

Embargoed: 11 August 2015

COLLABORATION ESSENTIAL FOR PRODUCTIVITY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY

Investment in agricultural development for the poor creates a win-win-win: more food and income for the poorest of the poor, lower prices for the urban poor and extra security and income for Australia, but all research sectors must collaborate to bring about real change.

This will be a key messages of Dr Martin Kropff, Director General of the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) in his address to the Crawford Fund's annual food security conference titled *The Business of Food Security: Profitability, Sustainability and Risk*. It is being held in Parliament House, Canberra 10-12 August and will focus on the importance of collaboration between the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to achieve sustainable intensification and improved food security.

"Maize and wheat make up close to two-thirds of the world's food energy intake, and contribute 55-70 percent of total daily calories in the diets of those living in developing countries," said Dr Kropff, who was until recently Rector Magnificus and Vice Chairman of the Executive Board of Wageningen University and Research Center, the world's top ranked agricultural university.

In his address, Dr Kropff will discuss ways that both CIMMYT and Wageningen have successfully and innovatively worked with the private and not-for-profit sectors for outcomes benefiting developed and developing countries as well as commercial companies and smallholder farmers.

"For the world to truly benefit from the agricultural research to overcome the impact of climate change, population growth and limited natural resources, all players must work better together," he said.

"Investment in research and development (R&D) may be low in the international public sector as compared to the private sector, but the effectiveness and the return on public sector investment is high, especially in developing countries. The private and public sector have different approaches to agricultural R&D but share a common goal to serve emerging markets and find new R&D applications.

"Agricultural research can remain an academic undertaking unless it is informed by real problems on the farm. Efforts must be made to deliver solutions through private-public collaborations to real users – the farmers of the world. The private sector has an important role to play. Working together will have the greatest impact on both productivity and sustainable food security for all," he said.

"Agricultural sectors in donor countries also benefit through CIMMYT's work. Up to 98% of Australian wheat originates from CIMMYT-derived varieties and it's been estimated this gives farmers a benefit of at \$30 million a year, or roughly \$750 million over 25 years. Australia's investment in CIMMYT creates a win-win-win: more production and income for the poor, lower prices for urban poor and extra income and security for Australia."

Other speakers will include:

- Mr Anthony Pratt, Executive Chairman, Visy Industries
- HE Gerda Verburg, Chair, UN Comm on World Food Security & of the WEF Council on Food Security & Nutrition
- Dr Cary Fowler, biodiversity conservation advocate

The Crawford Fund wishes to thank the supporters of this event including:

AARES, ACIAR, ATSE, AVRDC, Bayer CropScience, CBH Ltd, CIMMYT, CSIRO, Croplife Australia, Curtin University, Department of Agriculture, DFAT, Elanco Animal Health, Global Food Studies- University of Adelaide, GRDC, La Trobe University, Murdoch University, OGTR, PT Syngenta Indonesia, QUT, RIRDC, Scope Global, Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture, TIA, The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney, UWA, UWS, Visy, WWF