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USDA announces investment in plant germplasm

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Photos courtesy of USDA.

The USDA [announced](#) a new \$180 million Seed Sovereignty Initiative, a two-year effort aimed at strengthening U.S. agricultural security by accelerating the characterization and genomic sequencing of plant genetic resources held in the nation's public collections. The investment will focus on the USDA-ARS National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS), which maintains more than 600,000 accessions representing over 16,000 plant species.

The initiative will support large-scale sequencing of major crop collections, identification of critical gaps in U.S. germplasm resources, and the use of advanced analytical technologies to uncover valuable genetic traits. Making genomic information associated with NPGS collections more accessible and actionable could help researchers and breeders respond more rapidly to emerging production challenges while supporting the development of new crop varieties. The initiative represents one of the largest recent federal investments in plant genetic resource characterization and could substantially expand the scientific utility of USDA germplasm collections.

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