

No more paper! The click-wrap procedure for handling SMTA's as implemented at CGN

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Background

The Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (IT PGRFA) has to be used for all transfers under the Multilateral System of the IT PGRFA. It is obligatory, and its provisions and conditions cannot be changed. Using the SMTA generally causes much paper moving around. After receiving a seed request from a user, a contract has to be prepared, the list of accessions added, and copies need to be signed, send to the requestor who has to send it back, before seeds can be shipped. Apart from the labor required this is also a very time consuming process, and hinders swift service to the users of genebanks. Therefore CGN developed in 2007, as part of its documentation system GENIS, a procedure for handling these transactions fully automatically.

Procedure

Selection and ordering of material



A customer orders material from the CGN web site. The order is finalized by entering contact information of his/her self and his/hers authorized official. The SMTA procedure will start if it is indicated that the material is used for food and agriculture.

Confirmation of the order



The customer receives an email to confirm the order.

Request for authorization



The authorized official receives an email stating that an order awaits his/hers authorization. This email contains a link that leads to the authorization page.

Signing the SMTA



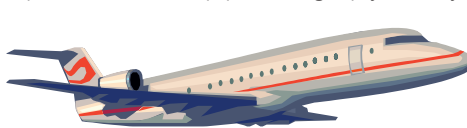
On the authorization page the authorized official has to scroll through the text of the SMTA and a list with the requested accessions, and agrees with it by clicking a button at the end of the SMTA. The authorized official receives an email to confirm the authorization.

Seed handling

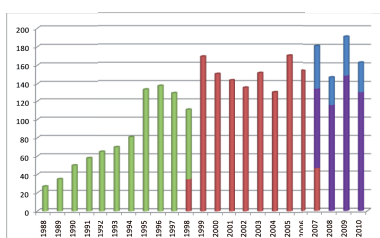


The customer receives an email to inform about the authorization of the order. This email is copied to the seed handling department of CGN. In some cases CGN staff might contact the customer e.g. if the request is very large or the purpose of the requested material is not clear.

Seeds are taken out of the storage and are dispatched as soon as possible, dependent on additional paperwork e.g. a phytosanitary certificate.



Transactions



Number of seed transactions per contract type over years. Green = no contract, red = CGN-MTA, blue/purple = SMTA paper/click-wrap.

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