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CIMMYT revitalizes its leadership in socioeconomics and agronomy research

To better address economic and environmental changes affecting agriculture in developing countries, CIMMYT is launching two research programs that focus on key issues in those areas.

Scientists in CIMMYT's new **Socioeconomics Program** will continue to work with maize and wheat breeding and agronomy programs to ensure the relevance of center efforts, and will also take on projects pertaining to their discipline, including studies on evolving markets and value chains. The new program builds on decades of strong work and leadership in agricultural economics and impacts assessment, and will extend and intensify partnerships with advanced research institutes.

The launching of the **Conservation Agriculture Program** reflects the importance of natural resource management in agriculture and the significant productivity gains that are possible through improved practices for farming systems. Work will expand on current systems agronomy research by CIMMYT and partners around the world, particularly on cropping methods that simultaneously boost productivity and reduce resource degradation.

After a rigorous recruitment and interview process, CIMMYT agronomist Pat Wall (p.wall@cgiar.org) was named Director of the Conservation Agriculture Program. While recruitment proceeds for the position of Director for the Socioeconomics Program, CIMMYT poverty specialist Jonathan Hellin (j.hellin@cgiar.org) will serve as Interim Director. All communications and queries regarding these areas of CIMMYT research may be addressed to them.

The new programs emerge from the Impacts Targeting and Assessment Unit (ITAU), which has closed. Former ITAU Director, Dr. John Dixon, has moved from CIMMYT headquarters to Australia to take up a shared international consultancy with the center and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

Contact persons for the other CIMMYT programs remain the same:

- Marianne Bänziger, Director, Global Maize Program (m.banziger@cgiar.org)
- Hans-Joachim Braun, Director, Global Wheat Program (h.j.braun@cgiar.org)
- Jonathan Crouch, Director, Genetic Resources Program (formerly Genetic Resources Enhancement Unit, j.crouch@cgiar.org).

Feel free to contact me directly with questions or suggestions regarding these or other exciting new directions in CIMMYT's work.

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