

BILL & MELINDA GATES
**AGRICULTURAL
INNOVATIONS**

Contact: media@gatesagone.org

Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations and African Agricultural Technology Foundation Join Forces to Accelerate Research into Staple African Crops

St. Louis, Mo. (Jun. 16, 2023) — Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations (Gates Ag One) and the [African Agricultural Technology Foundation](#) (AATF) are to partner to strengthen research into improving staple crops grown by millions of African farmers.

AATF works across more than 20 countries in Eastern, Southern and West Africa to develop innovations that address low agricultural productivity and support improved livelihoods for smallholder farmers. For instance, AATF has released five new hybrid rice varieties adapted for African conditions that have increased yields from three tons per hectare to 10 tons per hectare. AATF also coordinated a global partnership towards development and release of pod borer resistant (PBR) cowpea in three West African countries, which contains a gene that produces a protein lethal to the biggest pre-harvest pest, the Maruca pod borer. With climate change increasing the spread of harmful insects to new areas, the development provided farmers with an additional tool for climate adaptation.

“We’re excited to forge this new partnership with Gates Ag One to build on our efforts and results to date that has contributed significant advances in agricultural productivity across Africa,” said Dr Canisius Kanangire, Executive Director at AATF.

AATF, which was established 20 years ago, manages Public-Private Partnerships for the transfer of innovative technologies to increase access to the latest innovations by smallholder farmers in Africa. An estimated

BILL & MELINDA GATES
**AGRICULTURAL
INNOVATIONS**

[65%](#) of the world's arable land is in sub-Saharan Africa, yet yields are currently only around a [third](#) of the global average.

"AATF is a leading player in the sector that works to develop adapt and commercialize agricultural technologies that boost smallholder farmers' productivity and climate resilience," said Joe Cornelius, CEO of Gates Ag One. "We're excited to be partnering with AATF to bring innovations to farmers across Africa to bolster yields and food security."

Gates Ag One, a non-profit affiliate of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was created to leverage advances in global crop science to serve the growing needs of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The organization invests in early scientific discoveries to accelerate the development of improved crops that can close the yield gap.

Ends

About Gates Ag One:

[Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations](#) (Gates Ag One) is a non-profit organization that accelerates breakthrough agricultural research to meet the urgent and neglected needs of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Out of the conviction that all lives have equal value, Gates Ag One serves the interests of smallholder farmers, who are most exposed to climate shocks yet lack the access that others have to the latest agricultural innovations. Gates Ag One works to level the playing field and empower smallholder farmers to transform their agricultural productivity, nutrition security and climate resilience. Learn more at gatesagone.org.

###