



Nigeria releases two soybean varieties developed at IITA

Two soybean varieties, TGx 1988-5F (NCRISOY-1) and TGx 1989-19F (NCRISOY-2), were released in December 2014 by the Nigeria Varietal Release and Registration Committee. The varieties were developed by IITA in collaboration with National Cereals Research Institute, Badeggi, the agency responsible for the development of soybean in Nigeria.

NCRISOY-1 is an early maturing variety that can be harvested 90-100 days after sowing. It was developed from a progeny derived from a single-cross between the parents TGx 1740-2F and UG5. Other salient features are promiscuous nodulation and resistance to several diseases (rust, *Cercospora* leaf spot, and bacterial pustule). The potential yield is about 2.5 tons/ha. Grains contain approximately 35% crude protein and about 18% oil.

NCRISOY-2 is a medium maturing variety that can be harvested 101-110 days after sowing. It was developed from a progeny derived from a single-cross between TGx 1440-2E and UG5. Other salient features are highly promiscuous nodulation and resistance to several diseases (rust, *Cercospora* leaf spot, and bacterial pustule). The potential yield is about 3.0



Remi Adeleke inspecting the new soybean varieties on the field.

tons/ha. Grains contain about 38% crude protein and about 18% oil.

Remi Adeleke of Legume Breeding says, "One of the outstanding characteristics of these varieties is the production of the first set of pods at about 15-20 cm from ground level since this makes them suitable for mechanized harvesting." The feature of rust resistance in these varieties will counter the increasing threat from the recent spread of the devastating rust disease. These two new varieties will add to the arsenal of the three

other rust-resistant varieties released in 2008 and 2010. Seeds of NCRISOY-1 and NCRISOY-2 have been provided to AGRA seed project and the IITA Youth Agripreneurs for further increase.

Currently, the increasing demand for soybean by the food, feed, and poultry industries outstrips domestic production of soybean in Nigeria. Undoubtedly these two varieties will contribute significantly to increased production and help to reduce the imports of soybean to meet the significant supply gap.

Master Bakers in Abia State trained on cassava bread production

The IFAD/IITA High Quality Cassava Flour (HQCF) value chain project recently organized a 2-day training workshop for 40 participants drawn from the Master Bakers Association in Abia State, the Abia State Women in Agriculture (WIA), and the National Roots Crops Research Institute (NRCRI) Umudike. The workshop aimed to equip the bakers with the knowledge of how to use HQCF for baking bread and confectionery.



The trainees with Mr Agomoh Nkwachukwu (center), wearing a suit.

Master Bakers in Abia State trained on cassava bread production

IITA Gregory Nwaoliwe was the facilitator of the workshop. He said that the initiative was part of IITA's concerted efforts to make nutritious, palatable, and affordable meals available to Nigerians, boost the economy, and reduce unemployment especially for women and young people. "The training corresponds with the Federal Government's policy on the inclusion of 20% HQCF in bread. This option will save Nigeria from spending scarce foreign

exchange on wheat flour importation, create employment opportunities for the unemployed youth, and also open up market opportunities for cassava farmers in general." He added, "HQCF is simple to use and healthy. It can be adapted for both domestic and commercial production of cakes, biscuits, chinchin, meat pies, and so on." Mr Agomoh Nkwachukwu, Permanent Secretary, Office of the Executive Governor, who

represented the Abia State Governor Theodore Orji, was so delighted with the outcome of the training. He said, "I had heard about cassava bread and now I see it is a reality. Our bakers in Abia State can now benefit from this technology". He urged the bakers to ensure that the product reached the general public and the rural areas as those were the potent avenues for creating awareness about it

AfDB scores SARD-SC project high on implementation

During their third supervisory mission to the SARD-SC project in Ibadan, 1-10 December 2014, representatives of the African Development Bank (AfDB) said they were satisfied with the significant improvements in the implementation of the project across all its commodity value chains of cassava, maize, rice, and wheat.

The representatives were Dr Jonas Chianu, Principal Agricultural Economist and SARD-SC Task Manager, Mr Baba Abdullai, Principal Procurement Officer, and Mr Olufemi Ojo-Fajuyi, Financial Management Consultant.

The team also expressed their satisfaction with the implementation within the different components of the project (technology and innovation generation, technology and innovation dissemination, capacity building, and efficient project management) noting that efforts to achieve the various targets set for the different indicators of the project showed that the project was on track.

"The disbursement rate of the project is currently over 35% which is good for such a complex project at its current level of implementation," they said.



Hilde Koper with Dr Jonas Chianu after signing the Aide Memoire.

"We expect this to increase in 2015 following the payments of the pending full cost recovery bills for the various implementation centers for 2013 and 2014."

The team also paid a courtesy visit to Dr Kenton Dashiell, Deputy Director General, Partnership and Capacity Building, who warmly expressed his pleasure on the reported progress of the SARD-SC project. He also

assured the team of the readiness of the IITA's senior management to do all necessary to ensure that the project delivered its planned outputs and impacts.

The 10-day supervisory mission was concluded with the signing of the project's Aide Memoire by Mrs Hilde Koper-Limbourg, Head Project Administration, on behalf of the DDG. Dr Jonas Chianu signed on behalf of the Bank.

Events for next week:

- HRS Office Contract Review/Seminar, Manihot Room, Monday, 26 January 2015.
- HRS Annual Retreat, Conference Centre (PM), 27-29 January.
- Corpers' Day Seminar: "Corruption Free Leadership" Seminar, Conference Centre (AM), Wednesday, 28 January.
- Cassava Breeding Group, Vigna Room, 29-31 Jan 2015.

Got a story to share? Please email it with photos and captions every Wednesday to Andrea Gros (a.gros@cgiar.org), Katherine Lopez (k.lopez@cgiar.org), Jeffrey T. Oliver (j.oliver@cgiar.org), Catherine Njuguna (c.njuguna@cgiar.org), or Adaobi Umeokoro (a.umeokoro@cgiar.org).

Other upcoming events

IITA Youth Agripreneurs prepare for an Entrepreneurial and Business Training workshop

In his continued efforts to mentor the youth to engage in agriculture as a viable business, Dr Nteranya Sanginga, IITA DG, has planned a 3-day entrepreneurial and business training workshop which is set to make those in the IITA Youth Agripreneurs scheme icons in the world of agricultural entrepreneurship. The beneficiaries of the proposed training have been drawn from five countries across sub-Saharan Africa: Kenya, Zambia, DR Congo, Tanzania, and Uganda.

On 3-5 February 2015, consultants from EKIMIKS Nigeria Ltd--a leading business management firm with quality experience in entrepreneurial skill mentoring and which seeks to empower budding entrepreneurs on financial and management related issues--will join the young people at the Conference Center in Ibadan in the training entitled *Empowering Agripreneurs on Agripreneurial and Business Management*.

The training will be streamed real time with daily updates on IITA social media platforms and will cover aspects of *Leadership and Self-Management in*



The banner features logos for IITA (Research to Nurture Africa), CGIAR, FMARD, IITA Youth Agripreneurs (Empowering the Future), L.A. CONSULT (Risk + Finance + General Management), and SYNERGISE. The main title is "Empowering Agripreneurs on Agripreneurial and Business Management". Below the title, it states "IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria" and "3 – 5 February 2015". At the bottom, the slogan "...Agriculture is the future" is written in a cursive font, and the website "www.iita.org" is in the bottom right corner.

Entrepreneurship, Essential Business skills, Business Accounting, Effective Sales and Marketing Strategies, Creating a Bankable Business, Case studies with agricultural bias of Agronomy and Animal Husbandry. The topics are all aimed to create and enhance the productivity and profitability of the Agripreneurs' enterprise, transform participants' attitudes, and strengthen their skills.

Owoeye Omolayo, IITA Youth Agripreneurs' Head of Capacity

Development Unit, stated that the workshop became imperative because of the roles being played by the group among young people in the agricultural sector.

She added that the workshop would equip the participants with basic knowledge in book-keeping and accounting, zero defects in business operations, corporate governance practices, fundamental entrepreneurial skills, and prepare them for future challenges especially in the world of business.

East and Southern Africa Project: Africa RISING gears up for External Mid-Term Review

It's all systems go as staff involved in the Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING), East and Southern Africa Project, prepare for an external mid-term review from 26 January to the end of April 2015. The review will be conducted

by a team of three experts – Jim Ellis Jones, Jean Ndikumana, and Chitsike Annah Colletah. They will be holding key informant interviews, document reviews, and focus group discussions as they visit the project sites in Malawi and Tanzania that will be covered in this review.

"The focus of this review is on assessing the conformity of the implemented work with the research framework developed, evaluating how the project is fostering learning by the stakeholders, and examining partnerships and project management. We therefore expect to get recommendations how to rectify aspects of the project, if this is necessary," notes Dr Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon, Coordinator, Africa RISING West Africa and East/Southern Africa Projects.

Results of the review will feed into the donor-commissioned Program review later this year and the planning for the next project phase. Recommendations from the review will also allow the Africa RISING management, Chief Scientist, and key partners to make necessary adjustments before the next field season. There was a similar external mid-term review of the Africa RISING West Africa Project last year between August and November 2014: a final report from that exercise is now available.



Dr Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon, Coordinator Africa RISING West Africa and East/Southern Africa Projects.