

Joint P R E S S R E L E A S E

Breeders Trust invests in variety recognition using Geo4A satellite technology

Marknesse - Brussels, 25 June 2020: the Brussels-based Breeders Trust today signed a major contract with Geo4A, a subsidiary of the Austrian company GeoVille. GeoVille specialises in the data processing of satellite images and is a leader in the field within Western Europe. Geo4A focuses specifically on services for the agricultural sector and has built up a strong position in the potato sector in the last two years. This is an extensive project but no statements are made about the exact details of the investment. The parties indicate that this is a long-term cooperation.

Breeders Trust is regularly in the news to draw attention to infringements of plant breeders' rights and illegal production and trade, but also to provide information about the importance of certified propagation material. The idea behind Breeders Trust is that together breeders can act more forcefully against unfair production and commercial practices adopted by the often globally operating rogue companies that discredit the entire sector. In order to be able to carry out enforcement efficiently in the future, it is important to work with these kinds of interesting technologies, according to Mr Staring of Breeders Trust.

Paul Oomen, Managing Director of Geo4A is happy with the cooperation. 'The seed potato sector is an important sector for us and we try to support these companies as well as possible. We want to emphasize that Geo4A only focuses on the technological development in which (breeding) companies and farmers make their own agreements about its use. All these parties are important partners for Geo4A.' Furthermore, Oomen expresses his satisfaction that in this difficult period, in which the potato sector is also being hit hard, joint investments are still being made in new technologies.

Geert Staring, General Director of Breeders Trust, is also looking forward to working with Geo4A. 'It is an ambitious group and they already have extensive knowledge and experience with various large market players in the sector, especially in the field of growth monitoring. However, this is also a completely new challenge for Geo4A, but the proposed approach and future perspective seem promising. In this way we hope to receive more information about the varieties and the cultivated hectares retrospectively, anywhere in the world. Initially we will start with five varieties and we will be expanding that further in the coming years. In the first phase we will mainly look at specific variety characteristics, taking into account the different growing conditions and soil types. The system is self-learning so the results will become more and more reliable. This principle is also applied in crop recognition, with which experience has already been gained. The intention is to use this form of variety recognition as one of the enforcement instruments in our toolbox. It will make our search for illegal propagation and royalties payments more efficient and provide a more complete picture for our breeders, who naturally want to prevent their varieties from being abused by others.'





Information for the press:

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About Geo4A (www.geo4a.com)

Geo4A develops information technology services for companies in the agricultural sector, mainly based on satellite data. The company has built up a strong position in the potato sector and focuses, among other things, on growth monitoring of fields, varieties and regions. Geo4A makes use of various innovative data and techniques and works closely with its parent company GeoVille.

About Breeders Trust (www.breederstrust.eu)

Breeders Trust supports participating companies in the implementation and enforcement of plant breeders' rights and the global eradication of the illegal trade and cultivation of potatoes and grass seeds. The organisation provides information about the risks of using non-certified seed potatoes and informs them about the rights and obligations a grower has within plant breeders' rights. Breeders Trust will take care that license fees are paid for the multiplication of varieties and that trade (including in varieties not protected by plant breeders' rights!) takes place within the applicable legislation. In this way Breeders Trust promotes continuity in the development of new varieties and a level playing field within the international seed potato chain.

