

Syrian seed bank that holds genes to fight climate change relocating due to war

A major seed bank in Aleppo, Syria, holds genes that might help researchers breed crops to survive climate change. But the conflict tearing the country apart has rendered the bank largely inaccessible for the past four years. Now an effort to duplicate its seed collection at more-accessible locations is ramping up.

On 29 September, the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), which runs the bank in Aleppo, launched a sister bank in Terbol, Lebanon... Together with a new bank in Rabat, Morocco, it will make thousands of seeds available to researchers.

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Seed banks function as bank accounts for plant genes. Collectors deposit seeds, which can later be 'withdrawn' to replenish crops lost in ...disaster, to breed new traits into crops — such as pest or heat resistance...

ICARDA's collection, previously held entirely at the bank in Aleppo, is especially valuable because it ... contains many wild relatives of modern crops such as wheat, barley, lentils and grass pea.

...Many wild varieties from arid regions have traits that may help crops to meet the challenges posed by climate change, including resistance to drought, heat and pests, and adaptations to salinity.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Syrian seed bank gets new home away from war](#)