
CottonGen update for 2016-2020

1 message

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Mon, Aug 17, 2015 at 6:49 AM

To: "Eric Young (eyoung@ncsu.edu)" <eyoung@ncsu.edu>

Dr. Young;

In late 2011 the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (SAAESD) and the 3 largest cotton seed providers kindly agreed to help fund development of a genomics, genetics, and breeding database (CottonGen) developed by Dorrie Main and her team at Washington State University. Our goal then was to develop a comprehensive database that would benefit all researchers and ultimately growers across the 17 states where cotton is grown, and we are now well along into the 5th year of this effort. The project involves integrating public websites, genomic sequence data, consensus genetic maps, large scale phenotypic data, and ultimately development of a breeder's toolbox. Significant progress has been made by Dr. Main, and we are now planning for the next five years with the same expectations for timeliness and financial thriftiness as we had in the first five years. Since inception SAAESD has provided CottonGen \$12,500/year, and we look forward to receiving your 2015 support in the next 6-8 weeks.

When we started this project our desire was to demonstrate a united sponsorship of the database across the entire cotton research community, and as such, Cotton Incorporated requested and received annual support from the USDA-ARS, three private sector partners, and the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (SAAESD). We are again asking for financial support from the same diverse group as we expand the breeder toolboxes CottonGen can provide.

As an example of the progress we have made recently, during the past two years genome sequences of two extant diploid relatives of Upland cotton have been deposited into CottonGen. Building on these two successes, in May of this year two draft genome sequences of *Gossypium hirsutum* were published and await integration. Curation of such large data sets requires expertise in order for the knowledge to be ultimately translated into breeder tools. Dr. Main and her team have that expertise and are currently developing a workshop which highlights a breeder friendly FieldBook App. A workshop is scheduled at the 2016 Beltwide Conference in

New Orleans to invite breeders to tell the CottonGen staff what they like and seek input on new functionality that would make breeding more effective.

The next five year CottonGen budget plan requires \$180,000 starting in 2016, with 2% increases thereafter. Through a cooperative research agreement between USDA-ARS and Cotton Incorporated, our organizations will contribute \$40,000/year and \$85,000/year. As is evident, USDA-ARS and Cotton Incorporated have committed to cover 70% of the required budget. We are asking for annual support of \$25,000 from SAAESD and the remaining \$30,000 split between our three private industry partners. Besides providing much needed financial support, funds from SAAESD demonstrate a united support for CottonGen across the entire cotton research community.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this critical database need and our request for support in the 2016 – 2020 time frame. I would be happy to speak to the SAAESD to answer any questions the group may have.

Regards,



DON C. JONES Ph.D.

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