



International Conference

# FROM SEED TO PASTA III

A SUSTAINABLE DURUM WHEAT CHAIN  
FOR FOOD SECURITY AND HEALTHY LIVES

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### MONSANTO'S BEACHELL-BORLAUG INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

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Corn, wheat and rice are the world's 3 most important cereal crops. Corn yields are growing faster than world population but wheat and rice are not, and are putting millions of people on a collision course with hunger. These facts led the late Dr. Norman Borlaug to ask Monsanto executives to boost research into wheat and rice breeding.

The Monsanto Beachell-Borlaug International Scholars Program is named after Monsanto and the greatest wheat and rice breeders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and was established on Dr. Borlaug's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on March 25, 2009. It is directed by Dr. Ed Runge and administered by Texas AgriLife Research of Texas A&M University and was guided by a distinguished judging panel from around the world.

Since the program's inception 89 scholars, from 30 different countries, were selected for support with the \$13 million provided by Monsanto over 8 years. They were selected from 432 applicants. Scholars include 35 women and 54 men, 37 in rice breeding and 52 in wheat breeding. Twenty-two scholars are still completing their Ph.D. programs. These scholars represent the best of the best entering the plant breeding profession. Scholars were expected to seek employment in public institutions if possible.

#### Conclusions – MBBISP

1. Has greatly increased research in rice and wheat breeding.
2. Was unique as Scholars conducted research during their PhD program in both developed and in developing/transition countries. The MBBISP enhanced interaction between professors and scientists in developed and developing/transition countries.
3. Concluded that Scholars needed additional leadership training and established a 40 hour leadership and development course taught by TERO International Staff (Clive, Iowa). Scholars took the leadership course during the first 2 years (20 hours each year) of their PhD program, before attending Monsanto Day at Ankeny or Huxley, Iowa, and the World Food Prize. The leadership course was well received.
4. Scholars will impact food security for many generations through their leadership.

In 2017 Monsanto established the "Ted Crosbie MBBISP Impact Award" to begin recognizing notable contributions. Scholar impact is just beginning to be recognized since the earliest graduates have been employed for less than 6 years. Dr. Bhoja Basnet, who is in charge of CIMMYT's hybrid wheat breeding program, was selected to receive the Ted Crosbie MBBISP Impact Award for 2017.