

McKnight Foundation Collaborative Crop Research Program

Quarterly Update for July 1-October 1, 2002

News

Bob Goodman

We are all grateful that Bob is on the mend after a frightening bout of pulmonary embolism. We wish him a full and speedy recovery!

Workshops, Conferences, and Meetings

Consultation on breeding for adaptation to P-deficient soils in the African context (July 30-August 1, Dundee, NY)

We currently have two projects on P-acquisition in the CCRP portfolio (soybean, China; maize & sorghum, Brazil and Kenya). To explore the idea of an additional project on this theme, more focused on Africa, we had a one-day discussion meeting that included representatives of our existing projects and some additional people recommended by J. Lynch. The group consisted of Drs. Kathleen Brown, Jonathan Lynch, Sieglinde Snapp, Julia Kornegay, Leon Kochian, Bob Goodman and Rebecca Nelson. A summary of this meeting was presented by Rebecca at the OC meeting in Copenhagen. Notes taken by RN, in the form of a PowerPoint file, can be found at this site:

<http://mcknight.ccrp.cornell.edu/participants/wkshpsoil02.html>.

Workshop on Biotechnology, Breeding and Seed Systems for African Crops (September 15-19, in Bellagio, Italy):

Rebecca was invited to contribute to this workshop, and took opportunity to meet with a subset of RF grantees from Africa and to plan with Joe DeVries of RF/Nairobi. The purpose of the workshop was to create an opportunity for African crop improvement specialists to interact with leading scientists and innovators to learn about the latest developments in crop genetic improvement and seed systems, and to discuss these issues as they relate to their own work. Participants were informed of new approaches and methodologies that may have immediate application or become useful in the near future, including the use of GIS to define production environments, and applications of

biotechnology and information technology in breeding programs. For more information, visit this site: http://www.css.orst.edu/rockefeller/Breeding_Workshop.htm.

Pearl millet workshop (October 6-14, in Bamako, Mali)

This workshop, instigated by R. Nelson and J. DeVries and co-organized by T. Fulton (Cornell) and E. Weltzein (ICRISAT), was very useful as background for the themes of under-researched grains, P-acquisition, and Striga.

Upcoming Events

Microarray and Bioinformatics Workshop II: Gene array applications and candidate gene identification in rice and other cereal crops (December 2-5, Los Banos, Philippines):

This workshop is aimed at providing researchers working on cereal crops with an opportunity to explore new developments in genomics through hands-on work with gene array technologies and bioinformatics, as well as discussions and presentations. The workshop will take advantage of the recently-established Gene Array and Molecular Marker Application Laboratory (GAMMA Lab) at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). The workshop will involve participants from the CCRP and the Asian Rice Biotechnology Network (ARBN). The workshop will be supported by the Asian Development Bank and The McKnight Foundation. Information on this workshop can be found at <http://mcknight.ccrp.cornell.edu/participants/conference.jsp>

CCRP Web

The CCRP Web, hosted at <http://mcknight.ccrp.cornell.edu> is well on its way to its full release, scheduled now to happen before the end of the year. Currently, we are working on three major areas: security, database functionality, and last round edits and additions. Though the web will be a perpetual “work in progress,” we expect it to be releasable once these vital portions of the web are up and working properly.

The CCRP website is constructed of more than 750 files, which include roughly 200 photos, 350 documents, and 200 pages. It has been a tremendous and continuous effort on the part of a few people: Kelly Lindsay, who put together the initial layout and is now editing and creating new pages on a daily basis; Jon Corson-Rikert of Cornell’s Mann

Library, who has been working on the very backbone of the site, the databases. He has also been researching security, which will play a major part of the website by providing access to documents through pre-assigned “roles;” and B-Swing, who put the site together with straightforward navigation and beautiful graphics. Feedback has been very helpful in these processes, and many thanks go out to those who provided us the opportunity to improve the site. Continued feedback is certainly welcome and appreciated!

The tasks we have left for completing our first release versions are as follows:

1. Site revisions. Kelly is currently editing and adding new pages on a daily basis.
2. Keyword refining and adding. Our student assistant, Megan, is putting together a hierarchy of literally thousands of keywords that will be a powerful tool for finding literature in our database.
3. Database functionality. Jon Corson Rikert is successfully working on getting the databases functioning.
4. Establishing the look and feel of the databases. Jon, Rebecca, and Kelly are matching the databases to the colors and style of the site.
5. Gene function database. Ying Wei and her assistant are currently developing this database.
6. Literature database refining and building. Kelly has moved over 4,700 references into a new database, "cleaning" it up in the process. New references are being added every day.
7. People database revisions. This information will be updated.
8. Copyright law research. Two options have currently been presented to us regarding copyright laws for our proposed literature service.
9. Security. Kelly has established a security hierarchy and document database that Jon will implement on the site. Jon is currently researching and testing this.

The site can be viewed at <http://mcknight.ccrp.cornell.edu>.

Literature Service

Over the past few months, we have had meetings with Pat McClary, a copyright lawyer, and Mann Library representatives regarding copyright law issues with the proposed

CCRP Literature Service. As Cornell has extensive literature access privileges for faculty and staff, providing articles to our colleagues who do not have this level of access to current literature is considered copyright infringement.

Currently, there are two options that provide a solution:

- 1) The Copyright Clearance Center. Using this service, articles that we wish to send out can be requested and submitted online for a price ranging between \$5 and \$45.
- 2) The Mann Direct Service, available Spring 2003, is based on cost recovery. The cost for an article will be roughly \$18.00 in copyright fees.

We are still debating which service is more beneficial and appropriate for the needs of our colleagues. We have established a fixed budget for these services {Comment not to be included in report: I suggest 10K—which makes 625 per project. What do you think?) and divide it up among the projects. That way, each project will have a set limit on the amount of requests per year.