

SGSV Partner Fact Sheet

The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Global Crop Diversity Trust, and the Nordic Gene Bank have entered into an agreement providing for the management, operation, and the long-term funding of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

Government of Norway

The seed vault is owned and managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on behalf of the Kingdom of Norway, which also funded its construction, and is established as a service to the world community. Norway's offer to host the seed vault emanates from a deep commitment to global citizenship. In establishing the international seed vault, Norway is making a unique contribution to the preservation of the planet's most important biodiversity, and to international commitments to end hunger. The Seed Vault is in line with Norwegian policy with regard to biodiversity, preservation of genetic resources, North-South policy, development policy, and food safety.

Norway is the ideal location for the seed vault. Geographically, it offers a remote site with natural cooling capacity. Equally if not more important, Norway has the political trust of all the countries involved to put safeguarding the world's agriculture heritage above the self-interest of Norway. In the eyes of many, a global seed vault could not be located anywhere else in the world but Norway. Norway has consistently played a strong and respected role as a trusted, honest broker in the frequently acrimonious debates over who controls and protects the world's genetic diversity of plant life.

Norway has not only provided the world with an exceptionally functional seed vault—millions of seeds should be safe and viable for centuries—but also one that is an aesthetic inspiration, a living monument to the too-often obscure cause of crop diversity. Its national commitment to invest at least 1 percent or more of a building's budget on art work has resulted in a stunning artist's installation that will allow the vault to sparkle in the midnight sun of the Svalbard summers and glow in the long nights of its winters.

Web site: <http://www.seedvault.no>

Global Crop Diversity Trust

The mission of the Global Crop Diversity Trust is to ensure the conservation and availability of crop diversity for food security worldwide. Although crop diversity is fundamental to fighting hunger and to the very future of agriculture, funding is unreliable and diversity is being lost. The Trust is the only organisation working worldwide to solve this problem. The Trust, which set up headquarters in Rome, will support basic conservation costs in national and international collections of crop diversity. The Trust also will provide funding to rescue and salvage collections currently at risk, and build capacity in developing countries to manage such collections. The Trust is assembling an endowment fund to finance the conservation of crop diversity forever, removing the uncertainty surrounding the safety of this most precious resource. The permanent security offered by Svalbard is part of that vision.

The Global Crop Diversity Trust is funding the operations of the Seed Vault and is also financing the preparation and shipment of seeds from developing countries and international agricultural research centres to Svalbard.

Web site: <http://www.croptrust.org>

Nordic Genetic Resource Center (NordGen)

NordGen is responsible for the daily operation and management of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

NordGen liaises with genebanks around the world with respect to the seeds to be deposited and the timetable and process for deposition, including guiding the depositors with regard to the packaging and labeling of the seeds and entering into and signing agreements with depositors on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on the basis of the Standard Deposit Agreement.

NordGen maintains the on-line public database and cooperates closely with the Directorate of Public Construction and Property, also known as Statsbygg, on the monitoring and maintenance of the physical facility.

NordGen conserves and documents the genetic variation of species useful for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and farm animals in the Nordic countries. NordGen was formed on the 1 January, 2008, uniting the former Nordic genetic institutions and organisations of the Nordic Gene Bank, the Nordic Gene Bank of Farm Animals, and the Nordic Network for Forest Tree Gene Conservation. NordGen is an institution under the Nordic Council of Ministers and is located in Alnarp, Sweden with branches in Norway.

The Nordic model of conservation and documentation of plant genetic resources has been effectively used in the Nordic collections stored since 1979 in Sweden and since 1984 for Nordic genetic safety collections on Svalbard. This model has been successfully used in many developing regions of the world as part of Nordic international development assistance. This experience assures that the SGSV is served by very qualified and experienced staff with a well-tested, cost-efficient system of conservation and documentation for the long-term storage of the genetic resources of the world.

Web site: <http://www.nordgen.org/sqsv>