**Higher Education Challenge Grant Project**

**‘Enhancing Educational Outcomes for Plant Genetic Resources Conservation and Use’**

**MEETING NOTES April 2, 2024, 10 am MST**

Attending: Pat Byrne, CSU Soil and Crop Sciences

Deana Namuth-Covert, CSU College of Agricultural Sciences

Gayle Volk, USDA-ARS, Fort Collins

Gary Kinard, USDA-ARS, Beltsville

1. Pat: Current project ends May 31; will check that all remaining funds are spent by then.

Clare Coyne (retired curator at Pullman) has offered to take the lead in finding continued funding.

Osher (OLLI) courses: Pat and Gayle will teach in Fort Collins (April 2, 9); and Pat will teach at Spur (April 16,18)

1. Gayle: CSU Online courses will be offered in Fall 2024. Geoff Morris and Davina Rhodes will be instructors for Courses 1 and 3; Gayle for Course 2.

Four cryopreservation ebook chapters were recently approved and released.

Seven new success stories will be released within a week or two, with many more in the pipeline.

3. Gary: There have been 8,703 unique users of GRIN-U since launch in July 2021, with the most common countries of users being US, China, India, Canada, Brazil, and Germany.

Laura Gu, the main technical manager of GRIN-U, is on leave for a few weeks.

The next quarterly update newsletter is scheduled for mid-May.

Gary suggested and we all agreed that we should continue meeting after the May 31 end date, as many of our activities will be ongoing.

1. Deana: Upskilling; badges; ebook usage

Deana sent usage data via email: Since Feb 2023 there have been 54,367 visitors and 75,196 page views of the ebooks. The most visited by far is the cryopreservation ebook, followed by crop wild relatives and climate ready plant collections. There are now 9 participants in the crop wild relative badge course.

Deana will look at the new cryopreservation chapters to see if they lend themselves to a badge course.

1. Pat: Demo plots will be planted again at ARDEC and for the first time at Spur, focusing on wild ancestors of modern crops.

Pat and Gayle will both give presentations at the crop wild relatives conference at the Denver Botanic Gardens in September.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, May 7, 10 am-11:30 am MDT