

Dear Maize Meeting Registrants,

**In light of the fast and unpredictable spread of the novel Coronavirus COVID-19, the MGC Board of Directors (BOD) together with the Maize Genetics Meeting Steering Committee (MGMSC) have decided to cancel the 2020 Maize Genetics Meeting.**

We recognize that this is a very big disappointment to the entire community. We share in this disappointment. Please know that this was a very difficult decision that was not taken lightly or without input. We realize that there are many different perspectives on this matter. In fact, we had much deliberation when it comes to data available and uncertainties. Regardless of our differing perspectives, we had respectful discussions and are confident that we all have the community's best interest in mind.

Although the current statistics point to low risk for many of our attendees, the risk greatly increases when traveling through multiple cities and airports in affected regions. Furthermore, we cannot predict how things will change between now and the end of the meeting. What is clear is that in the short term things will not get better. For these reasons, we determined that the safety of our maize community as well as our organizations, family, and communities was not worth risking.

Although we intend to immediately work on the financial and contractual implications of cancelling (which have been discussed at length), we will be unable to issue refunds on registration given contractual obligations and finances available. We also recognize the difficulties and expenses you may incur relating to your flights and other travel and are deeply sorry. We sincerely apologize but hope everyone understands and supports the decision to put safety before finances.

We would like to recognize that the entire meeting organizing committee has put many hours of thought and action into developing an outstanding program and thank them for their service. In addition, we thank you for your time preparing talks and posters. It is our goal to ensure that your time has not been wasted and thus we are committed to exploring alternative ways to capture the spirit of this meeting and community. We have had many suggestions and requests for a virtual approach to sharing the science, which we will pursue. Importantly, the social and celebratory aspects of the meeting will also be missed. We are committed to finding ways to recognize our awardees at a future date.

Please make sure to call the hotel and cancel your reservations at your earliest convenience to avoid additional charges

We will continue communicating with regards to the future planning. We thank you for your understanding.

Best Regards,

The BOD and MGMSC

David Braun, Natalia de Leon, Shawn Kaeppler, & Ruth Wagner

Mike Muszynski, Clint Whipple, & Marna Yandeu-Nelson