



April 2019

CORRECTION: A previous issue of the BGRI newsletter indicated Dr. Ruth Dill-Macky's primary affiliation as the USDA-ARS Cereal Disease Laboratory. This error has been corrected to reflect her affiliation with the University of Minnesota Department of Plant Pathology.

Farmer Field Schools: Innovative, Effective Training in Nepal



Participants at the Farmer Field School in Nepal. Photo by Suraj Karkee and Dinesh Marasini

Under the aegis of the Delivering Genetic Gain in Wheat (DGGW) project, the Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU) has established a seed system in Nepal for the purpose of creating access to quality certified seeds for smallholder farmers in the Chitwan region of Nepal. For the seed system in Nepal to thrive, it is critical to have extension support to continuously upgrade farmer knowledge regarding new technologies and their adoption.

The key objective of the DGGW project at AFU was to mobilize, engage and train farmers in the region. Sathguru Management Consultants, in India, has been a key partner in realizing this objective. Based on input from previous years, this season, AFU revamped their training sessions and initiated a Farmer Field School (FFS) approach to effectively and impactfully train wheat seed farmers.

[Read more about the farmer trainings in Nepal on the BGRI website.](#)

Multimedia Spotlight: Stem Rust in Kenya



1.2 BILLION FARMERS DEPEND ON WHEAT FOR FOOD AND INCOME.

A still from the latest Delivering Genetic Gain in Wheat Video, "Protecting the World's Wheat - Delivering Genetic Gain in Kenya." Credit: Chris Knight.

Farmers and scientists have been fighting stem rust since the domestication of wheat thousands of years ago. This brilliant dance between humans and nature will likely never stop, but by working together we can stay one step ahead of this pesky pathogen.

In this video, the DGGW's filmmaker, Chris Knight of International Programs - CALS, at Cornell University, visited the Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization Food Crops Research Institute (KALRO-FCRI) at the Njoro Research Station to see how we're working with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) and a global partnership of more than 25 countries to protect the world's wheat from diseases and the stress of climate change.

[WATCH NOW: Protecting the World's Wheat - Delivering Genetic Gain in Kenya](#)

Diane Saunders recognized for pioneering work in wheat

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, the largest UK public funder of non-medical bioscience, has announced the shortlist for its **[BBSRC Innovator of the Year award](#)**. The award highlights particular individuals and small teams who are producing outstanding work from their research funding.



This year, Diane Saunders of the John Innes Centre in Norwich has been selected as

one of the 12 finalists to be considered for the title for 2019 for her potentially transformative approach to identifying individual strains of complex fungal pathogens directly in the field, working in collaboration with Dave Hodson from CIMMYT and the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research.

"The MARPLE technology being pioneered in the field in Ethiopia by Diane Saunders and Dave Hodson allows researchers to quickly and positively identify disease pathogens," said Maricelis Acevedo, associate director for science of the Delivering Genetic Gain in Wheat project. "This the kind of game-changing innovation agricultural scientists dream about, and it is wonderful to see this achievement being recognized."

Guru Radhakrishnan and Nicola Cook with Diane Saunders (far right) searching for wheat rust in the field in Ethiopia.
Photo Credit: John Innes Centre

Ruth Dill-Macky at the University of Minnesota Plant Pathology Department



Ruth Dill-Macky, professor of small grains pathology, was the recipient of the 2019 Women in Triticum Mentor Award, celebrating here with Norman Borlaug and Maricelis Acevedo at the University of Minnesota earlier this month.

This month Maricelis Acevedo had the opportunity to visit the University of Minnesota campus and deliver personal congratulations to our 2019 Women in Triticum Award Mentor, Dr. Ruth Dill-Macky.

Dill-Macky has served on the faculty of the Department of Plant Pathology at the University of Minnesota for over 26 years. Her research program, focused on the diseases of cereal crops, is internationally recognized for work on *Fusarium* head blight (FHB or scab). Dill-Macky's award is a recognition of her mentorship of female students, her contribution to the efforts to develop best management practices for the control of FHB through examining the effect of host, pathogen and environmental factors on the development of FHB and on the accumulation of *Fusarium*-associated mycotoxins and the role of crop residues in FHB epidemics. She is also currently the researcher co-chair of the United States Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative (USWBSI), which aims to enhance food safety and supply by reducing the impact of FHB.

[Read more about Dr. Dill-Macky's research and the WIT Mentor Award at the BGRl site.](#)

Events and Opportunities

1st International Wheat Congress

21-26 July 2019 (Saskatchewan, Canada)

<http://2019iwc.ca>

Wheat Diversity and Human Health Conference

22-24 Oct 2019 (Istanbul, Turkey)

<https://www.wheat-health.org/en/>

Abstract Submission Deadline: 15 June 2019

2020 Borlaug Global Rust Initiative Technical Workshop

1-4 June 2020 (Norwich, UK)

Registration & Program TBA

Contribute to the BGRI Newsletter and Social Media

If you have any news of interest to the BGRI community, please send us a message and we will try to include it in subsequent BGRI newsletters! We also publish and share stories on our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts. Use [@globalrust](#) to tag any contributions.

Events, career and educational opportunities, photos, and new publications are especially welcome.

Contact BGRI newsletter editor [Samantha Hautea](#) or [the BGRI](#).

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Borlaug Global Rust Initiative

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