

NIAB and EMR - KEY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What is happening between NIAB and EMR?

A. NIAB is acquiring the business and assets of East Malling Research. Following the transfer, the NIAB Trust and the East Malling Trust will work closely together to support the new organisation.

Q. Can you explain the rationale for doing this – why is it necessary, what are the benefits and how is it better than the current situation?

A. With renewed demand for industry-facing, translational research to address the challenges facing UK and global agriculture, this partnership will retain and strengthen the UK's applied crop science infrastructure and capabilities, bringing together 200 years of combined research experience and providing within a single organisation the scientific expertise required to support progressive crop production at all levels within the arable and fresh produce sectors.

The complementary skills and expertise within the two organisations offer significant synergies, and will create exciting new scientific and commercial opportunities.

Q. What was the catalyst for doing this now?

A. Building on a successful decade of growth and development, bringing new scientific capabilities in plant genetics, pre-breeding and agronomy research, NIAB has developed ambitious plans to lead the UK in crop innovation, and to grow to become a resilient £40 million turnover business by 2025 through expansion, joint ventures, acquisitions and new scientific partnerships. At the same time, EMR was seeking a partner to bring greater stability, scale and new research opportunities. This deal addresses the needs and objectives of both organisations.

Q. What are the financial benefits and considerations?

A. NIAB has agreed to purchase EMR's assets including Plant Variety Rights, plant and machinery. The long-term benefit lies not only in the scientific complementarities, but also in the possibilities to work with both the NIAB and the East Malling Trusts. The Trusts will support the organisation according to their charitable objectives through the provision of facilities and research grants. Bringing the two research organisations together will stimulate new scientific and commercial opportunities.

Q. What about names and governance?

A. The new organisation will be established as NIAB EMR, a charitable company limited by guarantee and a wholly owned subsidiary of NIAB.

Q. Who will lead and manage the new organisation?

A. Dr Tina Barsby will be CEO of the combined organisation. NIAB Chief Operating Officer David Neill will become Managing Director of NIAB EMR, responsible for business reorganisation and financial performance, and working with the East Malling Trust to ensure the East Malling site is developed and operated in support of NIAB EMR.

NIAB Deputy Director Stuart Knight will review the science across the organisation with a view to aligning the science strategies. Peter Gregory, ex-CEO of EMR will be retained as a consultant to assist with this. As well as changed roles at Cambridge, we expect to appoint a scientific leader for NIAB EMR within the first year, at which time all responsibilities will be re-evaluated.

At Cambridge, Mark Leaman will assume greater responsibility for day-to-day estate management within his current role, and similarly Nick Watson will lead commercial relationships and regional trials.

Roger Carline will continue as Managing Director of EMS, reporting to David Neill, and will work with NIAB staff to align commercial strategies. We expect to change the way we currently manage trading activities at NIAB.

Q. How many people will the combined organisation employ?

A. Around 300 in total, of whom 85 will be in NIAB EMR.

Q. Will there be any job losses or facility closures?

We need to first spend time ensuring we understand the opportunities presented by the new organisation; any changes will be driven by business need. We expect some rationalisation and efficiency savings to result.

East Malling's on-site trial grounds and access to laboratories, office accommodation and meeting facilities may offer potential cost savings through co-location, but our priority is to ensure that current services to customers and members are not adversely affected.

Q. Will there be any staff movement?

A. Initially, David Neill will be based at NIAB EMR as Managing Director. Depending on business need there are likely to be opportunities for staff to interchange between Cambridge and East Malling in the future.

