

## Plant genetic resources – conservation and exploitation for research activities

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Plant genetic resources play a major role for global food security. The most significant and widespread mean of preserving plant genetic resources is *ex situ* conservation. Today about 1,750 *ex situ* genebanks world-wide maintain 7.4 million accessions. One of the ten largest *ex situ* collections of our globe is located at the Leibniz Institute of Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research (IPK) in Gatersleben, Germany, conserving 150,000 accessions from 3,200 plant species and 780 genera. Since the majority of genebank holdings globally is maintained as seed, seed storability is of exceptional importance for germplasm conservation.

At IPK research on seed longevity was initiated for a range of crops and wild relatives stored over decades. Historical germination data accumulated during 35 years of seed germination monitoring were analysed to predict species specific seed longevities. The study considered 75 species comprising 79,075 accessions and 157,402 observations. Beside interspecific differences variation was also detected within species and genetic analyses were initiated in barley, wheat, oilseed rape and tobacco.

In addition, mass spectrometry based untargeted metabolite profiling experiments were performed in order to detect biochemical changes coinciding with loss in seed germination. GC-MS analysis of the polar metabolome of wheat and barley identified glycerol and related intermediates as highly correlated to germination rate. Therefore, the lipidomic composition of a wheat panel was investigated using high-resolution liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry (LC-MS). A high proportion of tentative oxidized lipids was detected, suggesting lipid oxidation as the causal trigger for membrane degradation.

Beside research on seed storability genebank accessions and genetic stocks have been extensively used for genetic and genomic studies. Data on mapping of loci/marker trait associations for a range of different traits will be presented.