

Gebisa Ejeta

Purdue University
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Gebisa Ejeta is a native of Ethiopia. He received his early education including a BSc in Plant Science from Alemaya College of Agriculture. His PhD in Plant Breeding and Genetics was received from Purdue University in 1978. Dr. Ejeta started his professional career as a Principal Plant Breeder at the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) where he developed the first commercial sorghum hybrid in Africa catalyzing the creation of a viable seed industry.

Dr. Ejeta joined the faculty of Purdue University in 1984 where he currently holds a position of Distinguished Professor of Plant Breeding & Genetics. He conducts an interdisciplinary sorghum research. His research focuses on a continuum ranging from basic genetics to the development and delivery of technologies that address primary constraints of sorghum in both the developed and developing world. His findings have advanced the knowledge base of the genetics and physiology of the major biotic and abiotic stresses afflicting the crop including nutritional quality, drought, plant diseases, and the parasitic weed Striga. He developed, released, and facilitated the adoption and spread in several countries of a number of sorghum varieties and hybrids. He has studied and promoted biodiversity and advanced the effective exchange and use of crop germplasm resources globally.

Professor Ejeta is a leader in international development through his crop improvement research, his efforts in human capacity and institution building, as well as in his advisory capacity on research program management. He has served on review panels and advisory boards of major agricultural research and development organizations including the international agricultural research centers (IARCs), the Rockefeller Foundation, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, and a number of national and regional organizations in Africa. Recently, he spent a sabbatical year in Nairobi, Kenya assisting the Rockefeller and Gates Foundation launch their new joint initiative, the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa. He is currently a member of the Science Council of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Gebisa Ejeta is the 2009 World Food Prize Laureate.