



Crites Seed and ProGene Plant Research are pleased to announce the formation of a joint venture chickpea breeding program aimed at developing new chickpea varieties that offer both improved agronomic characteristics for growers and superior quality traits for end users. The program will utilize Crites's greenhouse and associated research facilities in Moscow, Idaho. Nancy Powell, who has been breeding dry peas for ProGene, will be the lead breeder. She will draw on the extensive vegetable breeding experience of Alexis Plouy, who recently joined Crites as International Research Director.

ProGene is the preeminent breeder of dry peas in the Pacific Northwest, while Crites has become a major supplier of the existing chickpea seed varieties for the region. The two firms have enjoyed a long and productive business relationship in which Crites has performed stock seed maintenance for ProGene's leading dry pea varieties. The movement into chickpea breeding is a natural extension of this relationship that will efficiently utilize and mesh the two firms' assets and capabilities. In the words of Crites CEO Andy Johnson, "Abundant plant-based protein is a necessity to sustain global population growth. Our two firms' common strategic vision will enable this joint venture to be successful and to propel us toward a leading role as a global steward of pulse breeding, production and commercialization."

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