

## Brazil Ready to Teach Tunisia How to Improve Wheat Growing

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Sefeddine Cherif, the ambassador of Tunisia to Brazil, wants to take the Brazilian experience in wheat research to his country. He and the first secretary at the embassy, Mohamed Tascou, met at the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) Cerrados, in the city of Planaltina, in Goiás state, and a partnership between the Brazilian company and Tunisia was suggested.

The Arab country, which is located in North of Africa, is the main global per capita consumer of wheat. According to the ambassador, Tunisia needs wheat cultivars that are more resistant to drought, as the climate in the country is desert and semi-arid. One of the suggestions proposed by the ambassador was technical exchange between both countries and the exchange of experience with genetic material of wheat.

According to Cherif, Tunisia has good experience in the production of olive oil and dates, but the country needs to learn new techniques for wheat growing. At Embrapa Cerrados, the diplomats talked to researcher Walter Quadros, who explained the development of wheat cultivars for the drylands areas of Brazil and showed him an area where experiments are taking place in the field.

The diplomats also spoke to vet José Robson Sereno, head of Embrapa Cerrados, and to researcher Marília Santos Silva, international articulator at the Embrapa unit, with whom he exchanged ideas to start a new partnership. The ambassador also recalled that the minister of Foreign Relations of Brazil, Celso Amorim, visited Tunisia in June and discussed the possibility of exchange of experiences in the agricultural area.

During Amorim's trip, then Brazilian ambassador to Tunisia, Marília Sardenberg Zelner Gonçalves, also commented that Embrapa could supply its ample know-how in crops for dry climates. It was with the intention of aiding the African countries in the agricultural area that the Embrapa opened an office in Ghana, Africa.

Embrapa is also studying the possibility of taking systems for satellite land monitoring to African countries. Representatives of the Embrapa office in Ghana are going to deliver a document with the proposal to the heads of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), which includes 60 countries that produce and consume wood.

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