Centre for Genetic Resources
the Netherlands (CGN)
a short introduction
Welcome at a special occasion

- welcome in one of the international agricultural research centres
- CGN is proud to host 2011 European Plant Genetic Resources Conference
- at the occasion of 25th anniversary of CGN
CGN’s history

1986
- established to adopt and curate (Wageningen-based) PGR working collections
- collections originating from Wageningen University, government research institutions and the private sector
- CGN part of Wageningen University and Research Centre

2000
- merger with animal genetic resources activities

2004
- addition of activities in forest genetic resources
Some figures about CGN

- **annual budget**
  - € 3 million total, € 1.6 million PGR

- **staff PGR cluster**
  - 12 permanent positions, incl. 6 curators
  - additional greenhouse staff and researchers/consultants

- **collection size 24,000 accessions of 25 crops**
CGN’s position and partners

- CGN is an independent entity within Wageningen UR
  - reporting directly to ministry of agriculture
- CGN benefits from its position in the university
  - scientific environment
  - international network
  - major providers and users of germplasm
- CGN operates in country with major breeding industry
  - substantial collaboration with private seed industry
CGN’s perspectives

■ “mantra”
  - no conservation without utilization
  - no utilization without information

■ scope
  - collection management only one component of PGR management
  - policy support, support for *in situ* management additional core functions
CGN’s perspectives

- traits, not origin, determine value of accessions
  - limited number of collections but with wide geographic coverage

- PGR management needs continuous innovation
  - improving effectiveness (reaching the user)
  - increasing accession-level information
  - decreasing duplication of efforts

- CGN part of global system
  - how to determine optimal contribution?
CGN’s strategy

- investing in quality over volume
  - well curated and documented collections of moderate size

- private sector cooperation
  - major contributions in-kind for regeneration and evaluation

- informing PGR and seed system policy makers
  - essential for effective genebank community functioning
A recent strategic decision

- CGN to focus on vegetable crops
  - strengthening existing vegetable crop collections
    - in particular moderate climate zone vegetables
    - gap analysis, collecting missions
  - developing new collections of neglected and underutilized vegetable crops
  - providing crop portals to vegetable genetic resources information
  - disinvesting in well-represented arable staple crops
Leading questions

- To serve and conserve
  - what to conserve?
    - limited financial means
  - how to promote use?
    - how to best respond to user needs?
  - how to effectively collaborate?
    - reducing duplication of efforts
    - building an effective global system

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