



Wageningen, August 21, 2009

Keygene N.V. and Wageningen University and Research Centre sign a licensing agreement and strengthen their collaboration.

Keygene N.V. and Wageningen University and Research Centre (Wageningen UR) signed a licensing agreement that strengthens and expands their long lasting relationship on August 17, 2009. The agreement comprises fungal resistance intellectual property (IP) and technology and continued access for research purposes of the AFLP® technology of KeyGene that is sublicensed to Wageningen UR. In return, KeyGene will have users' rights, including sublicensing and commercial rights to some of Wageningen URs abiotic and biotic stress resistance IP.

World-wide, a strong and growing demand for increased crop production requires sustainable solutions towards abiotic and biotic stresses. Solutions such as water use efficiency and resistances against fungi. In a highly effective reverse genetic approach using a population of transposon tagged Arabidopsis plants, scientists of the Plant Sciences Group of Wageningen UR identified a number of key genes involved in (a)biotic stresses. The genes were subsequently characterized and shown to provide drought and salinity tolerance and thereby increasing yield under stress conditions. KeyGene has developed a proprietary and advanced genotyping technology platform that includes AFLP for molecular fingerprinting of crop plants and populations. This highly successful, commercial platform has been used for identifying, characterizing and breeding for, amongst others, resistances against fungi, aphids and nematodes. With the signing of this licensing agreement, the combined strengths of both KeyGene and Wageningen UR will be used to introduce novel (a)biotic stress tolerances in commercially important crops.

Arjen van Tunen, CEO of KeyGene states that “By exchanging user rights of the AFLP technology and the expertise and knowledge on biotic and abiotic stress genes, KeyGene and Wageningen UR significantly strengthen their position as front runner Agro-Research organizations. It perfectly fits with our new Green Gene Revolution approach that we are following in order to provide durable solutions for world wide Agro -Biotech and Seed industries, and enable a further use of our Accelerated Molecular Breeding and Molecular Mutagenesis Technology Platforms in trait development”.

Raoul Bino, director Plant Sciences Group, Wageningen UR, added that “Combating plant diseases and finding solutions to enable sustainable and high crop production under adverse conditions, is a challenge and does ask for combined efforts and expertises. This strengthened collaboration between KeyGene and Wageningen UR will certainly provide new opportunities and will also guarantee that our knowledge and expertise will find its way to the plant breeders.”

About KeyGene

Keygene N.V. (www.keygene.com) is a R&D company with the mission to be the leading company in developing and applying DNA expertise in the field of molecular genetics with a focus on crop plants.

In recent years KeyGene invested in next generation sequencing platforms to support its leading position in the field of plant molecular breeding and developed new enabling technologies. KeyGene exploits its proprietary technologies, databases and know-how through strategic alliances, contract research and products for applications in the plant breeding industry. KeyGene has a subsidiary in Rockville Maryland, USA and a Joint Lab at the Shanghai Institute of Biological Sciences in Shanghai, China. In total KeyGene employs 130 researchers and staff.

About Wageningen UR, Plant Sciences Group

The Plant Sciences Group of Wageningen UR is a collaboration between Wageningen University, Plant Research International and Applied Plant Research (PPO). The primary focus of these three partners is on fundamental, strategic and applied research, respectively, in the fields of sustainable crop production, food and health, crop protection, biodiversity and biobased economy. The Plant Sciences Group covers a wide range of integration levels: from molecule to agrosystem, and many disciplines like genetics, crop physiology and development biology.

For more information, please contact:

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