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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

December 2019



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

Welcome Dr. John Medendorp!



The Legume Systems Innovation Lab welcomes Dr. John Medendorp to the position of Deputy Director, replacing Cynthia Donovan who recently retired. Cynthia's long legacy in the legume community left a void that wasn't easy to fill. Stepping in, John brings many years of international experience and expertise that will strengthen existing relationships and continue the lab's legacy of sustainable, resilient legume innovation research management. John holds a PhD in Higher, Adult, and Lifelong education with a specialization in international development from Michigan State University.

Considering John's upbringing in a small midwestern town, one might wonder how he ended up on the global stage as a leader in capacity development and agricultural systems innovations. For John it was a single experience that left an indelible mark. At a young age, he was introduced to a Cuban refugee family who was sponsored by his home community of Fremont, Michigan. Fremont, with a population of under 4,000, was a place of very little diversity. "Interacting with playmates who looked differently, acted differently, dressed differently, spoke differently – all of this was both confusing and fascinating for me," says John. That early experience led to a lifelong dedication to international work. "Once I was exposed to the diversity of our world, I had to learn more, see more, help more."

Over the next 42 years, John lived and worked internationally. Community development, leadership training, organizational development, and agricultural system development are all areas of John's expertise. His research focuses on agricultural education and training system development in Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) with a special interest in learning system capacity development.

His extension experience working for and with humanitarian organizations, universities and USAID/USDA have given him a unique perspective on the alignment between research, technologies, technology transfer, public private partnerships, and value chains, as well as institutional and system development. "I see most things from a systems perspective," says John. "It is just the way my mind works."

We welcome John's global experience, interdisciplinary approach, and systems thinking and know that the Lab will benefit greatly from his expertise. Read more about John's experience and research by clicking the button below.

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Competitive Grant Funding

Update on Status of Awards

The Legume Systems Innovation Lab Management Entity looks forward to announcing the award of projects from each Area of Inquiry (AOI) in the coming months. In total, USAID has approved five projects (three from AOI 1, one from AOI 2, and one from AOI 3). These are currently being contracted by MSU and the lead institutions. One additional project from AOI 2 and one from AOI 3, will be under USAID review for approval in January. The projects will be officially announced once they have been approved by USAID and contracting is completed through MSU.

From the Field

Animations Prove Successful Training Technique

The article below includes excerpts from the MSU Today news article, "Animated Videos Advance Adoptions of Agriculture Techniques" by Jessi Adler, published December 5, 2019.

In remote areas with low literacy rates, showing animated videos in the local language demonstrating agricultural techniques results in high retention and adoption rates of those techniques, found researchers from Michigan State University, Iowa State University and Mozambique Institute of Agricultural Research (IIAM).

In 2015, the researchers taught farmers in the Gurue District in Mozambique, using animated videos or traditional lectures, how to use jerrycans to secure stored beans for future planting seasons. Jerrycans, containers often used in Africa to store water, were chosen because they are easily and cheaply obtained, yet they keep the seeds dry and protected from pests.



Women in Mozambique watching animated video on post-harvest bean storage technique. Photo: Ricardo M. Marai

In 2017, the researchers analyzed the farmers' ability to recall the eight steps in the process, if they had used the new storage technique, and if they had shared the technique with other farmers.



Farmers in Mozambique try out post-harvest bean storage technique after viewing SAWBO video.

The study, published in the journal Information Technology for Development, demonstrated that two years after being shown an educational animated video on the postharvest bean storage method, farmers in Mozambique had a 97% retention rate and 89% adoption of the storage solution.

The animation, was created by Scientific Animations Without Borders (SAWBO) a MSU based program that transforms extension information on agriculture, health and women's empowerment into animated videos, which are translated into many languages.

Read the complete article by clicking Read More below.

[Read More](#)

Featured Legume of the Month

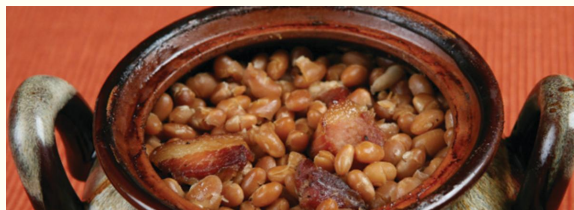
NAVY BEANS



Cooking with Navy Beans

The most popular of recipes featuring the navy bean is **Boston Baked Beans**. It is also our Deputy Director, John Medendorp's favorite bean dish. Native Americans were the first to introduce the recipe to the pilgrims. The pilgrims, who did not believe in work on Sunday, would prep the bean dish on Saturday and let it cook overnight and throughout the next day to provide a warm meal upon return from church in the afternoon. The pilgrims adapted the original recipe to substitute salted pork for bear fat and molasses for the Native American's use of maple syrup. Some believe the addition of Boston to the baked beans name came as a result of the Boston's position as a center for American

You may be surprised to learn that navy beans are white in color. The navy bean is small bush-type bean plant. It got its popular name because it has been a staple of the United States Navy since the early 20th century. Other names of the bean include haricot, pea bean, Boston bean or white pea bean. They are highly nutritious and 100 grams of the bean provides 40% of the recommended daily allowance of protein.



One traditional recipe for **Boston Baked Beans** can be found by clicking the recipe button below.

[Get Recipe Here](#)

rum making, of which molasses is a byproduct.

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

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