

**Title** Seed health initiatives at Asian seed health centre  
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### **Abstract**

Seed health is of great concern to farmers, quarantine personnel, germplasm managers, seed producing agencies, certification agencies, phytosanitary authorities, quality control managers, seed traders, seed sector programmes and regulatory authorities. Seed health is a specialized discipline, and personnel managing the seed sector need specialized training in detection and diagnosis of seed-borne pathogens, especially in Asia and Africa. With this background, the Danish Seed Health Centre for Developing Countries (DSHC) has established two regional centres for Asia and Africa. The Asian Seed Health Centre (ASHC) at Mysore, India, has developed course modules such as short courses, modular courses, a proficiency certificate course and a Master in Philosophy course for seed health training. In addition ASHC has identified research areas like creation of a molecular database for seed-borne pathogens, molecular diagnostics, and biological control and management of mycotoxin problems. Seed health is an important non-tariff seed trade barrier, hence accurate diagnosis of seed-borne pathogens using serological and molecular techniques is of special significance. This demands creation of a molecular database and country-wide seed health status reports. The molecular techniques should be validated against conventional seed health tests. Biological seed treatment is gaining special attention in organic farming. The mycotoxins in seed could also be an important trade barrier; it is therefore intended to develop molecular markers to identify toxigenic fungal strains and to manage mycotoxin problems. In the coming years we hope to consolidate these efforts initiated by DSHC.