



ACPFPG contact: **Michael Gilbert**

+61 8 8313 6740

CSIRO Contact: **Bruce Lee**

+61 2 9490 8490

Vilmorin & Cie contact: **Claire Planche**

+33 4 73634195

**ACPFPG and CSIRO join forces with Vilmorin & Cie to commercialize
Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) wheat in Australia**

“Australian growers to benefit from international collaboration”

Paris, France, and Sydney/Adelaide Australia April 6th, 2012

The Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics (ACPFPG) and CSIRO announced today that the world’s fourth largest seed company, Vilmorin & Cie (Vilmorin), has taken a license to access technology that aims to reduce the amount of Nitrogen fertilizer used by Australian growers for their wheat crops.

This technology was sourced by ACPFG and CSIRO’s Food Futures Flagship (working through CSIRO Plant Industry) in 2007 from Arcadia Biosciences Inc (Davis, California) for the Australian market.

Nitrogen fertilizer production uses large amounts of energy and excessive use of nitrogen has sometimes led to environmental problems in many regions. It is currently the largest single cost for cereal growers.

This license brings together leading Australian wheat research groups with the largest European wheat seed company.

“This is an exciting development and represents an important milestone for ACPFG.” said **Michael Gilbert, ACPFG’s General Manager**. “ACPFPG was established to develop and deliver new technologies for the benefit of Australian farmers and improvements in nitrogen use efficiency has been a major target. CSIRO has been a valuable partner and now we have a respected European company to help us further develop and deliver the technology”.



“Wheat has recently attracted strong international interest as an important staple crop and Vilmorin has had a long standing commitment to wheat seed research and development”, said **Dr Bruce Lee, Director of the CSIRO’s Food Futures Flagship**. “CSIRO has always had a long-standing commitment to wheat so this is an excellent partnership and we are looking forward to exploring the applicability of this technology to wheat”.

Emmanuel Rougier, CEO of Vilmorin, said “In 2008, we made a strategic investment in Australian Grain Technologies, the largest wheat breeding company in the country. This licensed technology will complement that investment, and we aim to make GMO wheat integrating the NUE technology available to every Australian grower that wants it. Globally, we invest over 15% of our revenue in research and are strongly committed to the international development of innovative new varieties of wheat”.

Wheat is the largest acreage crop in the world. It is the staple food for 35 percent of the world’s population and represents 20 percent of the total protein intake. Increasing global food production is needed as the population approaches 9 billion by 2050.



ACPF (www.acpfg.com.au) was established in 2003 by the South Australian Government and the Australian Federal Government through the Australian Research Council and the Grains Research and Development Corporation. ACPF scientists also improve cereal crops' tolerance to environmental stresses such as drought, heat, salinity and nutrient toxicities; major causes of yield and quality loss throughout the world and significant problems for cereal growers. The future resilience of our food production systems in the face of a changing climate will depend upon the development and delivery of new technologies.

CSIRO (www.csiro.au) is Australia's national science agency and one of the largest and most diverse research agencies in the world. Its National Research Flagships program focuses on large-scale, long-term, multidisciplinary science to address Australia's major national challenges and opportunities.

As the world's fourth largest seed company, **Vilmorin** (www.vilmorin.info) develops vegetable and field seeds with high added value, to better meet global food requirements. True to its vision of sustainable development, Vilmorin relies on ongoing investments in research and international growth to strengthen its market shares. An ambition that is driven by its corporate culture which is based on the sharing of knowledge, quality of life and respect for the needs of mankind.

###