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

FEED THE FUTURE INNOVATION LAB FOR LEGUME SYSTEMS RESEARCH

November 2019

Legume Systems Innovation Lab Update
From the Management Office

The Legume Systems Innovation Lab's Management Entity, in consultation with the Technical Management Advisory Committee, is finalizing revisions and contracting of selected research projects submitted during the competitive process in the three Areas of Inquiry.

There is a lot of great research proposed and the Legume Systems Innovation Lab is excited to be a part of it!

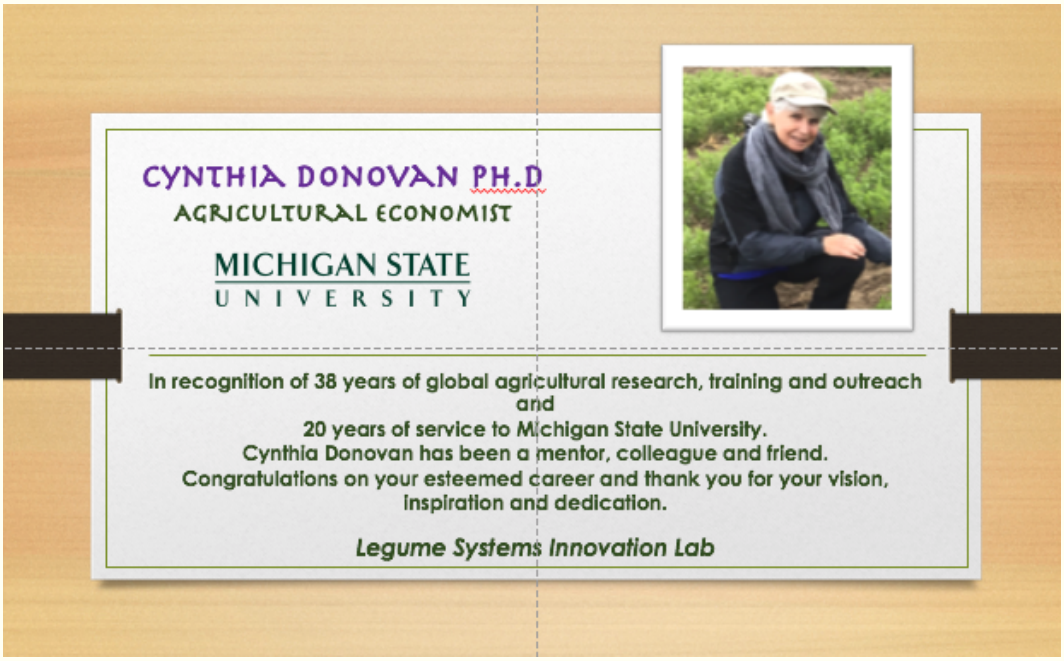
Public announcements of selected projects are expected in January.

Breaking Up is Hard to Do
Lab Deputy Director Retires After 38 Years of Service

Recently the Legume Systems Innovation Lab staff gathered to celebrate the amazing career of our Deputy Director, Cynthia Donovan. Cynthia's retirement is bittersweet, as we are excited that she is beginning a new chapter in her life, we are saddened that we no longer will have her knowledge, wisdom and leadership. Since 1981, Cynthia has been involved with research, training and outreach in developing countries.

In addition to her role as the Legume Systems Innovation Lab Deputy Director, she held the position of Associate Professor in International Development in the Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics (AFRE) and a member of the Core Faculty of the African Studies Center at Michigan State University.

Cynthia is an avid kayaker and we wish her smooth waters to paddle through as she navigates new adventures! Thank you Cynthia for all your hard work and dedication in making our world a better place for all.



Cynthia greets a new friend

Colleagues celebrate Cynthia's career

Cynthia visiting a Central American bean field

From the Field

The Impact of Collaboration: Leveraging Synergies Between Innovation Labs For Success In Senegal

The Legume Systems Innovation Lab has funded six initial activity projects focused on creative legumes systems research. One of these activities includes cowpea varietal release trials in Senegal using sustainable intensification markers. The project also highlights a unique collaboration between Feed the Future Innovation Labs.

Fatou Thiam lives in Keur Bassirou Thiam village; Darou Mousty Commune in the Louga Region in Senegal. She is participating in trials of new cowpea varieties through research supported by a collaboration of two Feed the Future Innovation Labs; Michigan State Univeristy's Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research and Kansas State University's Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Sustainable Intensification. Both the innovation labs and farmers have benefitted from this cross inter-lab collaboration of people and skills.

Cowpeas are an important crop in Keur Basirou Thiam Village, Senegal. Photos above and below courtesy of Racine Kane

"I am extremely happy with the project and the new cowpea varieties on dissemination because here in our region of Louga the rainy season is very short and rainfall amount small. Here, crop(s) like peanut have difficulties for maturing also, as women we preferably grow cowpea. The new variety grows faster with higher yields and nutrient denser compared to the one we had before. I am also happy because of these varieties here in the middle of the rainy season, you can harvest and cook for your family or sell in the market and solve your own problems," says Fatou.

"These participatory research approaches have allowed for better systems assessment of both biophysical and socioeconomic parameters that are key drivers of farmer adoption and ultimately sustainable intensification," said Dr. Zach Stewart, program principle investigator.

“Enhancing Resilience and Nutrition in the Peanut Basin of Senegal through Increased Integration of Newly Released, Improved Cowpea Varieties” is a Legume Systems Innovation Lab project aimed at providing smallholder farmers with improved cowpea varieties. Led by Dr. Zach Stewart from Kansas State University the project works closely with the Senegalese Agricultural Research Institute (ISRA).

Read More

Featured Legume of the Month

BROWN LENTILS

Lentils are high in fiber and low in complex carbohydrates, while low in fat and calories. Lentils are great source of protein. A half a cup of cooked lentils contains approximately 12 grams of protein! Lentils are also an excellent source of folate. Folate is a B-vitamin. According to the National Institute of Health. Folate is necessary to make DNA and other genetic material.

Cooking with Brown Lentils

Spicy brown lentil soup is a favorite of Cynthia Donovan, retiring Legume Systems Innovation Lab Deputy Director. She has adapted her version from Mollie Katzen's recipe that appeared in the Moosewood Cookbook, first edition. The cookbook first appeared in 1974 and featured recipes served at the Moosewood restaurant in Ithaca, NY. Washington Post Food Editor, Joe Yonan has listed it as one of three *must have* vegetarian cookbooks and it was named a Cookbook Hall of Fame winner by the James Beard Foundation.

Cynthia's Spicy Lentil Soup is a nutritious and delicious meal.

Get Recipe Here

How the United States Benefits from Agricultural and Food Security Investments in Developing Countries

A joint report from Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU)

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

Visit our website

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