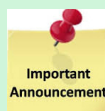


GCP21 NewsLetter #2

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Global Cassava Partnership for the 21st Century GCP21



Important
Announcement

World Congress on Root and Tuber Crops - WCRTC - the website has a new look!!!

Visit us at

<http://www.gcp21.org/wrtc/>

Registration, Abstract Submission and Field Trip Enrollment open on **May 1, 2015**

If you did your Pre-Registration after March 27, we are sorry but your data was not recorded, please do it again!

WORLD
CONGRESS
ON ROOT AND
TUBER CROPS



Adding Value to Root and Tuber Crops



GCP21-III

Third Scientific Conference of the Global Cassava
Partnership for the 21st Century



ISTRC

17th Symposium of the International Society for
Tropical Root Crops

Nanning, Guangxi, China Oct 5-10, 2015



Guangxi Academy of Sciences - GXAS



Guangxi Cassava Research Institute - GCR

Chinese Academy of Sciences - CAS

Chinese Academy of Tropical Agriculture Sciences - CATAS

GCP21 Newsletter #002

Global Partnership To Unlock the Cassava Potential

Angela Fernando, a.fernando@cgiar.org - GCP21 Communication Coordinator

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What is the Congress on Root and Tuber Crops?



The Global Cassava Partnership for the 21st Century (**GCP21**) and the International Society for Tropical Root Crops (**ISTRC**) join forces with **CATAS** – Chinese Academy of Tropical Agriculture Sciences, and **GCRI**- Guangxi Cassava Research Institute, to organize the **First World Congress on Root and Tuber Crops, Nanning, Guangxi, China, Oct 5-10, 2015**.

- The Congress will **facilitate discourse amongst key** root and tuber crops **stakeholders** – farmers, end-users, researchers, private sector and donor agencies;
- The Congress will promote discussions around **more than 24 topics** ranging from genomics to products;
- The Congress will constitute a **forum for an array of people** belonging to science, technology, private sector and policy makers to debate about the best way to improve these crops;
- The Congress will facilitate the **identification of solutions for major bottlenecks** in the production and will propose new technical solutions to resolve problems...

Importance of RTCs



Root and tuber crops (RTCs), including cassava, sweet potato, yams, potato, cocoyams and other minor root crops are important to the agriculture and food security of many countries and overall are a component of the diet for 2.2 billion people as well as contributing to animals feeds and industry. The annual world production of root and tuber crops is about 765 million tones (MT) consisting of potatoes (333mt), cassava (237mt), sweet potatoes (130mt), yams (53mt), and taro and other aroids (12mt). The global consumption of tropical root and tuber crops is around 110kg/capita/year. As such tropical root and tuber crops compare very favourably with the main staple grain crops such as wheat and rice.

Most of the potato production is consumed in the developed countries whereas most of the cassava, sweet potatoes, yam, taro and other aroids are consumed in the developing world. Therefore any advances in research and development in tropical root and tuber crops have a major direct impact on improving food security, income generation and commercial development in the developing world, leading to improvement in the social and economic livelihoods of hundreds of millions of poor people.

Adding Value to RTCs



Despite their importance, however, investment in RTCs has been much lower than in the cereal crops. The **World Congress on Root and Tubers Crops** seeks to support root and tuber crops through the theme '**Adding Value to Root and Tuber Crops**'.

RTCs are important because they meet local food preferences, providing an important part of the diet as they produce more edible energy per hectare per day than any other crop, they play an important role in food security, nutrition and climate change adaptation, they provide important sources of income through direct sale and value-addition via processing for food and non-food uses.

In this respect, the productivity of RTCs is often affected by the accumulation of pests and diseases which are passed on through vegetative propagation. A further challenge is that compared to crops such as wheat, rice and maize, RTCs are bulky, have a high water content and a relatively short shelf-life. This constrains value chain development and the expansion of production and delivery at scale to processors and markets. Appropriate

processing technologies and business enterprise models for these crops are not always readily available for potential investors to fully exploit these crops. There is also a need for new, beneficial varieties that meet a range of consumer demands.

RTC Resilience to Global Warming



RTCs have been demonstrated to be resilient to climate change and consequently, it is planned that RTCs will be used extensively to feed the world by 2015. Cassava for example is already drought resistant, will respond better than any other plant to high CO₂ concentrations and high temperatures. However it is also known that diseases will thrive on RTCs because of their vegetative mode of propagation and consequently the biotic pressure will increase with time. As a result of its potential, R&D has recently received a substantial impetus of significantly enhanced funding from traditional sources such as the [Rockefeller Foundation](#), [USAID](#), [DFID](#), and others. New sources of funding from [The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#), [Monsanto Fund](#), [Howard Buffett Foundation](#) and others, followed to complement a number of actions on cassava.

The Congress aims at raising awareness of the importance of the RTCs in the world, to review recent scientific progress, identify and set priorities for new opportunities and challenges as well as chart a course to seek R&D support for areas of RTCs where it is currently inadequate or lacking.

Objectives of the Congress



The aims of the Congress therefore include:

- **Raising general awareness** of the importance of the RTCs in the world;
- **Providing a forum** for cassava stakeholders to share knowledge and experience relating to R&D in the areas of socio-economics, biodiversity and genetic resources, postharvest deterioration, starch modification, nutrition, genomics, molecular genetic markers and gene discovery, tissue culture and transformation, biotic and abiotic stress, participatory research, and technology transfer; value chain and processing; policy and trade; business development and biofuel production...
- Discussing opportunities between researchers and members of the **private sector** to breed RTCs for specific products;
- Providing a special forum for **dialogue with donor agencies**;
- **Identifying gaps** in cassava R&D and proffer strategies for mitigation;
- **Setting priorities** for concerted future activities;

Participants to the Congress



The meeting will be attended by R&D stakeholders drawn from National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS); International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs); advanced laboratories and universities from developed and developing countries; agencies of the United Nations; governmental and non-governmental organizations; donor organizations; development organizations; business representatives from ag-biotechnology and food processing industries. We expect the participation of young students, confirmed scientists, engineers and developers from all regions of the world.

Travel Grant Program



The Congress will sponsor a **Travel Grant Program**, aiming at supporting a large number

of young scientists from all over the world, but particularly from Africa, to meet the scientists and the developers in order to contribute to forge the next generation of RTC scientists and developers. Donors and the private sector are invited to contribute financially to this program.

Format of the Congress



- Two formal **plenary sessions** in Days One and Five;
- Eight **concurrent oral scientific sessions** offering more than 250 presentations, and eight concurrent poster sessions in Days Two, Three and Four;
- **Evening workshops** on Days Two and Four;
- **Field Trip** on Day Six with visit to Chinese farmers, GCRI research station and a large cassava processing factory producing ethanol and other products;
- **Chinese Night** with visit of the Museum of nationalities, traditional dances and a typical Chinese Banquet;
- **GCP21 and ISTRC awards** on Day One and Five;
- **Conclusions and Press Conference** will be on Day Five.

In addition the Congress will be preceded and followed by professional, technical and strategic **satellite meetings** which will bring together an unprecedented crowd of professional in the field. Finally, the Congress will host a **business exhibit** all along the five days of the gathering to link scientists and industrial developers.

Important Dates



[Congress RTC, Nanning, Guangxi, China,](#)

[Oct 5-10, 2015](#)

[April 15: Travel Grant Program](#)

[March 1: Satellites and Exhibits](#)

[May 1: Registration](#)

[May 1: Abstract submission](#)

Statement



Despite recent investments, the gaps in research and development for RTCs are such that the needs in R&D far exceed the current level of funding. After reviewing the recent advances made, the Congress will present a synopsis of the most urgent needs in research and development and some potential solutions.

Links

- [GCP21](#)
- [ISTRC](#)
- [CATAS](#)
- [GCRI](#)



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a.fernando@cgiar.org



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