



Decades of Collaboration lay the Foundation for CIP-China Research Center

For more than 35 years, CIP has collaborated with Chinese universities (notably the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences) and national institutions to build research capacity and improve potato and sweetpotato farming in the world's most populous nation. During that time, CIP researchers have contributed to the steady expansion of root and tuber production in China, which is now the world's top potato producer.

In the coming years, this collaboration in agricultural research for development will be greatly enhanced thanks to the Chinese government's commitment to build a new research campus for the CIP-China Center for Asia and the Pacific (CCCAP), which was registered in China as an Inter-Governmental Organization in 2014. Construction workers have already made major progress on the CCCAP campus, located in Yanqing District, on the outskirts of Beijing.

The commitment to build this sizeable research facility is a reflection of China's desire to tap the full potential of potato and sweetpotato for improving food security, health, and incomes. It is also a testament to the impact of CIP's collaboration with the Government of China over the past four decades.

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Since 1978, CIP has contributed to the development of research capacity, new potato varieties, and potato and sweetpotato technologies in China, such as virus-free planting material, which have, in turn, resulted in significant improvements for Chinese farmers and consumers. CIP has completed more than 50 root and tuber research projects in China, contributing to the development of new varieties,

better farming practices and machinery, postharvest storage and processing technologies. During that time, China has imported more than 8,000 root and tuber accessions from CIP, and Chinese scientists have bred more than 100 new varieties with 'CIP parentage,' some of which are widely cultivated and have significantly boosted yields. From 1978 to 2012, average potato yield in China rose by 24.5%, whereas sweetpotato yield increased by 54.2%.

At the same time, CIP has received university degree programs, visiting scholars, short-term training for research personnel and field training for extension agents, thereby helping China to build the capacity needed to improve root and tuber production and utilization. In 2008, when China's Ministry of Agriculture established national potato and sweetpotato research systems, researchers who had worked with or been sponsored by CIP were tapped for leadership positions. Among the 24 leading scientists appointed to the national potato research system, 11 had worked on CIP projects and six had been sponsored by CIP to study abroad. Of the 16 leading scientists appointed to the national sweetpotato research system, ten had worked on CIP projects and six had been sponsored by CIP to study abroad.

This long-term partnership will continue to produce positive results in China and beyond. Once completed, the CCCAP campus will be a fully integrated, modern agricultural research center that offers the potential to become a growth platform for CIP. Researchers from various countries will collaborate there on efforts to improve root and tuber crop production in China, East Asia and the Pacific. Research at CCCAP will include various root and tuber crops, and scientists from other international centers can also be hosted

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here; the center will promote technical exchanges and other cooperation, joint research, and extension services for an international impact.