

Foreword 2018



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GEVES is a national examination office, implementing public policies for varieties and seeds through its different activities.

This year's annual report provides an overview of the actions and events of 2018 and outlines our projects for 2019 and in the longer term.

2018 has been a strong year for GEVES with a high level of activity. GEVES has continued to develop its technical and managerial skills, the acquisition and adaptation of technologies in seed testing, plant health, molecular biology, phenotyping, as well as investments in its various locations. Our work is diverse, and central to the agricultural and industrial sectors.

Several initiatives concerning the valorisation of plant variety data, right up to the farmer, have helped to promote the French Catalogue.

Due to Brexit, we have prepared for the addition of more than 100 new ornamental species to our testing activities for protection applications. We have created an accelerated application procedure for use in exceptional cases. This has enhanced the attractiveness of GEVES on the international market for variety registration, seed testing and plant variety protection in the important and competitive ornamental sector.

The National Coordination Structure for Plant Genetic Resources (PGR) networks is now fully operational.

GEVES contributed to the preparation of the H2020 INVITE project selected by the European Commission. It has participated in numerous European and international working groups, in keeping with its missions and projects. The National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for seeds and seedlings is now well structured and is equipped with digital tools and training. The number of seed tests has remained at a very high level.

New horizons are being explored in the field of biocontrol, which could offer interactions with the genetic characteristics of varieties. This will also be taken into account in our phenotyping work.

The activities of BioGEVES have been developed while and the BioGEVES 2030 project has been finalised.

All accreditation and certification audits were successfully completed and the financial balance of GEVES remained positive in 2018.

GEVES's commitment to openness and visibility has been illustrated by communication tools such as its new newsletter. It is important that we foster knowledge amongst decision-makers policy makers, farmers and the general public regarding GEVES's extensive technical expertise and its role in the economic and environmental performance of French agriculture.

GEVES is at the heart of the innovation eco-system, through its contributions to seed and variety regulation and its technical inputs. Together with the CTPS and all agricultural stakeholders, we strive to ensure the best possible match between seed and variety testing and production systems, and to explore new ways of fostering crop diversity through variety registration testing. GEVES has an essential role to play in defining farming for tomorrow, drawing on its own scientific expertise and the expertise of its founding partners. This also means accepting the controversy and confusion surrounding technologies, production models and protection models.

GEVES's strength lies in the balance of state, research, and sector expertise, and the solidity of its testing procedures and regulatory framework. Underpinning our activities is the principle that plant material - its conservation, improvement and distribution - is a common good.

Perspectives 2019

Society has high demands for the agriculture of tomorrow, which will largely impact the seed sector. Genetic improvement and seed quality contribute to the necessary development of agricultural production systems to reinforce their productivity and their durability, the quality of their products, the reduction of their impacts on biodiversity, air quality, water quality and public health.

The Seeds and Sustainable Agricultural Plan, published by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2016, is a frame of reference for GEVES's present and future actions. The actions set out by this plan are carried out by the Variety Study Department, in particular the promoting of post-registration variety data. Connecting this data with breeder data and post-registration data from agricultural research institutes and distributors is an important objective for GEVES. The DONOBT and VALOR-AGRI projects are examples of this, as is the API-AGRO platform of which GEVES is a founding member.

Our human, technical and organisational resources are continually adjusted, with regards to its financial balance and the economic model of GEVES whereby positions are made available by INRA. These positions play a significant and essential role in GEVES's missions of expertise and supporting public policies.

BioGEVES is implementing its 2030 plan with a steady increase in its support activities for GEVES's variety and seed departments, and for third-party services. A new triennial agreement (2019-2021) with the GNIS-SOC, concerning GEVES's activities in support of certification, is being finalised.

To optimise its services, GEVES will be putting in place a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool in order

to improve its transversal visibility and the efficiency of its internal activities.

The organisation of its teams and the resources and means implemented are modernised in coherence with GEVES's activities. These changes will also concern the staff representation bodies, as following the reform of the new "Unique Company Committee" procedures for consultation and exchanges with personnel bodies will be established and put in place by 01/ 01/2020.

The year 2019 will also see other structural changes for GEVES, including the change of CEO in July, the renewal of members of the CTPS and the GEVES Scientific Council, as well the change of Director of the SEV in the autumn. At the beginning of 2020, INRA will become INRAE following the INRA-IRSTEA merger. GEVES will be working closely with the Directorate for Support to Public Policies (DAPP).

We would like to thank our partners and the GEVES staff for their commitment and investment, which is integral to the expertise and performance of GEVES. Through its unique missions and expertise, GEVES plays a key role in providing resources and solutions for the agriculture of tomorrow.

We hope you enjoy reading this annual report for 2018. We would be very happy to hear any suggestions you may have, to help us continue to better meet your needs.



New CEO Alain Tridon takes office on 11 July 2019

Summary

Foreword by A. Deltour & C. Huyghe	2	Seed expertise	18-23
Perspectives 2019-2020	3	Molecular biology & biochemistry	24-25
GEVES at a glance	4-5	Research activities	26-31
GEVES's missions	6-7	GEVES's resources	32
Key dates in 2018	8-9	Communication	33
Plant variety evaluation & characterisation	10-17	Glossary	34
		Contacts	35