

OPPOTUNITY

Oppotunity enters into a license agreement to improve late blight control in starch potatoes

3. December 2024

Project Oppotunity has entered into a license agreement with Enza Zaden to use the DMR resistance trait to improve fungal control in various crops. Late blight is a major problem in many crops. Finding resistance takes years, and once found, the resistance is quickly broken. The DMR resistance trait appears to be a promising solution with a long-term perspective. Oppotunity aims to apply this trait by using CRISPR-CAS (an NGT) to improve late blight resistance.

Project Oppotunity is an agreement of 12 European parties active in starch potatoes who are seriously engaged in getting new breeding techniques approved in Europe. Hans Berggren, secretary of Oppotunity: "I am very optimistic to be able to show to stakeholders in the coming years the power of NGT's in the field via a modified potato on a plant disease as severe as late blight. We look forward to being able to use this technology soonest."

Jeroen Rouppe van der Voort, Research Manager IP & External Projects at Enza Zaden: "We have great expectations of the DMR resistance trait. We want to make it available to the industry to ensure that the use of crop protection products can be reduced."

The agreement allows the parties to Oppotunity to use the DMR resistance trait free of charge for demonstration purposes. For commercial use a fair fee will be charged, which is a small percentage of the cost savings associated with reducing the use of crop protection products to control late blight. The vast majority of the savings will benefit the farmer and support the initial introduction of the new variety to the market.

SolEdits will conduct the plant modifications for the Oppotunity partners to introduce the DMR trait into the widely used variety starch potato Kuras, which will be provided by Agrico for this purpose.

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About Oppotunity

Project Oppotunity is an agreement of 12 European Parties active in starch potatoes seriously engaged to get New Breeding Techniques (CRISPR-CAS) approved in Europe soonest. As the potato starch industry is a small European industry with 11.000 farmers making a living here from, it is key to be able to improve the potato varieties in such a manner that sustainability and competitiveness is maintained, threatened under the Green Deal. The project Parties will invest directly in one variety that will be accessible to the members having an increased late blight resistance, one of the most severe diseases in potatoes. www.oppotunity.eu/en/

About Enza Zaden

Enza Zaden develops new vegetable varieties that are grown, sold and eaten all over the world. Worldwide, the family business has around 2,900 employees with 45 branches in 25 countries. The company's goal is to provide people, anywhere in the world, access to healthy and varied vegetables. www.enzazaden.com. Vitalis Organic Seeds is the certified organic seed division of Enza Zaden www.biovitalis.eu.

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