ICRISAT, KeyGene ink research partnership

To develop productive crops for small farmers

A global partnership on technologies to potentially benefit millions of smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa was signed on May 25 in Mumbai.

According to a release in Sangareddy on Monday, Netherlands-based agricultural biotech company KeyGene and not–for-profit scientific research organisation, International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) for research and co-development on legumes and cereals. The two institutions will work together using novel crop innovation solutions based on KeyGene’s proprietary technologies and know-how.

The signing took place at a high profile trade mission hosted by the High Commission of The Netherlands, in the presence of Dutch Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture Carola Schouten in Mumbai. The LoI was signed by ICRISAT deputy director-general research (acting) Kiran K. Sharma and KeyGene CEO Arjen van Tunen.

KeyGene and ICRISAT would work together on innovative approaches for trait development and gene discovery. KeyGene would share its knowledge and expertise on crops and the use of KeyGene’s crop innovation platforms. This includes KeyGene’s Sequence Based Genotyping (SBG) and mutation breeding technologies. The genetically diverse grain legume resources of ICRISAT would serve as a reservoir for the identification and exploitation of useful traits. These will be used as a starting point for crop breeding and mutagenesis programs.

“We look forward to this collaboration with ICRISAT to combine scientific expertise from both organisations. The applications of KeyGene technology in the germplasm of ICRISAT’s mandate crops can help develop highly productive and resilient crops for food and nutrition security of the poorest populations in India and Africa”, said Mr. van Tunen.

Fostering innovation

“We are hopeful to see rapid improvements in the applications of technology and its translation into next-generation agricultural products to benefit smallholder farmers in the dry-lands. We also believe the combined knowledge will enable building capacity to foster innovation in agriculture”, said Peter Carberry, director-general (acting), ICRISAT. Read more..