

## Around Dakota Ag

# NDSU, Monsanto plan collaboration

**N**ORTH Dakota State University and Monsanto are teaming up.

The university and Monsanto, the world's leading biotechnology seed company, recently announced that they will collaborate on a wide range of projects. Scientists from both organizations will focus on cooperative research, technology development and educational activities, according to a press release issued by NDSU.

The initial focus will be on oilseed improvement.

### Good for economy

NDSU officials say the deal will be good for North Dakota farmers and the state's economy.

"Partnerships such as this one facilitate the opportunity for additional cutting-edge innovations in agriculture into the 21st century," says Philip Boudjouk, NDSU vice president for research, creative activities and technology.

"Results of these collaborations will expand the economic vitality of North Dakota. We are addressing a critical national priority while concurrently contributing to the prosperity of rural areas of our state," says D.C. Coston, NDSU vice president for agriculture and university Extension.

"If North Dakota is to maintain its edge in crop production, NDSU must conduct research on important plant characteristics, understand how those characteristics respond to North Dakota's environment and deploy them in ways that create value for crop producers in both eastern and western North Dakota," says Ken Grafton, director of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station; dean of the College of Agriculture, Food Systems and Natural Resources; and director of the AgBiotechnology Center of Excellence.

"The NDSU-Monsanto collaboration will give faculty and students working with the NDSU's AgBiotechnology Center of Excellence an opportunity to observe and learn from Monsanto's state-of-the-art crop improvement, animal science and biotechnology programs," Grafton says.

"Knowledge gained in the collabora-

### Key Points

- NDSU and Monsanto announce they are going to work together.
- Initial focus will be on oilseed improvement and product development.
- Officials say collaboration will pay off for North Dakota's economy.

tion should help the AgBiotechnology Center of Excellence identify viable opportunities for North Dakota growers to increase the productivity of their operations, add value to commodities they produce and expand opportunities in the emerging bioproducts industries in the state."

### Monsanto eager

Monsanto scientists are "eager to work with their NDSU counterparts to identify new opportunities for North Dakota farmers," says Ernesto Fajardo, Monsanto's U.S. crop production lead. "Biotechnology has helped North Dakota farmers diversify their crop enterprises."

"It is our hope that this collaboration will culminate in new ideas and the commercialization of unique technologies that will give NDSU, and especially young North Dakotans, a greater role in tomorrow's exciting agriculture," says Robb Fraley, Monsanto chief technology officer.

### Future products

Bill Wilson, NDSU agribusiness and applied economics professor and an assistant director of the AgBiotechnology Center of Excellence, says many remarkable plant science innovations will be commercialized in the next decade. "North Dakota has accrued more than \$700 million in economic benefits from crop biotechnology, and NDSU wants to ensure that North Dakota producers have access to these technologies and that our state's consumers benefit from recent advances in genomics, plant breeding and biotechnology. It is great to have the support of Monsanto. They value independent, third-party research."



PHOTO: NORTH DAKOTA WHEAT COMMISSION

**DESTINATION JAPAN:** A cargo ship is loaded with wheat to be shipped to Japan, which has bought more wheat from the United States than any other country.

## Wheat sales to Japan surge

**J**APAN was the leading export destination for hard red spring wheat in the 2005-06 marketing year. The Japanese purchased 58 million bushels.

The Philippines was next in line with purchases of 36 million bushels.

Rounding out the list are: Venezuela, 23 million bushels; Taiwan, 20; Italy, 27; Spain, 15; Korea, 14; Mexico, 12; Thailand, 9; and the Dominican Republic, 7.

Record or near-record sales were made to Japan, Venezuela and Mexico. Combined sales of 93 million bushels to these three markets were up 45% over the recent five-year average.

The Philippines, Spain, Thailand and the Dominican Republic showed a combined 34% increase over the five-year average but were steady with previous-year sales. Taiwan, Italy and Korea were equal to or slightly lower than the five-year average.

"Sharp gains in the Japanese market can be attributed to U.S. Wheat Associates marketing efforts to get a more reasonable spread between the government purchase price and subsequent resale price on U.S. wheat to mills in that country," says Jim Peterson, North Dakota Wheat Marketing Commission marketing specialist.

USW's ongoing efforts in Mexico and

### Key Points

- Marketing efforts have resulted in an increase in wheat sales.
- Japan and Philippines bought more spring wheat this year.
- Italy and Algeria were the leading buyers of durum.

Venezuela to educate buyers on how to procure the best value from U.S. wheat through improved contract specifications are also showing dividends.

Sales to all of Latin America, at 70 million bushels, are the highest since 1996, Peterson says.

### Durum exports

Top buyers of U.S. durum were: Italy, 11 million bushels; Algeria, 10; Morocco, 4; Venezuela, 2; Tunisia, 1.8; Nigeria, 1.7; Spain, 1; Costa Rica, 1; Portugal, 0.47, and Dominican Republic, 0.46.

"Quality deficiencies in other durum countries helped the U.S. to capitalize in smaller export markets, some of whom have been absent for a few years," Peterson says. "Stronger sales to Morocco have also been boosted by the new U.S.-Moroccan Free Trade Agreement which gives U.S. durum a tariff advantage over Canadian durum."



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