The Government of Rwanda has signed a new agreement with the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to strengthen agricultural innovation and climate resilience, building on a decade of successful collaboration.

The agreement, signed Thursday, aims to tackle challenges in Rwandan agriculture, including the development of crop varieties that can withstand the impacts of climate change, a growing concern for farmers across the country.

Over the past ten years, Rwandan farmers have benefited from innovations such as nutrient-rich beans that are easy to cook, orange-fleshed sweet potatoes rich in vitamin A, high-yielding cassava and yams, improved honey production, and fortified cereal flours. These crops and technologies have helped improve food security and livelihoods nationwide.

Farmers welcomed the new agreement, noting the importance of continued training on cultivating nutrient-rich and climate-resilient crops. Gerardine Nyirahanganyamunsi, a local farmer, said the training she received has already helped her achieve better yields.

“Signing this agreement is an important step for improving our agriculture. We have come a long way, and by applying new techniques and strengthening our current practices, we can continue to progress,” Nyirahanganyamunsi said.

Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Dr. Mark Cyubahiro Bagabe, said the partnership will support training for researchers and young agricultural professionals to develop crops that can withstand climate change.

“We expect the agreement to help train researchers and teach young people, bringing fresh talent to agriculture. We will also implement strategies to achieve higher productivity,” Dr. Bagabe said, adding that modern tools and scientific knowledge are essential for improving food security.

Dr. Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg, Regional Director of the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT in Africa, said Rwanda was chosen for the partnership because of the government’s efficiency and strong policy framework.

“Rwanda’s commitment, operational approach, and trust in partners make it an

ideal country to work with. When the government listens and values your work, projects move forward quickly," she said.

The new agreement updates the previous one signed in 2014 and will contribute to Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation (NST2) and Vision 2050 goals, supporting the country's efforts to accelerate agricultural development and food security.