

Press Release

SEED INDUSTRY CALLS FOR GLOBAL COALITION TO STRENGTHEN FOOD SECURITY

Nations must unite in order to ensure crop diversity and safeguard global food supplies for a growing global population. That was the message from the International Seed Federation (ISF) to representatives of governments, multilateral institutions, gene banks and foundations at the Crop Trust Pledging Conference in Washington DC on 15 April.

ISF Secretary General Michael Keller warned that without their support, we are in danger of losing crop diversity and limiting food supplies for future generations. "Central to this endeavor is the work of our plant breeders who depend on plant genetic resources to create new varieties," said Mr Keller.

Mr Keller highlighted the need for a specialized global system to collect and store plant genetic resources to maintain crop diversity and strengthen global food security. "The Crop Trust and the Access and Benefit Sharing Fund of the International Treaty are equally important and equally necessary in the global management and exchange of plant genetic resources from international gene banks," said Mr Keller.

Calling on stakeholders and Parties to support the conservation of genetic resources, ISF led the way with a symbolic financial contribution to be split between both funds, and emphasized the importance of ongoing cooperation.

"The seed industry continues to strive for improved and accessible seed with increased resistance to disease and pests, and an increased ability to withstand environmental extremes, in order to strengthen food security in the future," Mr Keller concluded. The Crop Trust, an international organization working to safeguard crop diversity, is an essential funding element of the United Nation's International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), an agreement that includes 135 countries.

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About ISF

ISF is the voice of the global seed industry. It has represented the interests of its members since 1924, and represents 96% of the international seed trade today. With a global reach extending to members around the world and official observer status in intergovernmental and international organizations, ISF is uniquely positioned to assist in the development of government policy and business strategy. www.worldseed.org