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**International Research Collaboration Aims to Boost Food Security
for Africa Through Crop Improvement**

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (January 5, 2024) — A group of scientists and agricultural leaders across three continents have joined together to develop improved crop varieties that meet the specific needs and circumstances of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa.

The alliance brings together African research organizations including Ghana's [Savanna Agricultural Research Institute](#) of the [Council for Scientific and Industrial Research](#) (CSIR-SARI), [Nigeria's Institute for Agricultural Research](#) (IAR), and the [African Agricultural Technology Foundation](#) (AATF). Additional partners include Australia's national science agency the [Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation](#) (CSIRO), the [Donald Danforth Plant Science Center](#), and [Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations](#) (Gates Ag One).

By 2050, nearly [one in four](#) of the world's population will be sub-Saharan African. Modelling indicates that African countries could meet this increased demand for food with full access to the latest agricultural innovations that would improve productivity between [two- and three-fold](#). The alliance aims to address threats to crop yields, for instance, from pest and disease outbreaks.

There is a strong correlation between agricultural growth and economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa. Economic growth through agriculture is an estimated [11 times more effective](#) at reducing poverty than other sectors.

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Africa's 33 million smallholder farms produce 70% of its food supply, yet they often lack access to the productive resources they need to thrive. In some countries, only 10% of smallholder farmers have access to the latest generation seeds or planting material.

The alliance is committed to working together to accelerate crop research and development that serve the unmet needs of smallholder farmers in the region.

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.

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