

Preface

This book stems from my personal interest in food-related policy issues. Through my leisure readings, I learnt that plant breeding governance is the answer to many food security challenges. It was my wish to combine my curiosity about plant breeding with my knowledge on legal and economic theory that led to the present text. The book explores the need to incorporate an exception for breeding purposes into the patent laws of those countries where patent and plant breeder's rights coexist. It examines the question of compatibility of such an exception with the TRIPS Agreement and indicates the relevance of the exception for food security. I hope that in this book, academics will find a useful legal and economic analysis of research exceptions to patent rights as well as of the relationship between patent exceptions for breeding purposes and food security issues. I also envisage that this book will help inform national legislators and generate meaningful debate on exceptions to patent rights for promoting plant breeding practices in line with the right to food.

Besides my commitment and enthusiasm in writing this book, many persons have contributed in a direct or indirect way in facilitating this work. First and foremost, I thank my family and friends for their understanding and support during the many challenges I encountered while writing this book. My sisters, Eta and Mirela, deserve particular acknowledgment for finding a humorous approach to what I thought of as “difficulties”. I extend my wholehearted gratitude to Prof. Carlos Correa for being my intellectual guide and giving me the privilege to gain from his knowledge. I also feel indebted to Dr. Niels Louwaars, Dr. Bram de Jonge, and Prof. van der Meulen (University of Wageningen, NL), who provided the necessary support for conducting the first interviews with stakeholders in plant breeding. All the interviewees deserve my greatest appreciation since they helped clarify the business and scientific aspects in plant breeding. Special acknowledgments go to Dr. Jaap de Satter of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Directorate for Agriculture) in the Netherlands for his kindness and continuous encouragement.

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