months with no new blueberry variety applications filed. Cherry variety applications have also decreased along with kiwifruit. Currently there are 49 apple varieties, 28 sweet cherry and 12 kiwifruit varieties under test.

The Cultivar Centre Havelock North, home of the PVR Variety Collection for *Malus*, was severely impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle which hit eastern parts of New Zealand's North Island in February 2023. Over 80 varieties, both candidate and reference have now been replaced, however tree health in some parts of the collection which was flooded continues to be problematic with the resulting negative impact on DUS testing in the short term. We are continuing to work cooperatively with variety owners or agents to source replacement plant material for both reference and candidate varieties as needed.

The Plant Variety Rights Act 2022 and the Plant Variety Rights Regulations 2022 has now been in force for two years. The special provisions for applications for varieties belonging to taonga (treasured) species, primarily species of native plants came into force in November 2024. These provisions address obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi and include establishment of the Māori Plant Varieties Committee. This committee has now been established and had its first meeting in April 2025. There are no fruit species considered to have taonga (treasured) status.

[End of Annex V and of document]