**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2107 / NW 2337E**

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES:**

**Mr L S Tlhaole (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:**

**QUESTION:**

With reference to several Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) conventional seeds that have been registered in South Africa, which are currently in production and which have been released, what is the process for releasing WEMA conventional seeds that are not on the market yet?                                                       NW2337E

**REPLY:**

Conventional varieties which are currently in production and released in SA are: WE3127, WE3128, WE4144, WE4143, WE4145, WE4147, WE4307, WE4309, WE4338, WE4351, WE4359, WE5321 and WE5323. These codes represent the variety denominations.

The varieties need to be listed on the National Variety List for them to be released for trade and commercial production in South Africa. The ARC would be required to make a formal application to the Registrar: Plant Improvement Act for listing of such varieties. The ARC would also be required to submit a sample of seed of those varieties. The varieties will be tested for compliance with prescribed requirements at DAFF’s evaluation farmers. If the tests are successful, the varieties will qualify to be listed in the National Variety List. These varieties will be eligible for release.

The commercialisation would proceed as follows: local seed companies wishing to market WEMA varieties should apply to the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) for sub-licences to market WEMA varieties. This is because AATF is currently the only sub-licencing partner to the WEMA project as per the project agreement with WEMA partners.