



**CPVO • OCVV**

Community Plant Variety Office  
Office Communautaire des Variétés Végétales

# External Communication Policy

3 boulevard Maréchal Foch - CS 10121 - 49101 ANGERS CEDEX 2 - FRANCE - Tel. +33(0)241256400 - Fax +33(0)241256410 - cpvo@cpvo.europa.eu - www.cpvo.europa.eu

Служба на Общността за сортовете растения • Oficina Comunitaria de Variedades Vegetales • Odrůdový úřad Společenství • EF-Sortsmyndigheden • Gemeinschaftliches Sortenamts • Ühenduse Sordiamet • Κοινοτικό Γραφείο Φυτικών Ποικιλιών • Community Plant Variety Office • Office communautaire des variétés végétales • Ufficio comunitario delle varietà vegetali • Kopienas Augu šķirņu birojs • Bendrijos augalų veislių tarnyba • Közösségi Növényfajtá-hivatal • L-Uffizju Komunitarju dwar il-Varjetajiet tal-Pjanti • Communautair Bureau voor plantenrassen • Wspólnotowy Urząd Ochrony Odmian • Instituto Comunitário das Variedades Vegetais • Oficiul Comunitar pentru Soiuri de Plante • Úrad Spoločenstva pre odrody rastlin • Úrad Skupnosti za rastlinske sorte • Yhteisön kasvilajikevirasto • Gemenskapens växtsortsmyndighet

## Background

The Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) is responsible for the management of the Community plant variety rights system. This system provides protection with an intellectual property right for new plant varieties on European Union level. The system, based on the 1991 act of the UPOV Convention, became operational in 1995. The mission of the CPVO is to foster innovation in plant varieties by high quality processing of applications for Community plant variety rights at affordable costs while providing policy guidance and assistance in the exercise of these rights for the benefit of stakeholders. The core task of the CPVO is processing of and taking decisions on applications for Community plant variety rights. In addition to its core business, the CPVO furthers effective plant variety protection through communication activities to raise awareness and enhance the attractiveness of the Community plant variety protection system (CPVR).

## Communication principles

The CPVO external communication policy is based on transparency, accessibility, coherence, timeliness and multilingualism. The CPVO ensures that its external communication activities are coherent, relevant and coordinated with the mission of the CPVO.

## Communication objectives

The objectives of the CPVO external communication policy are to:

- 1- promote the Community plant variety protection system in the EU as well as beyond its borders;
- 2- inform the CPVO stakeholders about the CPVO activities and developments;
- 3- gather input from stakeholders and enhance interactivity and dialogue;
- 4- build support for the European Union's policies and objectives by increasing the visibility of the CPVO activities and results, contribute to making "Europe" closer to the European citizens and easier to understand.

## Target audience: the stakeholders of the CPVO

The stakeholders of the CPVO are:

- ◆ breeders and the organisations of breeders;
- ◆ the entrusted examination offices;
- ◆ the Administrative Council (Member States and the European Commission);



- other European Union institutions (Council of the EU, European Parliament and other EU agencies);
- farmers and plant producers;
- national authorities outside EU (mainly UPOV Member States and candidate UPOV Member States);
- international organisations (UPOV, OECD, EPO, ICNCP, ARIPO, OAPI, EAPVP, etc.) ;
- the general public.

## **Communication tools/channels and activities**

### **1. The CPVO web site**

The web site is a priority tool in the CPVO external communication policy and is the most effective channel for communicating. It is aimed at covering all activities and actions of the CPVO. The CPVO has given its web site a clear identity, is continuously updating it and making it easy to navigate so as to communicate actively. Most documents are published in English and many are also translated in other EU languages so as to reach more stakeholders and broaden the CPVO audience.

### **2. Social media**

The CPVO maintains an online presence through various social media tools and uses these tools as appropriate to channel communications content.

### **3. Publications**

The CPVO publishes its Annual report in English and in French. This publication is available online (CPVO web site) and on paper. The English version is released end of April of the following year and the French version is released two months later. The Annual report is an activity report of the previous year. Its Annex listing the rights in force at the end of the same year is published electronically in PDF format and is put online mid-February of the following year.

The CPVO publishes an e-Newsletter twice a year. The CPVO newsletter is an opportunity for clients and other stakeholders to receive news on CPVO activities every 6 months.

The CPVO has also produced documentation for visitors such as a general brochure in a number of languages and the Strategic Plan 2010-2015.

### **4. Developing and promoting a Corporate Identity communication**

In 2008, the CPVO decided to refresh and modernize its image to convey a clear and cohesive visual impression across all its services and products. The Corporate Identity of the CPVO reflects the quality of the



Community Plant variety protection system and the quality of the services provided by the CPVO to its stakeholders since 1995.

The CPVO corporate identity is implemented in its publications, on its web site, on its written material, on its give-aways (pins, pens, bags, etc.), to ensure a coherent and professional corporate image of the CPVO to the outside world and maximize the impact of its communication.

## **5. Participating in fairs and organising open days for specific stakeholders**

The CPVO considers its participation to certain international trade fairs for plants to be a useful opportunity to promote the Community plant variety rights system, to have direct contact with applicants and potential clients and to receive feedback, to be informed on the latest developments in plant breeding, and to enhance the close and efficient relationship with the examination offices performing the technical assessment of candidate varieties for Community plant variety rights.

Every year, the CPVO participates in fairs in partnership with the examination office of the country hosting the fair.

Furthermore, the CPVO, also in cooperation with the national examination offices and sometimes, with the breeders' organisations, holds open days aimed at specific stakeholders (breeders, procedural representatives, examiners, seed companies). The open days take usually place at the testing centres of the national examination offices. These open days are an opportunity for the CPVO to explain the CPVR system, to discuss current issues on ongoing DUS trials, as well as giving participants the opportunity to visit the field trials and reference collections.

## **6. Welcoming delegations**

The CPVO has regular exchanges with plant breeders' rights authorities in other countries. By explaining how the CPVO implements the Community plant variety rights system, the CPVO contributes to the setting up of national or regional systems for the protection of new plant varieties. In particular, the CPVO has been active for a number of years in welcoming delegations from the ASEAN countries, the ARIPO countries and the OAPI countries, and supports their initiative to create regional systems in the interest of the breeding industry and growers.

## **7. Participating in and contributing to relevant international and national seminars and *fora***

The CPVO participates as much as possible to international and sometimes national seminars and *fora* so as to improve cooperation in the field of plant variety protection

## **8. Press relations**

The CPVO fosters regular contacts with the media to support and improve media coverage of its activities. The CPVO regularly issues press releases on outstanding news related to its activities. The CPVO also welcomes interviews with journalists and regularly updates CPVO data in general or specialized publications.



## **9. Relations with schools and universities**

The CPVO has regular requests from schools and universities to give lectures on the CPVR system. In particular, the CPVO participates in the University of California Davis Plant breeding academy (a professional development course designed by the UC Davis Seed Biotechnology Center to increase the supply of professional plant breeders), to the Wageningen University for Plant breeding (NL), in the UPOV distance learning course as well as lectures at the University of Angers.

The CPVO also opens its doors and explains its mission to the general public every year in February-March in the framework of Made in Angers, action organised by the town of Angers to enable people to discover the economic environment of Angers.

## **10. Joint activities to support the broader EU image**

The CPVO participates to joint activities to making "Europe" closer to the European citizens. These activities are organized by the EU agencies' Heads of Communication and Information Network which was set up in 2008 by the Heads of Agencies network with the mandate to increase the visibility of the EU agencies and strengthen communication and information about their activities and results.

## **Actors**

Communication must be consistent with the mission of the CPVO therefore it is the responsibility of the President of the CPVO and its Management team who are the natural spokespersons of the CPVO. They define the CPVO external communication policy to best serve the mission of the CPVO and to support its strategic objectives.

The Public Relations coordinator implements the external communication policy; promotes the CPVO communication activities and latest news on the CPVO web site in collaboration with the webmaster; coordinates the content and production of publications in close cooperation with the units and services of the CPVO; monitors and promotes the CPVO Corporate ID guidelines across all communication activities and tools; elaborates and coordinates the participation of the CPVO to fairs and open days in partnership with the examination offices and with the operational units involved; coordinates the visits of delegations; drives the production of PR material; ensures press relations; coordinates relations with schools, universities and the general public when visiting the CPVO. The PR coordinator carries out every communication activity in close-collaboration with the different units and services of the CPVO, once validated by the Management Team.

The webmaster develops the multi-lingual CPVO website; updates content of web pages on the basis of contributions from all CPVO units and services; defines, implements and maintains coherency of websites' graphical guidelines according to the CPVO corporate ID.



The members of the CPVO staff are important communication actors as they play a role of ambassadors for the CPVO when they speak in the framework of a particular communication activity or when they speak to the public and stakeholders in the course of their daily work as well as in life outside work.

## **Evaluation/follow up**

The CPVO regularly carries out satisfaction survey on its activity and particularly on its communications tools.

The PR coordinator also reports to the Management team on the implementation of communication activities and on satisfaction survey run in the course of specific communication events.

*This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.*

*14/6/2013*



**Martin EKVAD**

President of the CPVO



\* **List of abbreviations:**

ARIPO:	African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation
ASEAN:	Association of South East Asian Nations
EAPVP:	East Asia Plant Variety Protection
EPO:	European Patent Office
ICNCP:	International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants
OAPI:	African Intellectual Property Organisation
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
UPOV:	International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants

