

## Drought-resistant maize could earn Africa up to US\$1.5b

Researchers said on Thursday (26 August 2010) that distributing drought-resistant varieties of maize to smallholder African farmers could earn the continent between US\$900 million and US\$1.53 billion by 2016.



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Credit: Michelle Meiklejohn*

The study, published by the Mexico-based International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre, was conducted in partnership with other food research institutes in 13 African countries. All the countries have been distributing drought tolerant maize to farmers since 2007.

The researchers found that the drought-resistant maize varieties could increase harvests by up to 25 percent in low risk zones. However, the improvement observed in yields in very dry areas was of only up to ten percent. The researchers said the countries which could benefit the most from the tolerant varieties would be Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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