

Ethiopians in valley to study type of seeds

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A group of eight Ethiopian political and agricultural figures arrived in Cache Valley on Thursday to learn about various kinds of drought-resistant seed farming methods.

In the next week, the Ethiopian delegation will visit a number of farms and research facilities in Utah and Idaho, exploring the techniques and learning from the expertise of local farmers.

"We can prove to them that these types of farming experiences are productive and can make a difference," said Wallace Odd, one of the organizers of the trip. "We hope that they will take back a lot of knowledge."

Odd, who usually spends almost half of his year in Ethiopia, is the executive vice president of Morrell Agro Industries — the company that recently introduced American dry farming techniques and drought-resistant seeds to Ethiopia.

This is the second group MAI has brought to Utah to share hands-on farming experiences.

The group will visit flour and wheat mills, a hay-processing farm, seed cleaning plants, dairy production and university research facilities until Sunday.

One of the seeds the visitors will study was researched by Utah State University scientists.

If this and other similar drought-resistant seeds and techniques were established in Ethiopia, food and grain yields could more than double, MAI specialists say.