

International cassava workshop in La Réunion: surveillance and control of cassava viral and bacterial diseases on the African continent

OBJECTIFS

Promote scientific capacity and expertise of the Agropolis Foundation community in the field of diseases and pests of cassava.

ACTIONS

Organisation of International Workshop "Surveillance and control of cassava diseases in Africa"

RESULTATS

More than 40 cassava experts from African national and regional organizations and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and Research Institute for Development (IRD) attended the workshop on the French island of La Réunion. The meeting – an initiative of the Global Cassava Partnership for the 21st Century (GCP21) – was the first step in implementing a roadmap to improve management of cassava viruses and bacteria in Africa.

- 1- Establishment of a Pan-African Cassava Surveillance Network (PACSUN) comprising members of existing networks and organizations, extension services, NGOs and policy makers in Africa. PACSUN will provide diagnostic expertise and information about the viral and bacterial diseases infecting cassava in Africa; consolidate data on one website; use advanced mobile phone technologies to reach the most remote farmers; and coordinate appropriate responses in each country to halt or slow the spread of diseases such as the cassava brown streak disease.
- 2- Establishment of an International Cassava Transit site in La Réunion. The exchange of cassava material between countries in Africa or other continents is currently banned due to the risk of spreading cassava mosaic disease (CMD) and cassava brown streak disease (CBSD). La Réunion, where cassava isn't infected by these viral diseases, will act as a transit site where cassava can be checked for viruses and bacteria and where crosses could eventually be made to produce seeds for export without risk of spreading diseases. The experts at the 3P Center will work with regional and international centers to perform relevant tests for all known cassava viruses and bacteria.
- 3- Development of a website that will provide the cassava community with information on PACSUN members and updated information about the geographical distribution of all cassava viral and bacterial diseases.
- 4- Development of diagnostic technologies to better identifying viruses and bacteria infecting cassava and the whitefly vectors responsible for the rapid spread of viral diseases throughout the continent. A network of international, regional and national diagnostic laboratories will be established to better serve PACSUN.
- 5- Development of a comprehensive educational and training plan to support the activities of PACSUN. This will include the organization of technical and scientific training courses to ensure the transfer of diagnostic technologies to each country in the network and outreach through various channels to ensure that all stakeholders have the knowledge needed to improve management of cassava diseases.

Responsible :