



Scientists learn stem rust screening skills

Scientists from over 20 countries, many of whom are collaborators with the Borlaug Global Rust Initiative (BGRI), gathered in Kenya on 28 September for a two week international training course titled “Stem Rust Note Taking and Evaluation of Germplasm.” Until 7 October, they will participate in practical hands-on field activities, which is appropriate as more than 30,000 wheat lines from around the world are currently ready to be scored for stem rust resistance.

The Kenyan Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) is hosting the event at their Njoro research station, despite being affected by recent dry weather. In addition to field work, there are several scheduled lectures from renowned wheat pathologists and breeders: Bob McIntosh (Australia), Zac Pretorius (South Africa), Gordon Cisar (USA), Harbans Bariana (Australia), Brian Steffenson (USA), Kumarse Nazari (ICARDA), Dave Hodson (FAO), and CIMMYT colleagues Ravi Singh, Davinder Singh, Shridhar Bhavani, Yann Manes, Tadesse Degu, and Karim Ammar.

By the end of the course all participants should be able to score stem rust consistent with an international scale standard. This skill will allow them to actively contribute to the global monitoring of the stem rust Ug99. CIMMYT, the Durable Rust Resistant Wheat Project, KARI, and the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) jointly organized the training course.



Matthew Reynolds talks about climate change

The US government has temporarily satisfied its hunger for information on how to adapt agriculture to climate change. On 14 September 2009, Matthew Reynolds, CIMMYT wheat physiologist, joined around 15 other agriculture experts just outside of Washington, DC, USA, to present at a conference titled: “Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change: What Will It Take?”

The conference, sponsored by the US Department of State, opened with a keynote by John Holdren, science adviser to the President of the United States, and was followed by four main panel topics: Impacts of Climate Change on Agriculture; Research in the Public Sector; Research in the Private Sector; and Alternative Crops, Sustainable Management, and Integrative Strategies. The goal of the event was to explore strategies and raise awareness about adaption measures that are required—or will be required in the future—to maintain sufficient global food production.

“It is reassuring to know that the US government is taking the issue of food security in the context of climate change seriously,” said Reynolds, who presented on adapting the major cereal crops (including maize and wheat) to climate change. “The State Department was not the only government program represented at the conference; the broad spectrum of speakers and government officials (including USDA and USAID) present shows that they are considering a comprehensive approach to the issue.”

A position paper based on the outcomes of the conference will be prepared for the US government. It will also be published in *Science* magazine. ■

Students swarm El Batán

Sustainability goes beyond maintaining environmentally-conscious agriculture, it also involves passing knowledge on to future leaders so information is not lost. CIMMYT is dedicated to both types of sustainability, which was demonstrated on 11 September 2009 when El Batán welcomed 280 Mexican university students to its campus.

The program, "Open Doors," has been held annually for three years. This year it included students from 13 institutions of higher learning. Scott Ferguson, deputy director general for support services, welcomed the group and emphasized the importance of their visit by pointing out that the students may only be visitors now, but they could be part of the CIMMYT family in the future.

The rest of the day included thorough and engaging presentations from national staff on CIMMYT's global food security efforts. The students learned about the application of geographic information systems (GIS) for breeders and the use of genetic materials. They visited the germplasm bank, the applied biotechnology center (ABC), and wheat quality labs; they also ventured into the fields to observe maize, wheat, and conservation agriculture plots.

Thanks to all who helped make this event a success.

Newcomers

José Luis García Zúñiga,
general accountant,
Corporate Services/
Finance, 28 September.



Departures

Kayoko Lyons, consultant, Generation
Challenge Program,
11 September.

Héctor Sánchez Villeda, crop
information specialist, Crop
Research Information Laboratory,
30 September.

Birthdays 3-9 October

Caritina Venado 5; Gabriela Juárez
5; Carolina Saint Pierre 5; Jiankang
Wang 5; Beatriz Rojón 6; Eva Barreto
6; María del Rosario Espinosa 7; Jorge
Rosano 7; Wuletaw Degu 7; María
Delgadillo 8; Fernando Vergara 8;
Néstor Lechuga 8; Debra Eaton 8;
Arman Baitassov 8; Dionicio Zavala 9.

