Unveiling China’s 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), the year 2016 was crucial for advancing the innovation-driven development strategy and pushing forward the institutional reform for scientific and technological development in this country. Facing profound changes in 2016, the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) steadily moved ahead with all-round progress in the implementation of the Agricultural Science and Technology Innovation Program (ASTIP) and developed the National Agricultural Science and Technology Innovation Alliance (ASTIA), with a view to create an innovation-friendly climate by setting up a coordinated work mechanism for agricultural research across the nation, facilitating cooperation in research throughout the entire industrial chain, and seeking multi-discipline integrated agro-technological solutions. Advancement can be seen in the strengthened international cooperation with our partners, expanded talent pool by attracting scientists throughout the world and highlighting career development of CAAS staff, improved research infrastructures, stronger scientific innovation capacity and accelerated transfer of the research results. As for the progress achieved, CAAS provides more powerful momentum for the modernization drive in the agricultural sector of China.

In this fantastic year, seven achievements with CAAS researchers as first authors won national scientific awards, including the country’s first agricultural innovation team award that was bestowed to a CAAS innovation team for their outstanding work on wheat germplasm resources and genetic improvement. Breakthroughs have been witnessed in researches on such issues as the analysis of leaf mustard’s genomic structure and origin, the mining of regulatory genes related to the key traits of cabbage and rape, and a new mechanism for interaction between Pyricularia grisea and rice. The academy also continued the innovation efforts in coordinated research and development in major agricultural production regions. The integrated technology-based green production modes for 9 major agricultural products, including rice and amongst other agricultural products have been now promoted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) as best practices for developing countries.

CAAS also signed more than 10 agreements with top-class agricultural research institutions worldwide in 2016, built 18 new international joint laboratories and hosted or organized 43 international academic conferences. The academy’s technologies and products in such areas as crop breeding, plant protection, husbandry and veterinary drugs have been introduced and applied in a number of countries and regions, which has greatly contributed to the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative and the agricultural “going global” strategy.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and best wishes to friends from all sectors of society and to our overseas peers, who have long been helpful and supportive of CAAS’ growth. Let’s walk hand in hand in the path to explore the frontier of agricultural research and to address people’s needs for better life and environment of today and tomorrow.

Message from the President

Professor Tang Huajun, Ph.D.
President of CAAS
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