

## Brief Notices/Kurze Mitteilungen

### Establishment of a German-Dutch Potato Department at the Gene Bank in the Institute of Crop Science and Seed Research of the Federal Agricultural Research Center, Braunschweig-Voelkenrode

During early February 1974 the establishment of a German-Dutch Potato Department at the German Gene Bank in the Institute of Crop Science and Seed Research of the Agricultural Research Center was set up at the occasion of a celebration in the 'Instituut de Haaff' (Foundation for Agricultural Plant Breeding) Wageningen/Netherlands. The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Minister of Food, Agriculture and Forestry of the Federal Republic of Germany signed an agreement for mutual co-operation between the Institut de Haaff and the gene bank in the Institute of Crop Science and Seed Research in the field of long-term preservation of genetic material of the potato. For the first time in the history of agricultural research in both countries, at a governmental level a scope has been created for a very close collaboration of national research institutes, concerning the potato as one of our most important crop plants.

In Western Europe much attention has been paid to the joint action of the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany, since previous plans have failed to establish a European co-operation in the field of collection, evaluation and maintenance of valuable genetic material of the potato. Several institutes of other European countries are showing interest to start co-operation with the German-Dutch Potato Department as soon as it has started working effectively from the fall of 1974.

The special conditions for any long-term preservation of vegetative material as well as the specific daylength requirements of many *Solanum* species for the tuber induction are very expensive. Therefore a positive effort on potato breeding work in both countries is expected from those prerequisites that will be set up in Braunschweig, while correspondingly sharing the arising costs. The Potato Department will have access to facilities established in Braunschweig for the storage and documentation of plant genetic material. The institute's scientific and technical staff will be available for special problems to be resolved.

An ad hoc-working group of representatives from the co-operating countries jointly prepared the inter-

ministerial agreement with respect to the evaluation and preservation of genetic material for the breeding of potatoes in both countries. Responsibilities to be dealt with in the German-Dutch Agreement of February 1974 have been defined as follows:

- a) establishment of a collection of wild and primitive forms under systematic check up of genuineness and the existence of undesirable duplicates;
- b) generative maintenance and increase of this collection;
- c) storage of seeds and pollen and phytosanitary preservation of vegetative material;
- d) co-ordination of systematic testing of genetic material with respect to the most important qualitative characteristics and its reaction to pests and diseases;
- e) documentation of all kind of available and newly gained information and subsequent supply to the institutes involved;
- f) publication and periodic updating of a catalogue and its feed back with information from evaluation programmes;
- g) production of crosses with wild species that are difficult to hybridize;
- h) hosting scientists, and post-doctorate and graduate students of both countries in order to carry out special work.

Details of the working programme resulting from the aforementioned points will be discussed and stated by a programming board that is formed at par of representatives from both countries. The following persons are members of the programming board: the directors, Institute of Crop Science and Seed Research, Braunschweig, and 'Instituut de Haaff' (Foundation for Agricultural Plant Breeding), two scientists and one governmental representative of each country. Actual members of the programming board are: a) for the Netherlands: Dr. Lambert (Instituut de Haaff), Ir. Stadhouders (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries)

Dr. Hermsen }  
 Dr. van der Zaag } scientists

b) for the Federal Republic of Germany:

N. N. (Institute of Crop Science and Seed Research),  
 MR Schmitz (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry),

Prof. Ross }  
 Dr. Hunnius } scientists

From 1st September 1974 the Potato Department will be directed by Dr. W. Lange, who until then was the head of the Cytogenetics Department of the Instituut de Haaff, Wageningen.

The collection of genetic material will start with duplicated seed samples of the collections of Prof. Ross and Dr. Hermsen. By the documentation division of the German gene bank a set of special information will be prepared with respect to the kind of information already incorporated in the computer and characteristics found in potato material by other institutes.

The first working programme will comprise investigations on material that is expected from an expedition to the Andes 1974/75 under the direction of Prof. Hawkes. In this connection the programming board recommends that most important resistance characteristics might be tested first and contacts to be established to corresponding institutes. In the frame of divided labor first tests will be carried out in the Federal Republic of Germany to specify resistance to *Heterodera*, Rattle Virus, *Fusarium* (resistance of seedlings and tubers) and *Erwinia*; in the Netherlands: *Heterodera*, *Phoma*, Scurf and *Phytophthora*. Furthermore it is intended to cooperate with the International Potato Center (CIP) in Lima/Peru in the problem of testing for resistance to *Rhizoctonia* and *Phytophthora* and possibly for the testing of protein content and protein quality.

For the further development of the Potato Department a financial programme has been laid out. This plan has to be finally confirmed by the German-Dutch Commission of Agricultural Research.

## International Maize Symposium Genetics and Breeding – 1975

In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the rediscovery of Mendel's paper, the University of Illinois will act as host for a five-day symposium on maize genetics and breeding to be held at the Ramada Inn, Champaign, Illinois, from September 8–12, 1975. The program will center on six themes: corn breeding, evolution, cytogenetics, gene action and

control, nuclear-cytoplasmic interactions, and tissue bionomics. The proceedings will be published.

Preregistration information may be obtained from D. E. Alexander, Symposium Executive Secretary, Department of Agronomy, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois 61801 (USA).