BreedWheat:
Large National Research Programs on Wheat
Meeting in Clermont-Ferrand (France)

Friday, November 6th, 2015 – Clermont-Ferrand will be the world capital city of wheat on November 16th and 17th. Organized by the partners of the BreedWheat project (French “Programme Investissements d’avenir”), the wheat international scientific and seed community will meet for two days to exchange research results.

To facilitate exchanges between national programs on bread wheat

Two hundred researchers from five continents will be meeting within the framework of the International Wheat Innovation Workshop in Clermont-Ferrand (France) on November 16th and 17th. This meeting is twofold: (i) to inform the scientific and seed community on the main advances in genetics, genomics, and ecophysiology of wheat adaptation to major environmental stresses (nitrogen and water deficiencies, high temperature), (ii) to bring together projects and teams working on bread wheat within major international projects. This international workshop will enable them to share results and initiate new collaborations.

Organized by the partners of the French project BreedWheat, it brings together different programs: WISP (British project), proWeizen (German research and breeding alliance), CRP WHEAT (program for international research institutes), the IWGSC (International Wheat Genome Sequencing Consortium) and the Wheat Initiative (international consortium coordinating global research for wheat).

The Workshop will start with a conference presenting the results obtained in these projects and some related programs. Round table discussions after each session will promote dialogue between academic and industrial researchers, between researchers from the different projects, and between different projects and other initiatives.

The BreedWheat Project: significant progress at mid-term point

This meeting is also an opportunity to review at mid-term point the progress of the BreedWheat project, launched in 2011 for a 9-year period. The project aims at developing new breeding methods and using untapped genetic resources in order to create new varieties that will better perform in environmentally friendly culture conditions adapted to climate change. Today, this strategic project, which represents a total investment of 34 million Euros and brings together 28 partners, meets its aim.

Among the first benefits, a new generation DNA “chip” especially developed for wheat makes it now possible to simultaneously characterize thousands of different genetic markers on wheat plants. In parallel, 25 field trials were conducted by targeting different objectives: plant adaptation to drought, nitrogen fertilization reduction, and foliage and cob diseases. In these three years, about 700,000 data points were obtained, validated, formatted and stored in a database. This database provides a unique opportunity for all project partners for the second part of the project.

BreedWheat is therefore on track to address the great challenge of producing agricultural resources adapted to an ecologically intensive agriculture.

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