



## **CONTRACT FOR DESMODIUM SEED PRODUCTION IN KENYA**

---

The International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) and the Western Seed Company Limited, Kitale have a contract for desmodium seed production in Kenya

**PERIOD:** 1st July 2003 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Establish a close working relation between the research institutes and a private seed company
- Establish community-based commercial desmodium seed production units in eight districts in Kenya by 2006 to achieve a minimum of 6 tons seed production in Kenya
- Train farmers/groups to acquire the necessary skills to multiply clean seeds for income generation.
- Link farmers with a private commercial seed company within Kenya to enable the trained farmers being contracted by the seed company to produce seed.

### **WORKPLAN**

In the first year of the commercialization of the seed project, the Western Seed Company will provide 250 gm seed to each of 300 trained farmers in two identified districts of Kenya (Bungoma and Trans Nzoia) for planting as seed. These farmers will be contract seed producers for the seed company. All the harvest of these 300 contract farmers will be purchased by the seed company, who will clean the seed, check germination and viability, and properly pack and store. In year 2 of the project, 250 gm of seed will be provided to 600 contract farmers in 4 districts of Kenya for seed multiplication. In year 3, Seed multiplication will be undertaken by 900 farmers in 8 districts of Kenya. It is expected that this level of planting will help in production of at least 3 tons of high quality Desmodium seed in Kenya per year. After Year 3, the Western Seed Company will not provide any free desmodium seed for planting but will continue purchasing desmodium seed from the contract farmers and cleaning and packing them for sale at an affordable price (not more than Ksh1,000 per kg) to farmers. The seed company will check germination and viability and will provide appropriate storage facility for the seeds.

## **DISSEMINATION OF 'PUSH-PULL' TECHNOLOGY THROUGH DESMODIUM SEED PACKETS:**

In order to help in disseminating the 'push-pull' strategy widely in Kenya, and to create a demand for Desmodium seed for striga control, the Western Seed Company will provide a small portion of its overall seed produce in free packets of 20g from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the project. The Western Seed Company will also make 2,000 small packets of 20 g seed of desmodium, which will be provided free of charge in 2Kg maize seed bags along with a copy of ICIPE brochure on intercropping desmodium with maize for striga control. These maize seed packets will be sold in striga-infested areas in Western Kenya. The farmers, who will purchase those seed bags, will get an opportunity to test the technology for striga control and eventually the demand for seed will increase the following year. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the project, 5,000 maize seed bags will contain 20g free Desmodium seed packets and ICIPE brochure. This strategy will help Western Seed Company to create a demand for Desmodium seed by disseminating the technology.

As a back-up, ICIPE will disseminate the technology through a national radio programme, *Tambea na Majira*, which is listened by 5 million farmers. ICIPE will help in production of brochure and establishing a webpage for Seed Production.

### **TRAINING:**

Western Seed Company, in collaboration with ICIPE will provide in-depth training to participating farmers from each location in cultivation of *Desmodium uncimatum* and *Desmodium intortum*, harvesting and processing of seed materials.

### **SALE AND MARKETING:**

During the first three years of the project, the resulting products (a maximum of 6 tons of processed, cleaned and well packed seed) will be purchased by ICIPE (@ Ksh 1000 per kilo) to help expand the 'push-pull' programme. Any extra seed will be marketed by Western Seed Company.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

#### **ICIPE**

- Overall coordination in Year 1 and 2 but hand over to Western Seed in Year 3
- Selection of contract farmers with Western Seed Company
- Training of farmers with Western Seed Company
- Monitor pest and disease problems and find environmental-friendly solutions to them.

#### **Western Seed Company**

- Overall coordination and management after Year 3
- Selection of contract farmers with ICIPE
- Training of farmers with ICIPE
- Provide initial seed free to contract farmers.
- Purchase clean seed from farmers

- Check germination and viability and appropriate storage facilities
- Market appropriate packet size of desmodium in appropriate districts with Gatsby “push-pull” project details and with indications of where nearest demonstration/on farm trial can be seen.
- Help disseminate the technology by providing small packets of desmodium free of charge with maize and sorghum seed. The desmodium will be only a part of the produce purchased by the Western Seed Company.
- Assure production of desmodium seed as planned.

**EVALUATION:**

The progress of the project will be reviewed every six month through joint meetings. Perception of farmers and local communities towards the project will be studied through socio-economic interviews of participating farmers. On-site visit and consultations will be made to discuss farmers’ view and suggestions.