

**BecA-ILRI Hub and Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture
Conference:**

“From technology to product development for the African farmer”

**BecA-ILRI Hub
April 29, 2009**

Biosciences eastern and central Africa (BecA) is a joint venture of regional research partners linked to the global research community, with the aim to employ modern biotechnology to improve agriculture in eastern and central Africa. BecA’s mission is to improve the livelihoods of resource-poor people in Africa, through the development and use of new technologies and strategies for sustaining agricultural production, improving human health, and conserving the environment.

The Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA) is a charity under Swiss law and it supports partners who work in agricultural and rural development. SFSA’s mission is to create value for resource-poor small farmers in developing countries through innovation in sustainable agriculture and the activation of value chains.

As part of their mission in helping the African farmer alleviate poverty through agriculture, the Biosciences eastern and central Africa-International Livestock Research Institute (BecA-ILRI) Hub and the SFSA are bringing together speakers and participants from Africa and around the globe for a one day conference to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with translating science and technology into tangible outputs for Africa’s farmers. This conference will take place at the BecA-ILRI Hub in Nairobi, Kenya on April 29, 2009.

Presentations will cover current efforts to improve African agriculture and the effective translation of science for product development. Sorghum, one of the major crops for Africa, will receive special attention as a case study.

Please join us on this worthy undertaking as we seek new ways to forge partnerships and reach to greater heights of science for the benefit of African farmers.

Draft Program

Time	Activity	Speaker
9:00-9:15	Opening remarks	Carlos Sere Director General ILRI, Kenya
9:15-10:00	<i>Keynote presentation:</i> Agricultural development through investment in science and technology	Rebecca Nelson Associate Professor, Cornell University and Scientific Director, McKnight Foundation Collaborative Crop Research Program
10:00-10:15	Coffee break & Poster Session	
Science and technology focus session Chair: Norah Olemba , Executive Director, ABSF, Kenya Moderator: Gabrielle Persley , Snr Advisor to Director General and BecA, ILRI, Kenya		
10:15-10:45	The role of science and technology in agricultural development: ASARECA's vision	Charles Mugoya Regional Coordinator ASARECA, Uganda
10:45-11:15	BecA Hub and its role in enhancing science and technology capacity in Africa	Segenet Kelemu Director BecA-ILRI Hub, Kenya
11:15-11:45	Applications of science and technology to sorghum improvement	Patrick Okori Lecturer Makerere University, Uganda
11:45-12:45	Discussion	Discussants: Nina Dudnik Executive Director Seeding Labs, USA; and Rebecca Nelson , Associate Professor, Cornell University and Scientific Director, McKnight Foundation
12:45-2:00	Lunch	
Product development focus session Chair: Jacob Mignouna , Technical Operations Manager, AATF		
2:00-2:20	Linking science to product development	Brhane Gebrekidane Private Consultant and former Chief of Party for AMAREW Project, Ethiopia
2:20-2:50	Sorghum seed systems	Mary Mgonja Principal Scientist and Program Leader ICRISAT, Kenya
2:50-3:20	Feed in crop livestock systems (important role of dual purpose sorghum varieties)	Michael Blummel Global Operating Project Leader ILRI, India
3:20-3:35	Coffee break & Poster Session	
3:35-4:35	Discussion	Discussant: Dennis Kyetere Director General NARO, Uganda Ed Rege PICOTEAM Nairobi Kenya
4:35-5:05	Closing remarks	Marco Ferroni Executive Director Syngenta Foundation
5:05-6:05	Poster sessions and cocktail	BecA-ILRI Hub Students and Scientists