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International Cooperation for Winter Wheat Improvement in Central Asia:  
Results and Perspectives

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**Abstract:** Crop production in Central Asia has long history going back to 2000-3000 years BC. The farming in the past was mainly concentrated in irrigated areas along the two main river basins: AmuDarya and Syr-Darya. Wheat cultivation in Central Asia in the 20th century concentrated primarily in rainfed area. The breeding work conducted at several stations in the region was initially based on local landraces and resulted in adapted varieties. However, the breeding work was not consistent and interrupted. Since 1991 the wheat became an important crop due to food security concern and replaced cotton in some areas. The modern varieties developed in the region are well adapted and combine yield potential, grain quality and disease resistance. At the same time a number of foreign varieties from Mexico, Russia, Turkey, USA and other countries are cultivated in the region. The international cooperation with centers like CIMMYT and ICARDA resulted in the establishment of international network of researchers sharing the germplasm, knowledge and experience. New jointly developed varieties are being officially tested and some already reached the farmers. Support provided to wheat variety development and promotion in the region from international agencies and organizations like FAO, German Agency for Technical Cooperation, US Department of Agriculture, Washington State University, Winrock International, and others is fundamental for the wheat grain production in Central Asia.

**Key Words:** Breeding, CIMMYT, Central Asia, Food Security, ICARDA, Wheat

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