

Joint Media Release

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IRRI and BASF team up to promote direct-seeded rice in Asia

LOS BAÑOS, Philippines and SINGAPORE – The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and BASF signed three agreements, paving the way for wider dissemination and adoption of direct-seeded rice (DSR) tools and technologies. Through this partnership, the two organizations will establish a multi-stakeholder DSR Consortium and further research on the use of non-genetically modified, herbicide-tolerant rice.

Under optimal conditions, direct seeding is considered a more efficient and cheaper method of growing rice than manual rice transplantation. It requires less resources such as labor and water, and it emits less greenhouse gases compared with other rice growing methods.

Although direct seeding is widely practiced in the United States and South America, challenges such as higher yield losses due to weed infestation have limited its wide-scale adoption in Asia.

The new research consortium aims to:

- develop robust mechanized dry- and wet-DSR systems,
- investigate solutions to manage weeds, and
- formulate agronomic practices suited for DSR farms in Asia.

Furthermore, the consortium will enable IRRI to develop DSR technologies and test rice varieties suitable to Asian environmental conditions. Membership is open to the public and private sectors, research organizations, NGOs, and farmer groups.

“Feeding the world is not just a public sector concern. It's a problem that needs everyone's contribution, including the private sector. With this partnership, we're enabling organizations like IRRI to work closely with companies like BASF toward a common goal, which is sustainable development,” said Jacqueline Hughes, IRRI's Deputy Director General for Research.

The partnership will also advance research on non-genetically modified, herbicide-tolerant rice to safely control weed infestation in DSR systems. Once these varieties are introduced to the market, a third-party organization will assess their impact on rice productivity, profitability, and ecological sustainability.

“This partnership with IRRI will expand our reach and expertise, and we are confident that this will contribute to faster and wider dissemination of rice technologies, such as the Clearfield® Production System and Provisia® Rice System, that raise rice productivity and farmers' income at the same time. Through this collaboration, we are excited to provide products and program support that contribute to food security in a significant and environmentally sustainable way,” said Gustavo Palerosi Carneiro, head of BASF's Crop Protection Division in Asia Pacific.

About the International Rice Research Institute

The International Rice Research Institute is a nonprofit, autonomous, nonpolitical, international organization established in 1960 under international treaty, with a mission to reduce poverty and hunger through rice science, improve the health of rice farmers and consumers and ensure environmental sustainability through collaborative research, partnerships and strengthening of national agricultural research and extension systems.

About BASF's Crop Protection division

With a rapidly growing population, the world is increasingly dependent on our ability to develop and maintain sustainable agriculture and healthy environments. BASF's Crop Protection division works with farmers, agricultural professionals, pest management experts and others to help make this possible. With their cooperation, BASF is able to sustain an active R&D pipeline, an innovative portfolio of products and services, and teams of experts in the lab and in the field to support customers in making their businesses succeed. In 2016, BASF's Crop Protection division generated sales of €5.6 billion. For more information, please visit agriculture.basf.com.

About BASF

At BASF, we create chemistry for a sustainable future. We combine economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. The approximately 114,000 employees in the BASF

Group work on contributing to the success of our customers in nearly all sectors and almost every country in the world. Our portfolio is organized into five segments: Chemicals, Performance Products, Functional Materials & Solutions, Agricultural Solutions and Oil & Gas. BASF generated sales of about €58 billion in 2016. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA) and Zurich (BAS). Further information at www.basf.com.

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