



Four Universities Sign Wheat Material Transfer Agreement

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Four universities have signed onto a materials transfer agreement that should allow them to confidently share germplasm and quicken the wheat research process.

The agreement is between Texas A and M University, Oklahoma State University, Colorado State University and Kansas State University, all of which have wheat breeding programs focused on improving hard red winter wheat varieties.

The agreement, known formally as the Wheat Workers' Material Transfer Agreement (WWMTA), lays out the procedure for universities to share materials and the conditions under which they can be shared. Central to the agreement is the procedure for completing an "implementation letter", a contract between the donor and recipient institutions.

Among other things, the agreement specifies that the material shared remains the property of the original owner and that progeny of the material may not be transferred immediately to a third party. It also specifies that transfers under the agreements will come with no cost beyond processing costs.

"This agreement represents a cooperative effort dating back to January 2010, when public wheat breeders from the hard red winter wheat region realized that the uninterrupted flow of wheat germplasm would require a more formalized approach than afforded by the Wheat Workers Code of Ethics," said Dr. Brett Carver, the wheat breeder at Oklahoma State and a leader in the National Wheat Improvement Committee (NWIC).

"Protection was needed to ensure sustainability of individual breeding programs fueled by long-term grower investments, while sharing was considered essential to sustainability of the wheat breeding community. One of the beauties of the WWMTA is that signatory parties will continue to have the freedom to interact with other breeding programs outside the region or in the private domain."

Other universities are expected to join the agreement over time.

To read the final agreement language, please visit www.wheatworld.org/research under "Related Resources".



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