

CIMMYT and KAUST sign Memorandum of Understanding to advance genomic innovation and strengthen global food security

CIMMYT and King Abdullah University of Science and Technology have formalized a partnership to accelerate genomic innovation and strengthen global food security

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, December 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [CIMMYT](#) and [King Abdullah University of Science and Technology \(KAUST\)](#) have

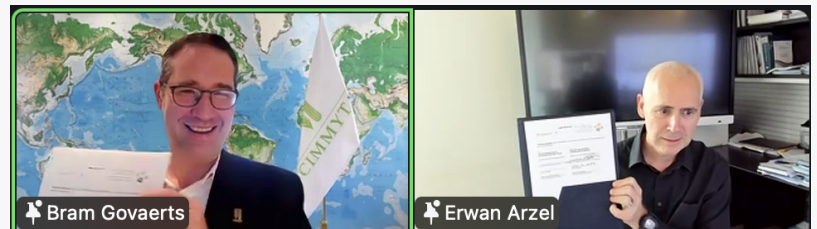
formalized a new scientific partnership aimed at accelerating crop improvement through cutting-edge bioinformatics, genomics, and data-driven agricultural research.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed virtually by Bram Govaerts, CIMMYT Director General, and Professor Erwan Arzel, Director, Research Funding and Services at KAUST, establishes a long-term framework for collaborative research, capacity strengthening, and innovation in support of resilient, productive, and sustainable food systems.

Building on CIMMYT's decades-long leadership in maize and wheat science and KAUST's globally recognized excellence in computational biology and advanced research infrastructure, the partnership will focus on:

1. Joint development and application of bioinformatics and genomic tools to accelerate breeding innovations.
2. Capacity building, including workshops, technical exchanges, and graduate training.
3. Co-creation of data platforms, standards, and best practices to ensure interoperability, quality, and impact.
4. Future areas of collaboration aligned with shared scientific priorities and emerging global challenges.

"This partnership exemplifies the type of bold, science-driven cooperation needed to deliver



Bram Govaerts and Erwan Arzel formalize a new CIMMYT and KAUST partnership to advance genomic innovation and global food security

resilient crops and sustainable food systems for the future,” said Bram Govaerts, CIMMYT Director General. “By combining CIMMYT’s mission-driven agricultural research with KAUST’s world-class expertise and regional leadership, we can unlock new innovations that support farmers and food security across the Global South.”

Professor Mark Tester, Chair of the Center of Excellence for Sustainable Food Security, highlighted that “Adapting to environmental change requires truly innovative approaches to food security that account for variable climates and limited water. We must focus on scientific expertise, bring together the brightest minds in the world, and move with pace. This partnership brings together two world-leading institutions with complementary strengths to tackle pressing issues in food security.”

A partnership aligned with regional and global priorities

The collaboration comes at a strategic time, as Saudi Arabia is increasing investment in agricultural innovation to enhance food system resilience. Recent national initiatives, including large-scale commitments to research, technology, and sustainability, underscore the region’s ambition to become a global hub for scientific excellence.

This MoU is fully consistent with the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 Strategy, which emphasizes innovation, sustainability, and food security as pillars of national development. It also formalizes a partnership that has been evolving for more than a decade, during which CIMMYT and KAUST have collaborated informally on research exchanges and joint scientific initiatives.

The CIMMYT-KAUST partnership directly supports these efforts by leveraging advanced computational research, world-leading germplasm resources, and internationally recognized breeding platforms. The synergy between KAUST’s scientific ecosystem and CIMMYT’s mission-driven mandate is expected to drive transformative advances with benefits extending across the Gulf, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

This collaboration reinforces CIMMYT’s role as a global pioneer in applied agricultural science and KAUST’s leadership as a world-class research institution committed to addressing critical challenges in food security, sustainability, and technological innovation.

About CIMMYT

CIMMYT is a cutting edge, non-profit, international organization dedicated to solving tomorrow’s problems today. It is entrusted with fostering improved quantity, quality, and dependability of production systems and basic cereals such as maize, wheat, triticale, sorghum, millets, and associated crops through applied agricultural science, particularly in the Global South, through building strong partnerships. This combination enhances the livelihood trajectories and resilience of millions of resource-poor farmers, while working towards a more productive,

inclusive, and resilient agrifood system within planetary boundaries.

Learn more at www.cimmyt.org.

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