

The CGIAR Initiative on Genebanks



The CGIAR (formerly the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) Initiative on Genebanks aims to strengthen the global genebank system in conserving and making available a wide variety of plant genetic resources vital for the development of climate-adapted crops and resilient food systems.

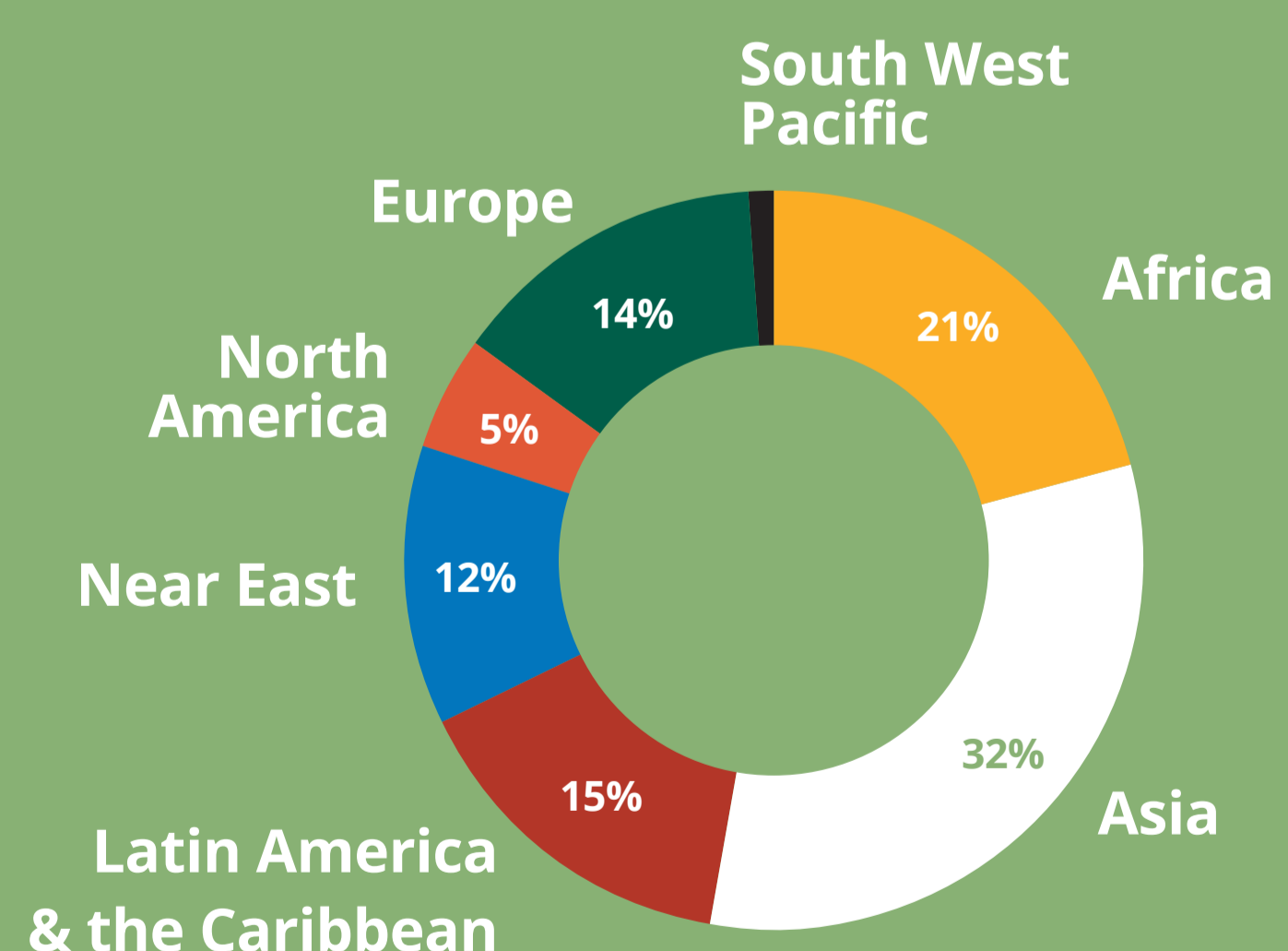
CGIAR genebanks manage collections of more than 20 staple crops in 10 locations across five continents. The collections are made freely available upon request to thousands of users worldwide every year under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, accounting for a large amount of the germplasm being exchanged under the Treaty's Multilateral System of access and benefit-sharing.



Recent highlights

- CGIAR's 11 genebanks conserve more than 700,000 accessions of crop diversity to ensure that they are available for current and future generations.
- Of the 1.2 million seed accessions currently stored in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, CGIAR genebanks have deposited more than half.
- In addition to preserving our shared agricultural heritage, CGIAR genebanks distribute tens of thousands of disease-free accessions every year to help researchers, crop breeders and farmers tackle issues like climate change, poverty and hunger.
- All CGIAR acquisitions and distributions of accessions comply with national and international policies and laws, including the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the Plant Treaty). The collections are freely available to everyone.
- CGIAR scientists actively support the global network of hundreds of national and community genebanks by sharing knowledge and strengthening their capacity. CGIAR collaborates with national breeding programs, seed systems actors, and small businesses to enhance crop improvement and provide farmers with seeds of improved varieties.
- CGIAR genebanks regularly assist communities in recovering traditional varieties, such as potatoes from the High Andes or barnyard millet from Tamil Nadu, preserving these valuable resources that might otherwise have been lost forever.

81% of distributions by CGIAR centers go to countries in the Global South



Regions of recipients of germplasm samples from CGIAR genebanks and breeding programs (2007-2022)

www.cgiar.org/initiative/genebanks/