

SGSV Partner Fact Sheet

Government of Norway

The seed vault is owned and managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on behalf of the Kingdom of Norway, which also funded its construction, and is established as a service to the world community. Norway's offer to host the seed vault emanates from a deep commitment to global citizenship. In establishing the international seed vault, Norway is making a unique contribution to the preservation of the planet's most important biodiversity, and to international commitments to end hunger. The Seed Vault is in line with Norwegian policy with regard to biodiversity, preservation of genetic resources, North-South policy, development policy, and food safety.

Norway is the ideal location for the seed vault. Geographically, it offers a remote site with natural cooling capacity. Equally if not more important, Norway has the political trust of all the countries involved to put safeguarding the world's agriculture heritage above the self-interest of Norway. In the eyes of many, a global seed vault could not be located anywhere else in the world but Norway. Norway has consistently played a strong and respected role as a trusted, honest broker in the frequently acrimonious debates over who controls and protects the world's genetic diversity of plant life.

Norway has not only provided the world with an exceptionally functional seed vault—millions of seeds should be safe and viable for centuries—but also one that is an aesthetic inspiration, a living monument to the too-often obscure cause of crop diversity. Its national commitment to invest at least 1 percent or more of a building's budget on art work has resulted in a stunning artist's installation that will allow the vault to sparkle in the midnight sun of the Svalbard summers and glow in the long nights of its winters.

The vault will cost almost USD \$9 million. The Government has signed a long-term contract with Statsbygg to provide on-going maintenance of the facility at a cost of approximately USD \$100,000 a year.

Web site: <http://www.seedvault.no>

Global Crop Diversity Trust

The mission of the Global Crop Diversity Trust is to ensure the conservation and availability of crop diversity for food security worldwide. Although crop diversity is fundamental to fighting hunger and to the very future of agriculture, funding is unreliable and diversity is being lost. The Trust is the only organisation working worldwide to solve this problem. The Trust, which set up headquarters in Rome, will support basic conservation costs in national and international collections of crop diversity. The Trust also will provide funding to rescue and salvage collections currently at risk, and build capacity in developing countries to manage such collections. The Trust is assembling an endowment fund to finance the conservation of crop diversity forever, removing the uncertainty surrounding the safety of this most precious resource. The security offered by Svalbard is part of that vision.

The Global Crop Diversity Trust has financed the preparation and shipment of seeds to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault from developing countries and international agricultural research centres. The Trust will provide USD \$125,000 to 150,000 annually for operation costs and also is allocating an additional USD \$500,000 to the task of assembling and shipping seeds to Svalbard from genebanks around the world.

Web site: <http://www.croptrust.org>

Nordic Genetic Resources Center

The Nordic Genetic Resources Center (NordGen) will operate the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and maintain a public on-line database of samples stored in the seed vault. NordGen staff will travel to Svalbard from Sweden as necessary and monitor the facility electronically (along with officials in Svalbard) in the interim. Deposit of seeds will be by advance arrangement.

NordGen conserves and documents the genetic variation of Nordic plant species useful for agriculture and horticulture. The material stored in the bank is available for plant breeding, research, and any other bona fide use. Its activities also foster rational co-operation between the Nordic countries in their efforts to use plant genetic resources for plant breeding and crop improvement research. The Nordic Genetic Resources Center participates in international co-operation on the conservation and use of plant genetic resources. It is located in Alnarp, Sweden.

Web site: <http://www.nordgen.org/sgsv/>