



Press Release, 03 November 2020

WHEAT INITIATIVE INCREASES NETWORK AND WELCOMES MOROCCO AS A NEW MEMBER

The Wheat Initiative Secretariat is pleased to announce that Morocco's National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) has been inducted as the newest member of the Wheat Initiative. Last February the Wheat Initiative Secretariat and members of the Scientific Board traveled to Rabat, Morocco as part of the preparations for Morocco's membership. Along the existing international members of the Wheat Initiative, Morocco will join as the very first African country.

The Chair of the Scientific Board, Peter Langridge welcomed Morocco to the Wheat Initiative: "Their membership will bring additional capabilities and extend our global reach. The involvement of Morocco in our activities and decision-making processes will help ensure broad access to wheat research outcomes and add a new and important voice to setting the global research priorities."

The Director of INRA Morocco, Dr. Faouzi Bekkaoui, commented "We are glad to be part of this global wheat research network in the world. We are looking forward to fruitful collaboration actions and collaborative programs."

INRA Morocco's mission is to undertake research for agricultural development. They have made a major contribution to the modernisation of the agricultural sector and agro-systems in the region by improving methods and systems to boost the competitiveness of the country's agriculture. It is a public institution with origins dating back to 1914, with the creation of the first official agricultural research service. INRA is composed of a network of 10 Regional Research Centers and dozens of experimental areas spread over the national territory, covering the various agrosystems of Morocco. Furthermore, INRA Morocco works to maintain strong partnerships with national and international organisations, as well as the private sector and non-governmental organisations. CGIAR, ICARDA and CIMMYT are important members of these strong partnerships.

Dr. Ferrahi Moha, Wheat Megaproject Coordinator at INRA Morocco and member of the AHEAD Steering Committee made the following statement: "There is an urgent need for close cooperation in heat and drought research to address the challenge of a changing climate and the demand for sustainable wheat production globally and in Morocco in particular. The Wheat Initiative could offer this through the development of new collaborative programs and coordinated actions. The combination of new varieties and agronomic practices will allow farmers to improve and stabilise wheat yields in diverse production environments."

For more information regarding the Wheat Initiative please visit our website www.wheatinitiative.org

and sign up for the quarterly newsletter at www.wheatinitiative.org/newsletter.

Contact: wheat.initiative@julius-kuehn.de