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**INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS**  
GENEVA

**TECHNICAL WORKING PARTY FOR VEGETABLES**

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APPLICATIONS FOR VARIETIES WITH LOW GERMINATION: ISF PROPOSAL

*Document prepared by a representative of the International Seed Federation (ISF)*

Introduction/background

1. Low germination can cause parent lines to be phenotypically less uniform although they are genetically uniform. Phenotypical variation is not always a result of genetic variation.

For instance:

1. Inbreeding may result in low fertility and low germination.
2. Lines created via dihaploid selections may have low germination.
3. Some species have dormancy which may result in low germination.
4. Some species require very special germination conditions which are difficult to realize.
5. Male sterility can be a reason for low germination.
6. In some species varieties with white flower color can produce seeds with low germination.

2. Prior to sending the required plant material to an Examination Office the breeder/applicant makes choices to enhance the quality of the seed. Several selections are done to create the application sample.

For instance:

1. selection of plants on which seeds are produced,
2. selection of fruits on which seeds are harvested,
3. selection in seeds on size,
4. selection in seeds on shape,
5. selection in seeds on color.

### Conclusion

3. Despite the existence of these techniques it may still not be possible to provide an application sample with a germination percentage meeting the minimum requirements.

### Proposal

4. To establish an exception to the minimum requirement rules by allowing an application sample with low germination percentage.
5. The Test Guidelines to provide instructions for the examiner, for instance to avoid selection on possible presence of genetic variation the examiner should choose a certain percentage of the earliest germinating seeds.
6. The applicant needs to inform the examiner about the percentage of germination and expected vigour.

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