

ICRISAT scientist gets international crop science award

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ICRISAT scientist presented with 2012 International Service in Crop Science Award



Bangalore: Dr CL Laxmipathi Gowda, director, grain legumes research program, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) based in Hyderabad, India, received the 2012 International Service in Crop Science Award during the Annual Meeting of Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), on October 23, 2012, at Cincinnati, US. The prestigious award is in recognition of Dr Gowda's contribution to agriculture in the dryland areas of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa in his nearly 37 years of scientific research work at ICRISAT.

Dr Gowda is known for his significant contribution in developing improved chickpea (both indigenous and kabuli) cultivars with high yield and resistance to diseases and pests. Shared as international public goods (IPGs) with scientists and national programs globally, 68 high-yielding chickpea cultivars from these improved breeding lines have been selected, tested and released in 30 countries globally.

Several of these chickpea cultivars have had significant impacts in smallholder farmers' fields, and have contributed in the attainment of national food security and increased farmers' incomes in many developing countries like Myanmar and Ethiopia. In India, adoption of improved chickpea cultivars from ICRISAT-bred lines has resulted in more than 80 percent chickpea area covered with improved varieties in the state of Andhra Pradesh. In the last decade the area has increased four-fold and production nine-fold, due to the nearly three-fold yield increase.

Dr Gowda is also known internationally, particularly in ICRISAT's focus regions (Asia, West and Central Africa, and East and Southern Africa) for his nurturing, scientific leadership in the areas of breeding, pathology, entomology, and physiology. He has been assisting and guiding national legumes improvement programs in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam, and Thailand. He is also an International Adviser for the Chinese National Groundnut Research Committee, and a member of the Genetic Resources Committee of India.

Dr Gowda is one of the main architects of the Hybrid Parents Research Consortium (HPRC), ICRISAT's flagship public-private partnership (PPP) program with private sector seed companies that is now a model for PPP in other international

centers. HPRC capitalizes on the private sectors' ability to produce and market hybrid seed, making those available and affordable to smallholder farmers.

Dr Gowda completed his BSc (Agriculture) from the University of Agriculture Sciences, Bengaluru; his MSc (Agriculture) from the GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar; and his PhD from the Indian Agriculture Research Institute, New Delhi. He joined ICRISAT in 1975 as a chickpea breeder.

He has published more than 270 journal articles and conference papers, and over 80 books and book chapters; and serves the editorial board of the *International Journal of Plant Protection*, *Journal of Food Security*, and *Journal of Crop Science and Biotechnology*.

CSSA is an international scientific society comprised of more than 6,000 members with its headquarters in Madison, US. It advances the discipline of crop science and fosters the transfer of knowledge on breeding and genetics, crop physiology, crop ecology, seed physiology, genomics, molecular genetics, biotechnology, and biomedical plants, among others.