



ANNOUNCEMENT

AATF Partners with Monsanto, CIMMYT to Form WEMA

On March 19, 2008, the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), a non-profit organization focused on improving the lives of smallholder farmers in Africa, announced a public-private partnership with Monsanto and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) to develop drought-tolerant maize (corn). Monsanto's contributions are on a royalty free basis for the smallholder farmers in Africa.

The partnership called Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) is an African-led project formed in response to a growing call by African farmers, leaders and scientists to improve yield stability and protect the harvest of smallholder farmers in the face of drought. Funding is provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Howard G. Buffett Foundation. We at Monsanto are very pleased to be part of this unique partnership, and I would like to share some information about the project with you.

Our first-generation of corn drought tolerance technology for our US commercial program recently completed its fifth year of field trials and is showing promising results. Information about our commercial drought tolerance program can be found at www.monsanto.com/droughttolerantcorn.

The WEMA project will combine the knowledge and technology advances of Monsanto's commercial drought tolerance program with CIMMYT's African-adapted germplasm and expertise in conventional drought tolerance breeding. The national agricultural systems of participating African countries will also be heavily involved in the project. Monsanto will contribute in four ways: (1) germplasm from our global proprietary breeding programs, (2) marker tools and know-how to accelerate the pace of breeding, (3) traits from our Global Biotech Stress Tolerance Collaboration with BASF for testing in Africa, and 4) expertise, all without royalty.

We believe that African farmers deserve the chance to choose the same kinds of technologies and tools as farmers elsewhere, such as those in more than 20 other countries that have used biotech-improved seed for the last dozen years. Drought is such a formidable challenge in Africa that we and our partners believe it is critical to apply the best technologies and provide African farmers with all the tools available to protect their harvests.

We are excited to have been asked to participate in this partnership with AATF and CIMMYT. It represents a unique opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the technology sharing element of our pledge to improve the lives of resource poor farmers in developing countries.

Please visit www.aatf-africa.org/ to learn more about the project.