



For immediate release, November 30, 2010

■ European seed giant Group Limagrain establishes North American Headquarters in Fort Collins, CO

FORT COLLINS, CO - Group Limagrain, the biggest plant breeder and seed company in Europe, has opened a subsidiary operation in Fort Collins, Colorado that will serve as the company's national U.S. cereal seeds base.

The subsidiary, Limagrain Cereal Seeds, is Group Limagrain's first American office for cereal breeding. The company will focus on wheat research and market its seeds under the LG brand.

The company has set aggressive goals and expects to launch up to 100 products in the next two years.

Frank Curtis, Limagrain Cereal Seeds executive vice president and chief operations officer, said the company chose Fort Collins because of the high quality and extensive agricultural research at Colorado State University and because of the city's quality-of-life reputation.

"We wanted to find a town where people want to live," he said. "We're going to be recruiting some very talented people from all over and it had to be a place in which people would enjoy living."

Curtis also noted the region's strong wheat production and proximity to the massive production areas of the central plains. Colorado is also centrally located for reaching out to other major wheat-producing regions in the U.S. and Canada, Curtis said.

Limagrain's business focus will be to create and market proprietary wheat seed varieties to sell to professional seed producers, who then market the seed varieties to their customers.

Although Fort Collins will be the North American headquarters, regional operations will be located in Washington, Indiana, Minnesota and Kansas, Curtis said. In addition to Colorado State University, alliances are being formed with Oregon State, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Purdue, Texas A&M, Kansas State, Virginia Tech, Georgia State and Oklahoma State Universities.

Group Limagrain was founded in France in 1942. The farmer-owned company has 7,000 employees and is the largest seed company in the European Union. For more information, call Curtis at 970 498 2200 or visit www.limagraincerealseeds.com or www.limagrain.com

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