Jacqueline Hughes takes charge as Director-General of ICRISAT

To focus on mitigating Covid-19 impact on agriculture

Jacqueline d’Arros Hughes, a plant health expert, has taken charge as Director-General of the Hyderabad-based International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

She succeeds Peter Carberry, who has returned to Australia after completing his term. Hughes, however, assumed office from the Philippines during a virtual event as she could not travel to Hyderabad due to travel restrictions.

“Risk to people, staff, communities, stakeholders, and the research on which many of our stakeholders depend, has to be minimised as the lockdown lifts,” she said.

The virtual event was attended by ICRISAT staff and the Governing Board.

With a Doctoral degree in microbiology and virology, Hughes, a British national, moved to Ghana in the early 1990s to work with the Cocoa Research Institute and then at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Nigeria. She later joined the World Vegetable Centre in Taiwan as its Deputy Director General – Research.

Before taking up the ICRISAT role, Hughes was Deputy Director General–Research at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines.

“Hughes is focused on mitigating the impact of Covid-19 on agriculture by supporting smallholder farmers in the semi-arid tropics of Africa and Asia in finding ways to safely return to their farms and ward off food crisis,” an ICRISAT statement has said. Read more..