



E-Review

Electronic Newsletter of the African Seed Trade Association

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INVITATION TO AFSTA CONGRESS 2010



Marcel B. Kanungwe, President of AFSTA

Dear Colleagues and Friends,
After a successful congress 2009 held in Cape Town, South Africa, the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) has planned its tenth annual congress 2010 at the Azalaï Hotel Salam from 1st to 4th March 2010 in the beautiful city of Bamako in Mali. The AFSTA annual congress is the largest African Seed event that addresses the challenges and issues in the African seed industry. Like every year, it will be another exciting event that will attract delegates from Africa and the rest of the world. They will have the opportunity to discuss and deliberate on various international and national issues that have significant implications on the seed industry in Africa and globally.

I am pleased to invite you to massively participate in this congress 2010 to enrich the discussions and explore seed business opportunities with other colleagues and friends and at the same time get to know more about famous places in Mali such as Timbuktu by participating in the pre- and post congress tours. Registration is now open and you are urged to register at your earliest convenience to secure your hotel room since the negotiated prices would be only guaranteed until 1st February 2010. All the details about the AFSTA Congress 2010, including online registration, are available at the AFSTA website www.afsta.org.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN AFSTA

By Charles Nyachae

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The Memorandum of Understanding of the West Africa Seed Alliance (WASA) was signed in October 2009 in Bamako, Mali between the following organizations: the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA), which represents the private seed sector. The main objective of WASA is to promote a sustainable commercial seed industry focused on ensuring that small-scale farmers in West Africa have affordable, timely, and reliable access to high quality seeds and planting material. WASA will work closely with West African governments and regional organizations to implement policies that encourage private sector investment in local seed production that will stimulate increased adoption of improved high-quality seed and complementary inputs.

With financial support from USAID, AFSTA has just opened a Regional Office in Bamako, Mali in support of WASA. Recruitment for the WASA Coordinator is underway. The Coordinator is expected to be on board by the beginning of March 2010, and will work from the AFSTA Regional Office in Bamako.

The Regional Director of AFSTA, Dr. Paul Senghor, has been recruited and reported on 19th October 2009. He holds a PhD in Life Sciences and has served in various organizations including Union for the Protection of New Plant Varieties (UPOV).

The AFSTA Regional Office is currently hosted by the Institut du Sahel (INSAH). In collaboration with the WASA partners and the seed stakeholders, AFSTA hopes that the opening of this Regional Office will facilitate the

implementation of activities that are aimed at improving seed supply in West Africa in particular and in Africa in general.



From L to R: Justin Rakotoarisaona, Moustapha Amadou (DG of INSAH), Paul Senghor (AFSTA Regional Manager).

AFSTA has signed the Headquarter agreement with the Kenyan government and attained diplomatic status on 23rd November 2009.

SADC REGIONAL VARIETY CATALOGUE WORKSHOP

Source:

www.sadc.int/fanr/crops/seed_security/.../SADCSEEDUpdateN42003.pdf

The South African Development Community (SADC) held a workshop on regional variety catalogue from 26th to 29th October 2009 in Lusaka, Zambia whose main objective was to create nationally comparable data and information in a regionally acceptable format for the regional variety catalogue.

There was need to include the country of origin in the list so as to know, for the same varieties, their originality. It was noted that some varieties do not undergo variety release in some countries. Instead, they go straight into the market if they meet the basic requirements of a particular country. Some varieties have similar names but it was difficult to determine whether they were the same. For such cases, there is need for countries with the varieties in question to submit the pedigree information to enable proper differentiation.

There was need for all countries to submit their variety lists to be incorporated into the main catalogue. The agreed list of varieties for the region needed to be sent to International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs) for input as they play an important role in the breeding of most varieties in the region. CIMMYT will look into maize and wheat, IITA will look into cassava, CIP will look into potatoes, etc. The World Vegetable Research and Development Centre

(AVRDC) Africa Regional Office in Arusha Tanzania will assist in reviewing all vegetable varieties. National authorities will also cross check their information with respective seed companies and all relevant stakeholders. The Iowa State University will send the reviewed list to all the national authorities and they will have a month to assess it before the final compilation is released in the region. Once the list is out all AFSTA members are urged to go through it and give any comments or suggestions.

FAO WORLD FOOD SUMMIT

Extract from:

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/37421/icode/>

“From 16th to 18th November 2009, world leaders convened at FAO Headquarters for the World Summit on Food Security and unanimously adopted a declaration pledging renewed commitment to eradicating hunger from the face of the earth sustainably and at the earliest date. Countries also agreed to work to reverse the decline in domestic and international funding for agriculture and promote new investment in the sector, to improve governance of global food issues in partnership with relevant stakeholders from the public and private sector, and to proactively face the challenges of climate change to food security”.

This is in line with the objective of AFSTA on promoting sustainable food production and security in Africa through promotion of seed trade for the use of quality seed by African farmers.

Upcoming events:

- **23rd – 26th January 2010:** American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) 49th Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference - Red Rock Resort & Casino Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.
- **8th – 9th March 2010:** Meeting on Alliance for the Seed industry in Eastern and Southern Africa (ASIESA), Nairobi, Kenya.
- **1st – 5th March 2010:** AFSTA annual congress 2010 in Bamako, Mali.

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Disclaimer:

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