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## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

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(As amended on 18 August 2016)

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## **1. Complaints in respect of plant material from mother blocks**

Complaints in relation to plant material supplied by PIO's to nurserymen must be taken up directly by the nurseryman with the PIO concerned and immediately followed up within 14 days by the PIO concerned and corrected where possible.

## **2. Complaints in respect of nursery vines**

Complaints in relation to nursery vines supplied to producers by nurserymen must be taken up directly with the nurseryman and followed up within 14 days by the nursery concerned and corrected, where possible.

## **3. Complaints referred to the VIA**

- 3.1 Should a complaint not be resolved satisfactorily mutually within 14 days, the complainant must submit a written complain to the VIA.
- 3.2 All formal complaints must be treated as strictly confidential during the course of the investigation by all persons involved.
- 3.3 Additional information and proof needed for the investigation may be requested from the parties involved by the Secretary in terms of the discretionary authority granted to the Executive Committee.
- 3.4 Should further inquiry be deemed necessary, the Secretary will in consultation with the Chairman of the Technical Committee compile an investigating team comprising members of the Technical Committee and other independent expertise as needed in the specific case.
- 3.5 The investigation team must investigate the complaint and the nurseryman / producer involved must be invited to attend the on-site inspection.
- 3.6 Samples taken during the investigation must be taken in the presence of the nurseryman / producer.
- 3.7 Samples must be analysed by a Government Laboratory registered with the VIA or the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development for the specific test to be done.
- 3.8 Recommendation of the investigating team and other expertise are submitted to the Management Committee in order to reach a conclusion and to consider further steps.
- 3.9 Findings of the Management Committee and any further steps to be taken must be submitted to the Executive Board for confirmation.

- 3.10 All formal complaints must be acknowledged in writing by the VIA and the parties involved must be informed in writing that the complaint has been received and is receiving attention.
- 3.11 After dealing with the complaint, the VIA must inform the complainant and parties involved in writing of their findings.
- 3.12 Should the Executive Board confirm that it is a valid complaint:
  - 3.12.1 the certification of the graft combination involved must be withdrawn;
  - 3.12.2 the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development must be notified;
  - 3.12.3 the name of the nurseryman / PIO concerned may be published in the Government Gazette;
  - 3.12.4 the registered nursery whose certificate number appear on the labels involved will take full responsibility for any investigation costs that might arise from the complaint at stake.
- 3.13 In instances where transgression of the Plant Improvement Act or other acts occurs, further actions or lawful pursuits may be instituted.
- 3.14 Should the finding show that the complaint was unjustified; the complainer will be responsible for the cost of the investigation and the laboratory analysis.
- 3.15 Should the producer who lodged the complaint not accept the findings of the VIA he will be entitled to lodge an appeal to the Registrar of Plant Improvement.

#### **4. Late submissions of returns**

Late submissions of returns, as per the Scheme, will be fined, an administrative fine of R1000 for every calendar month which the return is late.