

Distribution of Plant Genetic Resources to New Users. (C08-pederson085611-Oral)

Authors:

- G.A.Pederson - *USDA-ARS, Griffin, GA*

Abstract:

For over 50 yrs, the Plant Genetic Resources Conservation Unit, Griffin, GA, has conserved plant genetic resources and distributed them in response to research requests. Seed requests were often by plant breeders from all over the world for yield evaluations, disease resistance screening, or various selection programs. Plant breeders were well aware of germplasm collections so little advertisement of seed availability was needed. Times are changing. The number of breeders running traditional selection programs has been reduced. Requests for plant genetic resources from Griffin in the last 10 yrs, however, have stayed relatively constant. An average of 370 users request 17,500 accessions per year with over 68% of users each year being new users. New customers request genetic resources not only for traditional uses, but a whole range of nontraditional uses. These nontraditional uses range from educational displays at amusement parks and schools to archaeobotanical studies of world agricultural origins to gourmet food studies to paintings by botanical and fiber artists to research on fish control. Future efforts to advertise and market the free availability of U.S. plant genetic resources to the world should emphasize both traditional and nontraditional users.

Corresponding Author Information:

Gary Pederson	phone: 770-228-7254
USDA-ARS, Plant Genetic Resources	fax: 770-229-3323
Cons. Unit	e-mail: gpederson@ars-
1109 Experiment St.	grin.gov
Griffin, GA 30223	

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