



Global Farmer Statement on Plant Breeding Innovation

Farmers need plant breeding innovation to meet ever-growing production challenges.

Farmers urge governments to remove regulatory impediments and uncertainty to advance plant breeding solutions for rural communities, food security and sustainable development.

Farmers are central to feeding a vast, varied and growing world population. The challenges of farming have become increasingly complex, and farmers need to use leading-edge innovations to be resilient in the face of climate change and growing pest and disease pressures, to increase the availability of safe and nutritious food and to reduce agriculture's environmental impact.

Adding to these significant challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerability of our agrifood systems to unexpected shocks and stresses that can increase global food insecurity and malnutrition. If we are to meet the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals of zero hunger worldwide and improved nutrition, we must be prepared to sustainably increase production while withstanding extreme weather events and mitigating the impact of climate change.

Plant breeding innovation is key to helping farmers overcome these challenges and advance global food security. To select what works best for our farms, we will need access to every available tool and strategy to produce more food, while using less land, less water, less energy and less outside resources. We need access to higher yielding, safe and nutritious and resilient crop varieties, without unnecessary delays.

As farmers, we continuously seek new and better ways to produce food more sustainably. This allows us to reduce our share of global greenhouse emissions and improve our environmental footprint. The latest plant breeding methods, like genome editing, can improve crops faster and more efficiently than ever before. This leap forward provides tremendous potential for farmers, but we need governments to enact policies and regulatory frameworks that remove unnecessary barriers and encourage research, promote innovation, enable commercialization and allow a level playing field for global trade so we can benefit from the full range of new breeding techniques. The opportunity to fully harness innovation must be available to plant breeders who work in small or large organizations, for the public, academic or private sector, and in all crops. High global regulatory costs can restrict the use of new innovations to only the largest crops and companies, and limit farmer access to local, tailored solutions for our farms.

Farmers urgently need access to plant breeding innovation to help achieve our shared sustainability goals. Therefore, the organizations signing this document call on governments to implement clear, transparent, pragmatic, risk-proportionate and globally consistent policies that will allow the benefits of plant breeding innovation help us safely and sustainably feed a world facing significant challenges.