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To:

**Professor Dale Sanders**

**John Innes Centre**

**Norwich Research Park**

**Colney**

**Norwich**

**NR4 7UH**

**UK**

Jan 10, 2011

Dear Professor Sanders,

First of all, please accept my sincere congratulations on your appointment as Director of the John Innes Centre, it is indeed an international centre of excellence in plant science and microbiology.

I still vividly remember the glorious centenary celebration for JIC that took place in September 2009, when I led a Chinese delegation to attend that important event. We are extremely grateful that during the past three decades, JIC has helped to train a number of Chinese students and host lots of our researchers. These scientists have now returned and are making important contributions to the research community in China, and our JIC alumni is continuously growing. My personal experience, as the first Chinese visiting scholar in the late 1970's, was that I benefited tremendously from my visit to JIC. We are proud to say that today we have a strong JIC alumni community in China, therefore, it will be a very good time to work together, towards establishing a solid platform for future scientific exchanges and the development on various important scientific issues. You are very welcome to visit China in the coming years.

Under the auspices of the INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC INTERCHANGE SCHEME (ISIS) (the UK-Sino programme funded by the BBSRC), a delegation led by Dr. Qi Cheng (from CAAS)





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will be visiting the UK early in this year, with the purpose of fostering close research alliances with researchers at the John Innes (JI) Centre. I hope the visit of this delegation will greatly enhance exchanges of scientific knowledge and materials, and will pave the way for future scientific collaborations between China and JIC. Hopefully, this delegation will have the chance to meet you in person.

Having consulted with key members of JIC, an initiative aiming to form a "CAAS/CAS-Cambridge University-JI Centre" (CCJC) is in progress, I believe that it will develop fast with the input of both the UK and Chinese governments, and will enhance both in agricultural research and educational section.

For the short-term initiative programs, we could start with 1) student and scholar exchanges program for 3, 6, 12 months, respectively; 2) inspector annually visiting program, etc. For the long-term vision, we will also consider possibility to establish a "JIC-in-China" in the future, which would annually contribute more to both UK and China.

On behalf of Peking University, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and my colleagues from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), I would be very grateful to see the development of a closer collaborative relationship between scientists in Norwich and scientists in China in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Professor Zhihong Xu

Former President of Peking University