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AFRICAN AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION
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Contact: Nancy Muchiri,
n.muchiri@aatf-africa.org
+254 20 4223700/254 735 992 206

Isaka Mashauri
tanseed@yahoo.com
+255 784 352 412

TANSEED COMMISSIONS TREATER TO PROCESS SEED FOR CONTROLLING STRIGA WEED INFESTATION IN MAIZE IN TANZANIA

Tanseed and partners' commission seed processing facility that will see farmers' access to herbicide-resistant maize varieties to combat Striga weed infestation and improve maize production and food security enhanced

MOROGORO, Tanzania 26 September, 2014: The Striga Control in Maize partnership has today commissioned a state of the art seed processing machine that will enhance the effectiveness of StrigAway™- a herbicide-resistant seed and treatment to improve the productivity of maize, one of the most important food crops in Tanzania. The commissioning of the seed treater facility at Tanseed International in Njombe, Tanzania attended by the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) the coordinator of the partnership will facilitate the coating of maize seed with the StrigAway Imazapyr Resistant (IR) herbicide which kills the *Striga* seed as it germinates and before it can cause any crop damage.

Lauding the commissioning of the treater, Dr Gospel Omany, the Senior Manager Project Management and Deployment at AATF said that the treater will contribute to the improvement of maize production in Tanzania with the use of the StrigAway IR maize variety that Tanseed will process and market in the country. "Tanzania is the most affected country by the *Striga* weed in East Africa. More than 600,000 hectares in 11 regions in Tanzania are affected by *Striga* – including the food basket regions of Ruvuma, Mbeya and Iringa" he said. *Striga* infests more than 1.5 million hectares (ha) of land in East Africa.

"The Project goal of ensuring that farmers have access to improved seed that addresses such agricultural production constraints such as *Striga* will also greatly contribute to the country's attainment of its objectives under the *Kilimo Kwanza* initiative that is aimed at making Tanzania a food secure country" said Isaka Mashauri, the Managing Director of Tanseed.

StrigAway™ combats *Striga*, a parasitic plant that affects the agricultural productivity of approximately 600,000 hectares in Tanzania. Commonly known as witchweed, this parasitic plant can cause a 20-80 percent crop loss in maize, leading many farmers to abandon fields with heavy *Striga* infestation.

StrigAway™, which includes conventionally bred herbicide resistant maize varieties and an herbicide seed coating, was developed by BASF and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT).



The commissioning of the treater follows the registration of the Imazapyr resistance herbicide by Tanzania's Tropical Pesticides Research Institute in November 2012. The herbicide is used to coat maize enabling it to control the emergence of the *Striga* weed.

Tanseed released a StrigAway-IR maize variety, TAN 222 in 2008 also known as *komesha kiduha* (stop *Striga*) and has been testing it demonstration plots with farmers around the country since. "The registration of the IR herbicide and the commissioning of this treater will now enable us to move with speed to provide farmers with the StrigAway IR maize seed wherever it is needed" said Mashauri, "I see the fortunes of maize farmers in Tanzania and consequently food security improving dramatically with the use of this seed" he added.

The upscaling of the commercialisation of the StrigAway technology in Tanzania is being supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of the US government's Feed the Future initiative through AATF. Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation's goal is to find and commercialise agricultural technologies that benefit smallholder farmers around the world.

The Striga Control in Maize project in Tanzania is a partnership between AATF, Tanseed International, Meru Agro Seed Company, CIMMYT, BASF and Feed the Future initiative.

About AATF (<http://www.aatf-africa.org/>)

The African Agriculture Technology Foundation (AATF) is a not-for-profit organisation designed to access, develop, adapt and deliver appropriate agricultural technologies for sustainable use by smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa through innovative partnerships and effective stewardship along the entire value chain. AATF provides expertise and know-how that facilitates the identification, access, development, delivery and utilisation of appropriate agricultural technologies. AATF works towards food security and poverty reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa, and its structure and operations draw upon the best practices and resources of both the public and private sectors. AATF is a registered charity under the laws of England and Wales and has been given a tax-exempt status in the USA. It is incorporated in Kenya and in the UK and has been granted host country status by the Government of Kenya where it is headquartered and is registered as a charity in Nigeria.

About Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation (<http://www.partneringforinnovation.org/>)

Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation spurs private sector investment to disseminate new agricultural technologies to smallholders in developing countries. Funded by USAID as part of the US government's Feed the Future initiative and implemented by Fintrac Inc., the program's goal is to put innovative agriculture technologies into the hands of smallholder farmers to improve productivity and incomes quickly and sustainably.

About Tanseed International ([http://www. http://tanseed.co.tz/](http://www.tanseed.co.tz/))

Tanseed International is a private seed company with indigenous shareholding. It is incorporated in Tanzania under the companies ordinance (CAP 212) and registered with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security since 2002. Its mission is to improve agricultural productivity and rural livelihood through research, production and supply of quality seed.

About BASF (www.basf.com)

At BASF, we create chemistry – and have been doing so for 150 years. Our portfolio ranges from chemicals, plastics, performance products and crop protection products to oil and gas. As the world's leading chemical company, we combine economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. Through science and innovation, we enable our customers in nearly every industry to meet the current and future needs of society. Our products and solutions contribute to conserving resources, ensuring nutrition and improving quality of life. We have summed up this contribution in our corporate purpose: We create chemistry for a sustainable future. BASF had sales of about €74 billion in 2013 and

over 112,000 employees as of the end of the year. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA) and Zurich (AN).

About CIMMYT (<http://www.cimmyt.org/>)

Headquartered in Mexico, CIMMYT is the global leader in research for development in wheat and maize and wheat- and maize-based farming systems. CIMMYT works throughout the developing world with hundreds of partners to sustainably increase the productivity of maize and wheat systems to improve global food security and livelihoods. Improved, CIMMYT-derived wheat is sown on more than 60 million hectares in developing countries – over 70 percent of the spring wheat area planted with modern wheat varieties in those nations. These wheat varieties are responsible for bigger harvests that bring annual added benefits to farmers of at least US \$500 million. Similarly, 50 percent of modern maize varieties grown in developing countries come from CIMMYT improved seeds. CIMMYT is a member of the CGIAR Consortium and leads the Consortium Research Programs WHEAT and MAIZE. CIMMYT receives support from national governments, foundations, development banks and other public and private agencies.

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