



“I’m not talking about losing (agricultural) diversity in the same way that you lose your car keys. I’m talking about losing it in the same way that we lost the dinosaurs: actually losing it, never to be seen again.” Cary Fowler

The varieties of wheat, corn and rice we grow today may not thrive in a future threatened by climate change. Hence the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, or the Doomsday Vault as the media have nicknamed it, was officially opened on February 26, 2008, to serve as the ultimate safety net for one of the world’s most important natural resources.

The world's seed collections are vulnerable to a wide range of threats - civil strife, war, natural catastrophes, and, more routinely but no less damagingly, poor management, lack of adequate funding, and equipment failures. Unique varieties of our most important crops are lost whenever any such disaster strikes: securing duplicates of all collections in a global facility provides an insurance policy for the world’s food supply.

The Seed Vault is an answer to a call from the international community to provide the best possible assurance of safety for the world’s crop diversity, and became a practical possibility with the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and with it an agreed international legal framework for conserving and accessing crop diversity.

It is dug into a mountainside in Svalbard, a group of islands nearly a thousand kilometres north of mainland Norway who funded its construction as a service to the world. The Vault is managed in partnership between the Trust, Nordic Genetic Resource Center (NordGen) and the Government of Norway. The Trust considers the Vault an essential component of a rational and secure global system for conserving the diversity of all our crops. Today the Vault holds over 500,000 samples.

The Trust is currently supporting more than 100 institutes worldwide to regenerate unique accessions and deposit a safety duplicate sample in the Vault. The project is also financing the deposit of samples from the international collections of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). (*See attachment below for who is funding this.*)

Also check out this talk by Cary Fowler who takes us inside the vast global seed bank.

Farming Secrets says: *Biodiversity is essential to save the world from agricultural collapse*

Ref: Inspired a Ted talk which can be viewed in full at: farmingsecretsblog.com