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WELCOME TO OUR NEW GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER

The Executive Committee of the IAPPS Governing Board as appointed **Dr. Brhane Gebrekidan** as our new **IAPPS Governing Board member, coordinator of Region V: East Africa.**



Dr. Gebrekidan is currently the Africa Program Manager for the Virginia Tech managed Feed the Future IPM Innovation Lab. He has over 40 years of Ethiopian, African, and global experience in agricultural research, education, technology transfer, and project management. A plant breeder, Gebrekidan has developed new varieties of sorghum and maize for different ecological zones across Ethiopia. Gebrekidan has extensive experience in research, teaching, and management. He has taught courses in plant breeding, genetics, biometry, and cropping systems at the former Alemaya College of Agriculture at Addis Ababa University (now Haramaya University). He is a founding fellow, vice president, and board member of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences.

He has served as the founding editor of the Ethiopian Journal of Agricultural Sciences, as the chairman of the Agriculture Working Group of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, and as vice-chair of the Ethiopian Association of Agricultural Professionals. He is also vice-chair of the Professional Advisory Group of Colleges of Agriculture of Ethiopian Public Universities, and serves as an advisor to the Agricultural Transformation Agency of Ethiopia. Gebrekidan was director of the USAID funded IPM Collaborative Research Program (IPM CRSP) at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA from 1994 to 2002. He has also served as chief of party and senior research advisor for the USAID-funded Amhara Micro-enterprise development, Agricultural Research, Extension and Watershed Management (AMAREW) project based in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. Gebrekidan's other management experience includes stints as the associate program director of the

International Sorghum and Millet CRSP (INTSORMIL) in Lincoln, Nebraska, USA, the Ethiopian national team leader and coordinator for sorghum and millet for International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), maize breeder and team leader for Eastern and Southern Africa under the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), and Head of the Plant Sciences Department of Alemaya College of Agriculture at Addis Ababa University.

As leader of both the Ethiopian and eastern and southern Africa regional sorghum/maize programs, he has worked closely for over two decades with the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research and the other national research institutes in the region. Throughout his career, Dr. Gebrekidan has devoted himself to promoting good practices and policies in maize, sorghum, and millet improvement, and agricultural development in general.

Please join me in welcoming Brhane to the IAPPS Governing Board and family.

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VIRGINIA TECH AWARDED \$18M GRANT FOR IPM INNOVATION LAB

Virginia Tech has won a new \$18 million, five-year grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for a research program that will work to raise the standard of living of people around the world through environmentally sound agricultural practices as part of Feed the Future, the U.S. Government’s global hunger and food security initiative.

The Feed the Future Innovation Lab (formerly Collaborative Research Support Program) for Integrated Pest Management will conduct research and extension activities with farmers, counterpart universities, and host-country government research institutes to implement ecologically sustainable pest and disease control strategies. The predecessor programs to this new award have been led by Virginia Tech University for the past 21 years.

USAID recently announced that Virginia Tech would once again lead the program, a move that represents a vote of confidence in the work that has been ongoing since 1993. The new program will have a strong foundation in areas such as sustainable intensification, ecological service provision, ecological research, and empowerment of women farmers.

“We’ve been forming partnerships, conducting research, and getting to know farmers all over the world for the past two decades,” said Rangaswamy “Muni” Muniappan, who has led the Innovation Lab since 2006. “Our work has shown great results, and we look forward to continuing the fight against hunger.”

The competitively-awarded program will address new and emerging pest problems that plague

farmers in the developing world, as well as model and manage the spread of invasive species. Program scientists will also be investigating ways to preserve biodiversity and offset the impacts of climate change on agricultural pests and diseases.

The new Innovation Lab, managed by Virginia Tech's Office of International Research, Education, and Development, will commit its core resources to Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania in Africa and to Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Nepal, and Vietnam in Asia.

The Asian arm of the program will include two main sub-programs: one focused on rice in Burma and Cambodia, and a second on horticultural crops in Cambodia, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Vietnam. The Nepal program will additionally address integrated pest management for grains and climate change impacts.

The projects in eastern Africa will focus on innovative crop protection research for increased production and preservation of high-priority Feed the Future staple crops like maize, wheat, and chickpea in Ethiopia; rice and maize in Tanzania; and high-value vegetables in Kenya and Tanzania. The program will also research and implement new strategies to control existing and emergent pest infestations in countries where farmers with limited resources are predicted to be heavily affected by climate variability.

“This program has been working on the ground with poor farmers, making a difference in their lives, and contributing to global food security,” said Guru Ghosh, vice president for Outreach and International Affairs at Virginia Tech. “We’re pleased to have the opportunity to learn from past challenges and build on our successes.”

As in all the previous phases of the program, U.S. researchers will strengthen and forge new partnerships with international colleagues and work directly with farmers. The core tenets will remain unchanged: The program will strive to reduce pesticide use, increase food production, improve health, and make a difference in the lives of poor people in developing countries all over the world.

“A small innovation in a farmer’s life can have a huge impact on their family and on succeeding generations,” said Muniappan.

Prof. R. Muniappan

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IAPPS Mission: to provide a global forum for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, integrating, and promoting plant protection concepts, technologies, and policies that are economically, environmentally, and socially acceptable.

It seeks to provide a global umbrella for the plant protection sciences to facilitate and promote the application of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to the world's crop and forest ecosystems.

Membership Information: IAPPS has four classes of membership (individual, affiliate, associate, and corporate) which are described in the IAPPS Web Site www.plantprotection.org.

The *IAPPS Newsletter* welcomes news, letters, and other items of interest from individuals and organizations. Address correspondence and information to:

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