

First accessions formally included in the European Collection

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as in cryopreserved conditions. The accessions have also been safety-duplicated, either at IPK, Germany, at the Crop Research Institute (CRI) Prague Ruzyně, Czech Republic, or at the Institute of Horticulture (RIVC) Skierniewice, Poland. The proposed accessions are under governmental control and management of the Czech, German and Polish government. Furthermore, IPK, Germany and CRI, Czech Republic as AEGIS Associate Member Institutions, have accepted long-term conservation responsibilities for these accessions in accordance with the AEGIS agreed standards, and will make them readily available under the terms and conditions of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement.

Based on a review of the data supplied and the acceptance of the listed conditions, the National Inventory Focal Points in Czech Republic and Germany have been instructed by the respective National Coordinators to flag the agreed accessions in EURISCO, using descriptor 35 on the AEGIS status. These first flagged accessions of the European Collection can be found on the EURISCO website: <http://eurisco.ecpgr.org/>. The ECPGR Secretariat has been informed that Poland is also in the process of accepting and flagging other garlic accessions that were part of the EURALLIVEG project and that are being maintained in Skierniewice as European Accessions. We hope that this is only the beginning of rapid growth for the newly established European Collection.

It is with great pleasure that the Secretariat is able to report a significant development in the process of designing, developing and eventually operating AEGIS. On the 12th of December 2011, Joachim Keller, as the curator of the *Allium in vitro* collection at IPK, Gatersleben, Germany informed Frank Begemann, the National ECPGR Coordinator of Germany, that the *Allium* Working Group and Germany had agreed on a first batch of garlic accession numbers to be flagged in EURISCO as formally agreed European Accessions. This flagging has now been done in EURISCO and as such the European Collection has been born (see http://aegis.cgiar.org/european_collection.html).

The process of selecting and preparing garlic accessions for their subsequent formal acceptance by the host countries has been followed by the European Project EURALLIVEG, which had benefited from a grant of the European Commission in the frame of the Council Regulation No 870/2004 of the DG Agriculture. This project was successfully concluded in March 2011. The main objective of the project was the establishment of a safety-duplicated cryopreserved garlic collection. The accessions used in the project were selected in accordance with the criteria for candidate European Accessions, as agreed upon by the ECPGR Steering Committee and the *Allium* Working Group.

It should be noted that each of the accessions that have been proposed for flagging as a 'European Accession' are conserved both in the field as well



A cryopreservation experiment showing clonal uniformity. Photo: J.Keller, IPK, Germany