



New Agriculturist

News brief

Turkish delight over super seed

Drought-resistant chickpeas are proving a success after a summer of bumper yields in Turkey. The results come at a time of acute drought in the country's Central Anatolia region, which has devastated wheat and barley crops. Despite adverse conditions, the Gokce chickpea variety is producing around 1.5 tonnes per hectare. Developed by researchers from the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), in conjunction with Turkish scientists from the national agricultural research system, the pulse also has shown moderate resistance to *Ascochyta* blight, a major fungal disease of chickpea which can destroy crops.



Drought-resistant chickpeas are proving a success in Turkey
credit: ICARDA

Gokce, a large seeded variety, has been quickly adopted by farmers in Turkey, one of the largest producers of kabuli chickpeas in the world. In 2007, over 85 per cent of some chickpea areas have been planted to Gokce, with over 500,000 ha grown across the country. ICARDA intends to trial the seed in Iraq, where chickpea crops are particularly susceptible to *Ascochyta* blight and agro-climatic conditions are similar to Central Anatolia. There are also plans to undertake trials in Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.