



March 13, 2012

Press Release highlighting IZA's agreement with China's Ministry of Agriculture to promote zinc fertilizers in China

Beijing, China- The International Zinc Association (IZA) signed an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) to extend an ongoing cooperative project to promote zinc fertilizers in China. This extension is a result of an extremely successful zinc fertilizer research and demonstration effort that began in 2011, with significant improvements in crop yield and economic return for the farmer.

The two-year extension will run through 2013 and will include expanded crop trials, demonstration plots, training, and technology transfer. The total budget is \$500,000 and will be funded jointly by both parties. The goal is to improve crop production, human health, and farmers' incomes in China through the use of zinc fertilizers. The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) recently released their national "Guidance for Promoting Fertilizer Application" which recommends the increased use of zinc fertilizer in every region of China, highlighting the importance of this project.

14% of China's 1.3 billion people are at risk for zinc deficiency, which poses such health problems as stunting, impaired development, and weak immune systems. China is one of the largest agricultural countries in the world, and over 50% of China's arable soils are Zn deficient. The use of zinc-containing fertilizers not only increases crop yield, but crop nutrition as well, which means significant improvement in dietary nutrition.

Agricultural development in China has rapidly increased in the past two decades and China is the largest consumer of fertilizer in the world. During the signing ceremony, Dr. Li Tieshen, Vice Director General of NASTEC (National Agro-Technical Extension and Service Centre, Ministry of Agriculture, P.R.C.) said, "NATEC is very glad to work cooperatively with IZA on the promotion of zinc fertilizer use in China, which is very important to correct zinc deficiency in Chinese crop production, and improve fertilizer application technology and efficiency."

Dr. Andrew Green, Director of the Zinc Nutrient Initiative for IZA, added that, "IZA is very pleased to partner with the Ministry of Agriculture to address the critical issue of zinc deficiency in China. Increasing the use of zinc fertilizers is an effective and sustainable way to improve food security, increase the income of farmers, and improve the nutritional status of the people."



The signing ceremony between IZA and MOA, March 6, 2012. Pictured L-R: Dr. Ming Xian Fan (IZA), Dr. Andrew Green (IZA), Dr. Li Tieshen (NASTEC), Dr. Gao Xiangzhao (NATESC).

About NATESC

NATESC, established in 1995, is the division of the MOA that is responsible for all agricultural extension in China, including organizing fertilizer research and demonstration projects, developing fertilizer recommendation, and promoting scientific fertilization technology.

About IZA

IZA is a non-profit organization representing the global zinc industry by supporting and advancing zinc products and markets through research, development, technology transfer and communicating the unique attributes that make zinc sustainable and essential for life. IZA is active in crop health through its Zinc Nutrient Initiative and supports UNICEF's zinc and health programs through the Zinc Saves Kids Initiative.

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For more information, please contact:

Andrew Green, Director, Zinc Nutrient Initiative
International Zinc Association
Durham, NC, USA
(919) 287-1875

Ming Xian Fan, Director, China Program, ZNI
China, 86-10-8517-1685

Rob Putnam, Director, Communications
International Zinc Association
Durham, NC, USA
(919) 287-1872