

§ 97.208 Burden of proof.

The parties to a priority contest will be presumed to have developed their varieties in the chronological order of the filing dates of their applications for certificates involved in the priority contest, and the burden of proof will rest upon the party who last filed an application.

§ 97.209 Preliminary statement on novel variety developed in the United States.

(a) Each party to the priority contest is required to file on or before a date fixed by the Office, a concise preliminary statement giving the facts and dates relating to the development of his or her alleged novel variety. The preliminary statement must be signed by the owner; *Provided, however,* That in appropriate circumstances, as when the owner is dead or legally incapacitated, or a showing is made of inability to obtain a statement from the owner, the preliminary statement may be made by the assignee or by someone authorized or entitled to make the statement, having knowledge of the facts.

(b) Preliminary statements shall be filed with the Office in duplicate. A copy shall be forwarded to each opposing party by the Office as soon as practicable after both parties have filed their statements within the requisite period.

(c) In filing a preliminary statement each party must show the following information:

(1) The date upon which the first determination of the novel variety was made.

(2) The date upon which the first written description of the novel variety was made. If a written description of the novel variety has not been made prior to the filing date of the application, it must be so stated.

(3) The date of the first act or acts susceptible of proof (other than making a written description or disclosing the novel variety to another person), which, if proven, would establish determination of the novel variety, and a brief description of such act or acts. If there have been no such acts, it must be so stated.

(4) The date of the actual production of the novel variety. If the novel variety had not been actually produced before the filing date of the application, it must be so stated.

(d) When an allegation as to the first written description (paragraph (c)(2) of this section) is made, a copy of such written description shall be attached to the statement.

(e) If a party intends to rely on a prior application, domestic or foreign, the preliminary statement shall clearly identify such prior application. Copies of the cited application and related documents will be served by the Office, upon all interested parties to the contest. In the case of an application filed in a foreign country, English translations shall be served to all interested parties by the party relying on the application filed in the foreign country.

§ 97.210 Preliminary statement on novel variety developed in a foreign country.

When the novel variety was developed in a foreign country, the preliminary statement must show (a) the information specified in § 97.209 (c) through (e) and (b) whether, and if so, when and under what circumstances the novel variety was introduced into the United States by or on behalf of the party.

§ 97.211 Statements sealed before filing.

The preliminary statement shall be submitted in a sealed envelope bearing the name of the party filing it and the number and title of the priority contest as shown on the notice issued by the Office. The envelope should be enclosed in an outer mailing envelope marked "To Be Opened Only by the Commissioner."

§ 97.212 Correction of a statement on motion.

In case of material error arising through inadvertence or mistake, a preliminary statement may be corrected upon a satisfactory showing to the Commissioner that the correction is of material significance. Correction of the statement must be made as soon as practicable after the discovery of the error.