

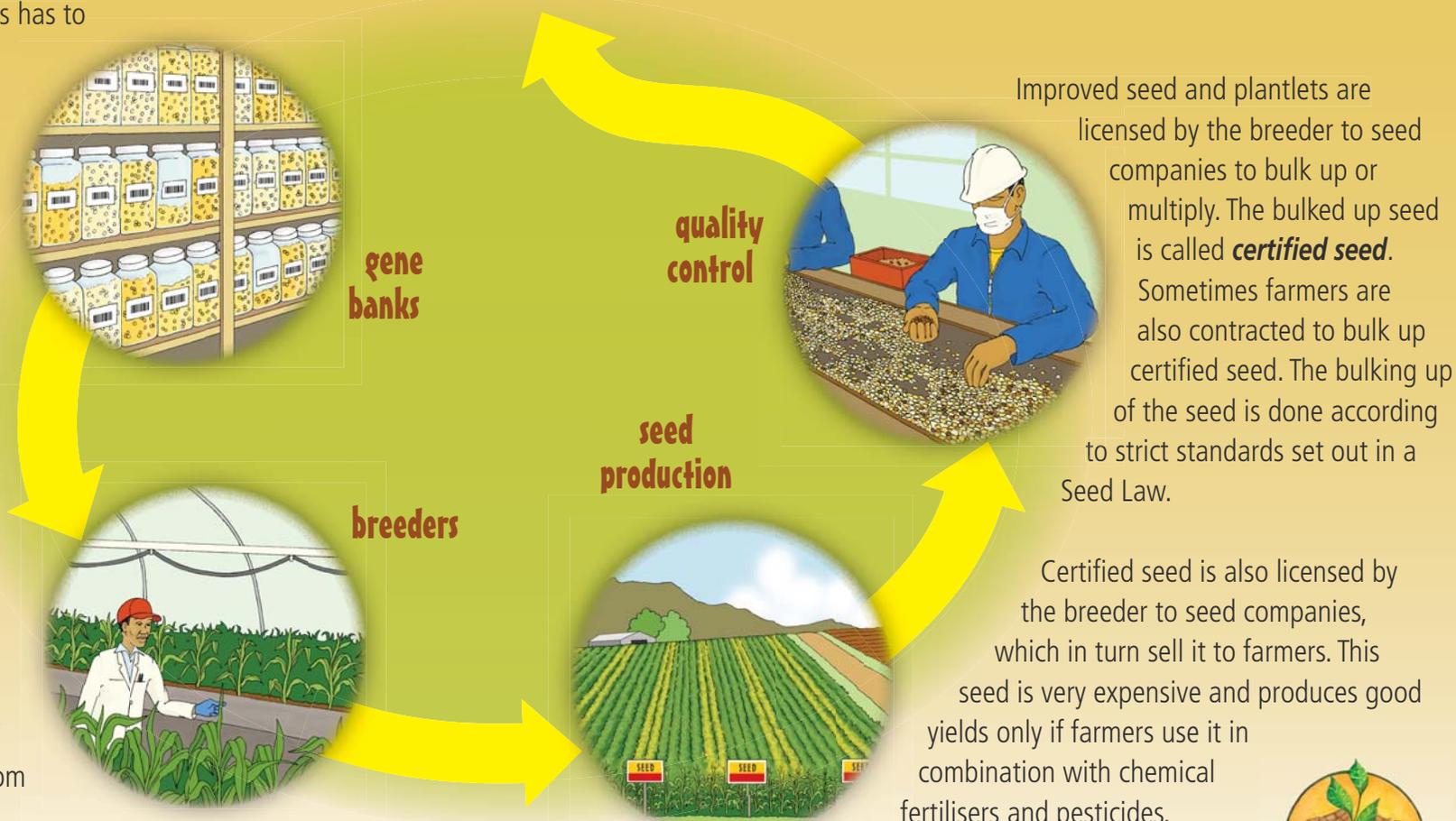
Seeds from the commercial sector are usually hybrids, improved Open Pollinated Varieties (OPVs) and other planting material such as plantlets. These are bred by private companies and research institutions and are also referred to as **improved seed**.

A **hybrid seed** is a first generation seed produced through cross breeding two naturally unrelated parental lines. To produce hybrid seed, the pollination process has to be deliberately controlled or manipulated. Hybrid seeds are mainly developed by seed companies. They are expensive and have to be bought every season, thus increasing dependency on the seed industry. When farmers replant saved hybrid seed, the yield will be low.

An **improved OPV** is one that has been developed over time through open breeding and contains a range of uniform or similar features such as the same weight, size and thickness. Farmers usually don't have to buy OPVs every season, and these can be replanted without yield loss.

**Plantlets** are little vegetative propagated material of the original plant – such as leaf and stem cuttings, shoots and runners – from which new plants can be grown.

# SEEDS FROM THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR



African Centre for Biodiversity

