



15 February 2008

Published by Communications

# Growing Commitments to International Agricultural Development



Announcing \$306 million in grants for international agricultural development, Bill Gates, Chairman of Microsoft, helped to lift the mood at the recent World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The announcement was made with Robert Zoellick, President of the World Bank, and Namanga Ngongi, President of the Alliance of the Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

“If we look at countries that have managed to develop good economies, all of them, except for, say, the oil-based countries, have had agricultural productivity as a key element of how they did that, even going back to countries like Taiwan or the United States,” Gates said. “And so, we see this field as critical.”

The latest World Development Report released by the World Bank showed that gains in agriculture have three times the effect on poverty reduction than gains in other sectors.

By targeting funds to strengthen agricultural sectors, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation hopes to help small farmers in struggling economies gain access to global markets and increase their incomes.

Noting that the amount of development assistance to agriculture has declined over the last 25 years — from about 16 percent in 1980 to about 4 percent today — Gates called for a global recommitment to improving farm productivity, particularly in Africa. “Some

countries like Ghana have upped agriculture productivity, and by doing that, halved their poverty rate,” he said.

The Foundation’s largest new grant is for the AGRA Soil Health Initiative, a \$180 million project aimed at rebuilding Africa’s farm soils, 75% of which are badly degraded. The effort to restore soil structure and boost fertility also includes projects to improve agricultural infrastructure.

“You do need to improve seeds and soils, but you also need markets that function,” AGRA’s Ngongi said. He called for Africa to have “its own Green Revolution.”

Other grants awarded will help East African farmers raise and market high-quality coffee varieties; upgrade dairy sectors in East Africa and Bangladesh to handle chilled milk; support the International Rice Research Institute in developing drought- and flood-resistant varieties; and establish micro-irrigation projects for smallholder farm families in India.

Learn more:

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/GlobalDevelopment/Announcements/Announce-070125.htm>

- Source: Communications

## Latest Publication from the Center's Staff

Congratulations to Dr. Christophe Kouamé, for his latest publication, recently received by the library.

Levasseur, V., Kouame, C., Pasquini, M.W., Temple, L. (2007). A review of urban and peri-urban vegetable

production in West Africa. ACTA HORTICULTURAE. no.762:245-252.

## New Publications (Articles & Books) Received by the Library

Abraham-Juarez, Ma del R., Rocha-Granados, Ma del C., Lopez, M.G., Rivera-Bustamante, R.F., Ochoa-Alejo, N. (2008). Virus-induced silencing of Comt, p Amt and Kas genes results in a reduction of capsaicinoid accumulation in chili pepper fruits. PLANTA. v.227 (3):681-695.

Gutman, W., Pawelkiewicz, M., Woycicki, R., Piszczek, E., Przybecki, Z. (2008). The construction and characteristics of a BAC library for *Cucumis sativus* L. 'B10'. CELLULAR & MOLECULAR BIOLOGY LETTERS. v.13(1):74-91.

Khar, A., Jakse, J., Havey, M.J. (2008). Segregations for onion bulb colors reveal that red is controlled by at least three loci. AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE, JOURNAL. v.133(1):42-47.

McLaren, N.W., Craven, M. (2008). Evaluation of soybean cultivars for resistance to sclerotinia stalk rot in South Africa. CROP PROTECTION. v.27(2):231-235.

Soengas, P., Cartea, M.E., Velasco, P., Padilla, G., Ordas, A. (2008). Morphologic and agronomic diversity of *Brassica napus* crops. AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE, JOURNAL. v.133(1):48-54.

Babula, D., Kaczmarek, M., Ziolkowski, P.A., Sadowski, J. (2007). *Brassica oleracea*. In: Genome mapping and molecular breeding in plants - volume 5: vegetables./ed. by Kole, C.; Berlin: Springer. p.227-285.

Barrett, D.M., Weakley, C., Diaz, J.V., Watnik, M. (2007). Qualitative and nutritional differences in processing tomatoes grown under commercial organic and conventional production systems. JOURNAL OF FOOD SCIENCE. v.72(9):C441-C451.

Chen, Y.W., Tai, C.Y., Wang, W.J. (2007). Proceedings of a symposium on vegetable breeding and plant protection. Taichung: Taichung District Agricultural Research and Extension Station, COA. 140 pp.

Kole, C. (2007). Genome mapping and molecular breeding in plants - volume 5: vegetables. Berlin: Springer. xviii, 375 pp.

Mutsaers, H.J.W. (2007). Peasants, farmers and scientists: a chronicle of tropical agricultural science in the twentieth century. Dordrecht: Springer. xxviii, 607 pp.

## New Popular Magazines Now Available in the Library

**Business Weekly** (Chinese) –  
11th–24th February 2008

**The Economist**: Half-way there –  
9th-15th February 2008

**National Geographic** (Chinese) - February  
2008

**PC World**: Today's 25 most innovative  
products – February 2008

**Scientific American** (Chinese) – February 2008



- Source: Fang-chin Chen/Communications

## News from Africa

### Training

AVRDC-RCA is conducting a farmers' training on "Production, Processing and Utilization of Vegetable Crops to Prevent Micronutrient Malnutrition" from 14 to 15 February. There are 18 farmers involved—10 men,

and 8 women who come from Mkwandua Village, Arumeru District, Northern Tanzania.

### vBSS Project Administrative Manager Visited vBSS-Cameroon



Mr Jan Helsen, vBSS program manager with IRAD vegetable scientist in a tomato field at Fouban, West Cameroon.

The manager of the AVRDC Vegetable Breeding and Seed Systems program, Mr Jan Helsen, visited the Cameroon liaison office on 4 to 9 February. During his visit, Jan reviewed the progress of the program with the liaison officer, Dr Christophe Kouame and met some key partners of the NBU and visited vegetable production and research sites.

### The First Meeting of vBSS-Cameroon Innovation Platform Held on 7 February

The first meeting of vBSS-Cameroon *Innovation Platform* was held on February 7. A total of 12 members representing NARES (3), Private sector (3), NGO (1), Public sector (3) and ARI (2) attended the meeting at Yaoundé. Members of the platform comprising 4 women and 8 men, were from Cameroon (9) and neighboring Spoke Countries (3). A common understanding of the Innovation platform for Vegetable Breeding and Seed Systems was shared. According to Dr. Kouame, this innovation platform will sustain the development of the

vegetable industry in the West and Central Africa humid tropics. It is a platform where stakeholders from the public and private sectors will interact to produce and use improved vegetable technologies as well as to improve the institutional and policy environments for vegetable technology development.

### Visitors

Dr. Hannah Jaenicke, Director of the International Centre for Underutilised Crops (ICUC), which is hosted by International Water Management Institute (IWMI), in Colombo, Sri Lanka, has arrived at RCA and will be staying in Arusha from 10 February to 15 March for the

final preparations for the "International Symposium on Underutilized Plant Species for Food, Nutrition, Income and Sustainable Development", which will be held in Arusha, Tanzania from 3 to 7 March.

- Source: Dr. Shilpi Saxena/AVRDC-RCA

## News from South East Asia: ASEAN GAP Training Course

**Good Agricultural Practices for Production of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables in the ASEAN Region**  
**25-29 February 2008, AVRDC-Asian Regional Centre, Thailand**



The AVRDC-Asian Regional Center will organize an ASEAN GAP Training Course in Thailand at the end of February. The course will be held at the Kasetsart University, Kamphaengsaen campus. It is being run in collaboration with AusAid, Cardno ACIL, RMIT University and the ASEAN Secretariat. A total of 20

participants from the ten ASEAN countries will attend this training course.

*-Source: Dr. Peter Ooi/AVRDC-ARC*

## Recommended Web Link of the Week:

### PLANTSTRESS Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

Environmental stress is a major limitation to agricultural production. The major environmental stresses of contemporary economical importance are drought, cold, heat, salinity soil mineral deficiency and mineral toxicity.

This web provides information, a meeting place, a consultation facility and a source for professional updates on the most important issues of plant environmental (abiotic) stress.

Please visit <http://www.plantstress.com/>

*- Source: Fang-chin Chen/Communications*

## New E-mail Address

Ms. Maureen Mecozzi (梅琳)

Editor, Communications

[maureen.mecozzi@avrdc.org](mailto:maureen.mecozzi@avrdc.org)



*-Source: Shirley Chen/Communications*

## **New Recruitment I: Dr. Edwin Javier International Variety Development Coordinator**

I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Edwin Javier has been appointed as International Variety Development Coordinator. He will join us effective 10 March 2008 and he will report directly to the DDG for Research.

Edwin received his PhD in Genetics (with a minor in crop science) from North Carolina State University in 1981. He served as the Coordinator of the International Network for Genetic Evaluation of Rice (INGER) at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) from 1999 to 2006. He coordinated the exchange and evaluation of elite breeding lines involving IRRI, Africa Rice Center (WARDA), Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT) and National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES) from various parts of the world. He has at least twenty five years experience in interdisciplinary research and development programs at the national, regional and international levels.

He will lead the new International Variety Development Unit to carry out responsibilities in international variety development, to maintain the indigenous vegetable research and demonstration plot and to develop demonstrations of the Center's best varieties and selections. He will also coordinate effective regional variety testing and development trials through collaboration with the Center's research units, regional centers, and partners. As budget allows, he will develop a global network of public and private sector staff and collaborators to support international variety development activities.

*- Source: Dr. Tom Lumpkin/Director General*

## **New Recruitment II: Mr. Olawale Taiwo Adeniji Vegetable Breeder (Tanzania), vBSS Project**

Mr. Olawale Taiwo Adeniji has been appointed as Vegetable Breeder (Tanzania) of the Project "Vegetable Breeding and Seed Systems for Poverty Reduction in Africa" for an initial period of two years, effective 3 March 2008. His duty station is in the AVRDC- Regional Center for Africa at Arusha, Tanzania. He will report directly to Jan Helsen, Project Administrative Manager.

Wale received his Master of Agriculture in Plant Breeding (Sub-specialization: Tissue Culture & Genetic Engineering) from the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria in 2003. He has at least ten years professional experience gained at the National Root Crop Research Institute of Nigeria, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Adamawa State University.

Wale's major responsibilities are to (1) support the program's national breeding unit (NBU) in Tanzania in vegetable breeding and seed systems development; (2) with the Country Liaison Officer and Project Administrative Manager, prioritize crops and breeding objectives for each crop, and design efficient breeding

strategies. Priority will be given to the varietal development of tomato, chili pepper, sweet pepper, onion, cabbage, and locally important indigenous vegetables; (3) develop and release new vegetable varieties; (4) establish breeding infrastructure, procure equipment and supplies, conduct staff training, and design plant breeding protocols in consultation with the NBU of Tanzania, Research Manager and Project Administrative Manager and in accordance with AVRDC's policies and regulations; (5) collaborate closely with staff of the NBU, AVRDC staff at the Regional Center for Africa in Tanzania, and AVRDC headquarters in all other matters related to vegetable breeding and seed systems; (6) develop cooperative linkages with contract seed producers, NARS regulatory personnel, and seed distribution channels; (7) monitor program activities; and (8) perform any other duties required by the vBSS Project Administrative Manager or the Director of AVRDC's Regional Center for Africa.

*- Source: Lilia Tan Habacon/Human Resources Manager*

## New Recruitment III: Dr. Mathew Abang Plant Pathologist, vBSS Project, Tanzania



Dr. Mathew Abang has been appointed as Plant Pathologist of the Project "Vegetable Breeding and Seed Systems for Poverty Reduction in Africa" for an initial period of two years, effective 1 March 2008. His duty station is at the AVRDC-

Regional Center for Africa, Arusha, Tanzania. He will report directly to Jan Helsen, Project Administrative Manager.

Mathew received his PhD in Plant Pathology and Crop Protection from University of Göttingen in 2002. He has at least eleven years of experience gained at IITA, the German Collection of Microorganisms and Cell Cultures (DSMZ), the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), and ICARDA.

Mathew will coordinate and conduct plant pathology related activities in support of the project's National Breeding Units (NBUs). His specific duties include (1) determining major diseases of targeted introduced and indigenous vegetables; (2) initiating and implementing strategic research on vegetable diseases that are of

significance to the project and in support of the project's NBUs; (3) designing protocols to screen and select introduced and indigenous vegetables for resistance to diseases; (4) providing leadership in establishing disease screening capacity in the four NBUs and surrounding countries; (5) promoting good agricultural practices (GAP) in targeted regions by developing an integrated disease management strategy for the control of major diseases, and through training and networking; (6) establishment of infrastructure, procurement of equipment and supplies, staff training, and design of plant pathology protocols; (7) collaborating closely with staff of all four NBUs, the Seed Health and Marketing Unit in the Republic of South Africa, AVRDC staff at the Regional Center for Africa in Tanzania, the Sub-Regional Office in Mali, and AVRDC's headquarters; and (8) perform any other duties as required by the vBSS Project Administrative Manager or RCA Director

- Source: Lilia Tan Habacon/Human Resources Manager

## Travel

As a follow up to the stakeholder workshop held in September 2007, Dr. Rémi Nono-Womdim will visit Malawi from 13 to 21 February to interact with key players on vegetable research and development. During his visit, Dr. Nono-Womdim will discuss with Mr. Thomson Chilanga, Deputy Director for Research, Ministry of Agriculture and Mr. Dellings Phiri, General Manager of SeedCo. Seed Company, Malawi, the implementation of vBSS activities in Malawi.

- Source: Dr. Shilpi Saxena/AVRDC-RCA

Dr. M.L. Chadha, 18-19 February, to Delhi, to get a visa for a visit to Taiwan. He will also visit the Division of Vegetable Science, IARI to discuss the feasibility of a tentative work plan for outcrossing field studies on Brassica in North India for the CIMBAA project.

- Source: Dr. M.L. Chadha/AVRDC-RCSA

## News from Food and Dormitory Services

Due to a long-term increases in prices, effective 18 February 2008, the price of rice in the Cafeteria will be adjusted to one bowl for NT\$10 instead of one scoop for NT\$5. Thank you for your attention!

因米價持續上漲多年，餐廳米飯售價將自 97 年 2 月 18 日起調整為每碗 10 元(舊價為一球 5 元)，謝謝惠顧！

- Source: Lydia Wu/FDS