

NEWEST rice project expands to Nigeria



A team from Nigeria's NBC, AATF and NCRI on an inspection tour of the selected CFT site at NCRI, Badeggi in June 2014

Activities to scale up the Nitrogen-Use Efficient (NUE), Water-Use Efficient (WUE and Salt Tolerant (ST) Rice project to Nigeria kicked off early this year with the signing of a collaboration agreement between the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) and the Nigeria's National Cereal Research Institute (NCRI). Nigeria becomes the third

project country after Ghana and Uganda.

During the period, partners in Nigeria identified a confined field trial (CFT) site at NCRI in Badeggi. The site was inspected by the country's National Biosafety Committee (NBC) in June 2014 who recommended its approval by the Ministry of Environment. To enable

NCRI to carry out the CFT, approval was granted for it to carry out biotechnology work and its Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) inaugurated by the NBC.

The team also initiated the CFT application process to seek approval from the country's NBC to conduct trials during 2014.

2014 annual review and planning meeting held

Project partners met in Accra, Ghana in April 2014 to review the implementation of 2013 activities and develop plans for 2014. During the meeting, a review of the data from the 2013 CFTs conducted by partners in Uganda, Ghana and by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture in Colombia was done. Promising preliminary results were observed from the trials data that showed differences in plant yield and that four lines had potential to perform better than the checks at different levels of nitrogen. Partners also took time to visit the CFT site in Nobewam.

During the meeting, a Project Advisory Committee meeting was held and discussions held on how to strengthen its project oversight and coordination role.



Partners and other stakeholders visit the Ghana CFT in Nobewam during the Project's annual review and planning meeting in April 2014

Development of triple stacked rice lines completed

The product development component of the project made significant progress with the completion of the transformation work to develop triple stacked nitrogen-use efficient, water-use efficient and salt tolerant lines. This activity carried out

by Arcadia Biosciences, the product development partner in the project resulted in the development of 19 triple stacked lines.

Seeds of 16 of the lines were sent to Ghana and Uganda for testing

in CFTs this year. Multiplication of seeds of the remaining three lines is in progress and will be shipped to the countries when ready. Seed of the 19 lines will also be sent to Nigeria and to the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Columbia.

Third confined field trial established in Ghana

Following the successful conduct of two CFTs in Ghana in 2013, a third trial was installed at the Crops Research Institute in Nobewam in March 2014. The trial is composed of 15 NUE events and contains three nitrogen treatments of 30, 60 and 90 kg/ha with four replicates each. The trial is progressing well and will be harvested in July.

During the course of the trial CFT compliance training workshops and audits were carried out to enhance regulatory compliance at the site.

Meanwhile, partners in Uganda are preparing the site for the second CFT planting following the issuance of the CFT extension permit in January 2014.



The third CFT in Ghana as at June 2014

Project Partners

- African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF)
- Arcadia Biosciences
- Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture (PIPRA)
- International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)
- National Agricultural Research Organisation, Uganda
- Crop Research Institute, Ghana
- National Cereal Research Institute, Nigeria
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

AATF is a not-for-profit organisation that facilitates and promotes public/private partnerships for the access and delivery of appropriate agricultural technologies for use by smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa. 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.

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