



19 April 2023

NOTIFICATION

Invitation to secure seed collections in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault

Dear Madam/Sir,

I have the honour to draw your attention to [Resolution 14/2022](#) of the Governing Body of the International Treaty, on Cooperation with Other International Bodies and Organizations.

By the said Resolution, the Governing Body renewed its invitation to Contracting Parties, international institutions and other relevant bodies and organizations to consider making use of the Seed Vault as part of their strategy for securing important seed collections and for the purpose of long-term storage of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.¹

The current global situation and developments arising from both climate change and man-made crises have made the need for back-up even more imperative. The Seed Vault is an insurance policy for other genebanks. If those genebanks lose their own resources, because of natural or man-made disasters, the collections can be restored by retrieving the duplicates from Svalbard.

The Svalbard Global Seed Vault offers secure storage space for safety duplicates of seeds that are conserved in genebanks. So far, ninety-one genebanks have already deposited safety duplicates of smaller or larger parts of their collections in the Seed Vault and since the opening in 2008, more than 1,2 million seed samples belonging to 6,042 species have been deposited.

In addition, the Seed Vault attracts significant attention from politicians and media, thereby enhancing public awareness on the role and importance of plant genetic resources in addressing current global challenges of climate change, and food and nutrition security.

The Seed Vault receives seeds three times each year. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault Coordinator has informed us that the Vault will open again from 5 to 9 June and from 23 to 27 October 2023 for receiving material. Information on the Seed Vault openings is available www.nordgen.org/en/calendar/. More information, including details of the depositor agreement, can be found at www.seedvault.no/ and www.nordgen.org/en/depositing-seeds/.

The storage at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault is free of charge. Only the cost of shipment and any necessary multiplication of seeds are covered by the depositors, with possible assistance available through project funding. Priority to the Seed Vault is given to deposits of unique seeds that are of importance for food and agriculture and are made available through the Multilateral System for Access and Benefit Sharing of the International Treaty or through other applicable international laws.

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¹ Part III of Resolution 14/2022, www.fao.org/3/nk250en/nk250en.pdf

The Government of Norway owns the Seed Vault, while Nordic Genetic Resources Centre (NordGen) manages all seed operations. NordGen signs the depositor agreement with the depositing institution on behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food. By signing the agreement for storage under black box conditions, the depositor is asked to confirm that the germplasm is part of a long-term and sustainable genebank collection, has been safety duplicated in another suitable location and is available from the active collection for research, breeding and training. The [Crop Trust](#) provides considerable funding for operational costs, as part of its funding scheme for the global conservation of genetic resources. The Crop Trust also assists countries and institutions by covering costs and providing technical advice for packing and shipping seeds to Svalbard.

For any query or request for further information, please contact the Secretary of the International Treaty at PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kent Nnadozie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kent Nnadozie

Secretary

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources
for Food and Agriculture