



(The following notice is a press release from The Crop Trust¹ concerning Genesys², a new on-line database for plant genetic resources. See their first video here: <https://vimeo.com/142639677>)

Addressing the challenge of feeding future generations - online tool is relaunched and improved to unleash power of crop diversity

Scientists developing new crop varieties to feed a burgeoning global population will benefit from improved access to data on more than 2.8 million plant samples from genebank collections from all over the world. It comes after the comprehensive update of Genesys (www.genesys-pgr.org), the open-access online global database on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA).

Genesys is a 'one stop shop' for breeders and researchers searching for plant genetic resources. The vital revamp has gone live this month to help those developing the new 'climate smart' crop varieties needed to overcome future environmental challenges.

Since its launch in 2008, the plant genetic resources community has welcomed this development. Rather than having to trawl individual databases, Genesys users are able to search the global holdings of 446 institutes around the world, meaning more time can be spent on research. Genesys includes three of the world's largest networks: the EC/PGR, the National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS) of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the CGIAR genebanks, which together hold the most important crop diversity collections in the world.

Genesys brings genebanks together, making passport and characterization data available by using - and reinforcing - established standards for data exchange in the genebank community. Data providers can easily sort and display the information they hold, compare their collection with those held in other genebanks. This allows them to avoid duplication and focus their resources and efforts on filling gaps in their collections.

Genesys also lets breeders know which genebanks hold the seed varieties that might have the traits they need to develop the crops that will feed the world in the future. The development of new crop varieties typically takes between ten and twenty years, so any streamlining of this process is extremely beneficial.

Genesys is supported by the Crop Trust, an international organization working to safeguard and make available crop diversity. The relaunch of the portal, led by Information Systems Manager Matija Obreza, is a result of a 6-month effort that focused on improvements to the usability of the site, and included stakeholder interviews and a website usability review. New features include video tutorials, as well as the recently launched Newsletter and @GenesysPGR Twitter account.

Genesys is one of the building blocks of the "Global Information System" of The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

Matija Obreza, Information Systems Manager at the Crop Trust, said:

“Today, everyone wants to know what is in your collection. Genesys provides a publishing platform for crop genebanks to make data about their collections accessible to researchers, policy makers, and the general public.”

“The relaunch of Genesys will speed up the process of developing the new crop varieties that future generations will need to feed themselves, and as such this is an important day for the plant genetic resources global community.”

Theo Van Hintum from the Center for Genetic Resources in the Netherlands said:

“Genesys is essential for the preservation of plant genetic resources. No one person or organisation can safeguard all of the agro-biodiversity out there – we need to know what people are doing around the world and what particular areas they are interested in, so that we can work together for mutual benefit.”

W. Jon Raupp, Senior Scientist at the Wheat Genetic Resources Centre, said:

“The great thing about Genesys is that it has accessions from hundreds of different data providers from all around the world all in one place. Rather than search all of their individual databases, I can now do it all through Genesys.”

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1The Crop Trust is the sole international organization working to ensure the conservation and availability of crop diversity worldwide. It funds the work of genebanks around the world and also manages the ongoing work of the [Svalbard Global Seed Vault](#), a safe and secure vault for crops from all over the world.

2Genesys Plant Genetic Resources portal (Genesys PGR) is an **open-access online portal** which allows the exploration of data about the world’s crop diversity through a single website. Genesys can be accessed online at www.genesys-pgr.org

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