



## ICBA, CRDF Global announce winners of major grant competition for joint US-Arab women research teams

**Dubai, UAE, October 30, 2016:** [The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture](#) (ICBA) and [CRDF Global](#) announced today the winners of the new collaborative agricultural research projects between US scientists and young Arab female investigators in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). The research initiative awards 100,000 USD over three years to each collaborating team. This competition is jointly funded by CRDF Global and ICBA. CRDF Global is an independent nonprofit organization that promotes international scientific and technical collaboration through grants, technical resources, training, and services. Competitions like this one enable cross-border collaboration and strengthen international research by implementing peer-reviewed research grant competitions.

Each team includes a female principal investigator from MENA. The four agricultural research teams are:

- Amani Bchir, University of Sfax, Tunisia and David Mulla, University of Minnesota
- Chafika Houasli, The National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA-Morocco) and Varma Penmetsa, University of California, Davis
- Rim Nefissi, Center of Biotechnology of Borj Cedria (CBBC), Tunisia and Robert Jansen, University of Texas, Austin
- Afwa Thameur, Regional Center for Agricultural Research (CARR), Tunisia and Walid Sadok, Regents of the University of Minnesota

ICBA and CRDF Global announced this new agricultural research grant competition earlier this year on International Women's Day.

"Women's contribution is critical for prosperous and developed nations. To help women fully realize their potential and fully contribute to their communities and societies, we are very pleased to partner with CRDF Global to promote research and leadership opportunities for early-career Arab women scientists," said Dr. Ismahane Elouafi, ICBA Director General. "These grants will help promote innovative ideas in agricultural sciences and empower women scientists throughout the MENA region."

"CRDF Global is committed to advancing women in science, and we are enthusiastic to work with the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture on this exciting new initiative. Creating opportunities for talented women scientists like Dr. Bchir, Dr. Houasli, Dr. Nefissi, and Dr. Thameur to collaborate alongside U.S. scientists will be essential in providing solutions to the profound challenges facing the global agricultural sector," said Siri Oswald, Director of Research Partnerships at CRDF Global.

The competition accepted proposals predominantly focused on:

- Breeding/genomics around important food crops and resiliency for climate change and salinity
- Water, soil and nutrient management to enhance resiliency to climate change and salinity

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### [About ICBA](#)

International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is an international, non-profit organization that aims to strengthen agricultural productivity in marginal and saline environments through identifying, testing and facilitating access to sustainable solutions for food, nutrition and income security.

### [About CRDF Global](#)

CRDF Global is an independent, nonprofit organization established in 1995 to promote international scientific and technical collaboration through grants, technical resources, training, and services. CRDF Global has 20 years of experience managing international research funding programs and supporting emerging science and technology infrastructure in more than 40 countries in Eurasia, the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia.