



ISTA Press Release

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The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) sign a Memorandum of Understanding

On May 24, 2006 the Vice-Director General of FAO, Dr. Louise Fresco, and the President of ISTA, Ir. Pieter Oosterveld, signed a Memorandum of Understanding between FAO and ISTA on the cooperation in capacity building, transfer of technology and exchange of information in all aspects of seed quality assurance.

The importance of seed testing and seed quality assurance was brought into the focus of Governments and the general public over recent years, mainly in the field of genetically modified seeds, where tremendous efforts were undertaken to install appropriate diagnostic and testing programmes.

However seed quality assurance is, particularly in developing countries, also an important procedure for establishing food security and in this context the analysis of the purity and germination capacity of a seed lot are key factors. FAO and ISTA agree that the awareness of the importance of seed quality control needs to receive more attention.

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding both organisations (FAO and ISTA) will strengthen and combine their efforts to draw the attention of Governments to the importance of seed quality assurance and control. Furthermore in their cooperation both organisations aim to enhance knowledge about seed testing and seed testing facilities, particularly in countries where the seed industry is still in an early stage of development, through special training programmes and projects.

