

Regulation of Biostimulant Products under Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985

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Prior to inclusion of Biostimulant products in Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985, there were around 30000 products in the market. In order to regulate biostimulants in the country, the Government of India issued Notification No S.O. 882 (E) dated 23rd February, 2021 by which the biostimulants have been included in the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985 and provision under Clause 20C has been made for regulating the quality of biostimulant.

As per Fertilizer Control Order, 1985 (FCO) **“Bio-stimulant”** means a substance or micro-organism or a combination of both whose primary function when applied to plants, seeds or rhizosphere is to stimulate physiological processes in plants and to enhance its nutrient uptake, growth, yield, nutrition efficiency, crop quality and tolerance to stress, regardless of its nutrient content, but does not include pesticides or plant growth regulators which are regulated under Insecticides Act, 1968. Bio-stimulants specified in the Schedule VI shall be classified under any of the following categories, namely:-

- (a) Botanical extracts, including seaweed extracts;
- (b) Bio-chemicals;
- (c) Protein hydrolysates and amino acids;
- (d) Vitamins;
- (e) Cell free microbial products;
- (f) Antioxidants;
- (g) Anti-transpirants;
- (h) Humic & fulvic acid and their derivatives
- (i) Live micro-organisms excluding biofertilisers and biopesticides

The provisional registration of biostimulants was a temporary provision for which G3 (Provisional Certificates) were issued for more than 8000 products of biostimulants to provide adequate time to manufacturers/importers for generating data on bioefficacy, toxicity, chemistry, etc. which is prerequisite for inclusion of biostimulants in Schedule VI, FCO. The Provisional registration for biostimulants was initially valid for a period of two years, ending 23rd February, 2023, which was extended till 22nd February, 2024, further extended till 22nd February, 2025 and again to 16th June, 2025, on the request of industry.

The Government has provided these extensions to the existing manufacturers/importers to manufacture/import for sale, sell, offer for sale, stock or exhibit biostimulants for a specific period to facilitate a smooth transition to the regulatory framework and ensure the continuation of manufacturing, importing, selling, and stocking of biostimulants by stakeholders. Keeping in view the interests of farmers, the Government has decided not to give any further extension to the provisional registration for biostimulant products beyond 16.06.2025. Accordingly, the Provisional Registration issued for biostimulants products stand invalid since 17.06.2025. The list of provisional registration for biostimulants products which have become invalid henceforth has been uploaded on the website of the Department of Agriculture as follows:

<https://www.agriwelfare.gov.in/en/CirBiostimulants:Documents>>Circulars/Notifications>>Biostimula>

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As of now, the Government of India has included only 146 Biostimulant Products in the Schedule VI of the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985 for which various notifications have been published in the Gazette of India and uploaded on the website of the Department of Agriculture as follows:

<https://www.agriwelfare.gov.in/en/CirBiostimulants:Documents>>Circulars/Notifications>>Biostimulants>

The Government of India has also issued a toll-free number for farmers, which is 1800-180-1551.

RC/KSR/AR

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