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**FEED THE FUTURE**

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## FEED THE FUTURE INNOVATION LAB FOR LEGUME SYSTEMS RESEARCH

April 2020



The Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research fosters dynamic, profitable and environmentally sustainable approaches that contribute to resilience, productivity, and better nutrition and economic opportunities. The lab is managed by Michigan State University.

### *From the Management Office*

**Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research Welcomes  
Dr. Ndiaga Cisse as West African Regional Coordinator**



It's no surprise that Ndiaga Cisse's favorite legume to eat is cowpea. In addition to being a staple in his diet since his childhood, Ndiaga pictured left, has dedicated his career to the legume with almost forty years of research and variety development. The Legume Systems Innovation Lab will greatly benefit from this experience as Cisse facilitates activities as the Lab's West African regional coordinator.

The Legume Systems Innovation Lab conducts cowpea research in seven West African countries a region Ndiaga knows very well.

Ndiaga began his research with cowpeas in 1983 while pursuing a Masters degree at the University of California at Davis. He went on to

earn his PhD in genetics and plant breeding at Purdue University in Indiana. As a cowpea breeder, Ndiaga has released ten new varieties.

“They have been largely adopted and are in fields across West Africa,” notes Cisse.



Ndiaga, pictured second from left above in Senegal cowpea field.

[Read More About Cisse](#)

## *Protecting Yourself From Coronavirus* In 30 Languages and growing!



### PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM CORONAVIRUS

The animation from SAWBO introduced in last month's newsletter is now available in **30** languages! Please share this video widely with your networks. The video includes easy steps to aid prevention.



If you can help translate this animation into a local language not yet available, please email SAWBO at [contact@sawbo-animations.org](mailto:contact@sawbo-animations.org).

## *From the Field* Projects Work Under COVID-19 Uncertainty

### **Five Competitively Bid Projects Complete Contracting Paving Way for Research to Begin with Focus on Staying Safe during Pandemic**

In last month's newsletter, the Legume Systems Innovation Lab announced a shrub intercropping system with cowpea working in West Africa. The lab awarded five additional projects which have now been contracted and will seek to begin research activities when and where the activities follow institutional and government guidelines related to COVID-19 to ensure the safety and health of all involved.

Here is a brief introduction to each project working in West Africa. Over the next few months, the lab will introduce the organizations and researchers leading these innovative projects.



### Development of Market-Driven Improved Cowpea Varieties using Mature-Markers

The project enhances yield potential of elite cowpea varieties and breeding lines in West Africa by adding previously identified traits with defined marker associations using foreground and background selection strategies.



### Quantifying the Scale and Scope of Nutritious Cowpea Products in Local Markets

The project aims to identify incentives for expanding the array of nutritious cowpea-based products sold in local markets, especially by small-scale women enterprises.



### How Input Subsidy Policies Change the Cowpea Farming Landscape

The project aims to enhance policy understanding of the consequences of fertilizer subsidies for the cowpea value chain with specific focus on crop diversity, gender- and youth-differentiation, and diet quality.



### Promoting Trade Integration in Regional Legume Markets with Mobile Technology

The project will help to bridge the information barriers between farmers, wholesalers and retailers in legume value chains. With the help of a phone-based service, farmers and sellers can communicate better, and improve outcomes for all.



### Science-driven and Farmer-oriented Insect Pest Management for Cowpea Agro-ecosystems

The project aims to develop and deploy climate-resilient, environmentally friendly and economically profitable integrated pest management tools and approaches, easily implemented by women and men farmers to minimize the impact of insect pests in cowpea cropping systems.

## Featured Legume of the Month

# Cannellini Beans

Cannellini beans are sometimes referred to as Italian white beans.





They are similar in size and shape to a kidney bean but are white in color.

## Cooking with Cannellini Beans... White Bean Salad

White bean salad gets its roots from Italy. With a little supervision this recipe is easy for kids to make. Prepare a double batch and enjoy. The longer the flavors have to marinate the better. it's perfect overnight or the second or third day.

Health, easy and nutritious - it's guaranteed to become a family favorite!



[Get Recipe Here](#)

## For More Information on the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research

[Visit our website](#)



This newsletter is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Feed the Future initiative. The contents are the responsibility of Michigan State University and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



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