

AMERICAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION

2007 – 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

asta
first—the seed[®]

125TH ANNIVERSARY





1883 - 2008
*Celebrating a Commitment
to Agriculture & Innovation*

CHARTING THE DIRECTION OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) Leads the Way by Driving:
Regulatory and legislative matters at the state, national and international levels.
New technology and innovation across all seed types.
An understanding of the value of seed.

Our Mission

ASTA's mission is to be an effective voice of action in all matters concerning the development, marketing and free movement of seed, associated products and services throughout the world. ASTA promotes the development of better seed to produce better crops for a better quality of life.

Who We Are

Founded in 1883, ASTA is one of the oldest trade organizations in the United States. Its membership consists of about 750 companies involved in seed production and distribution, plant breeding, and related industries in North America. As an authority on plant germplasm, ASTA advocates science and policy issues of industry-wide importance.

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MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

Dear ASTA Members and Friends:

As the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) marks the end of its 125th year, the seed industry finds itself in the midst of exciting and historic times. This quasiquintennial anniversary of the Association was themed appropriately, "Celebrating a Commitment to Agriculture and Innovation." The seed industry plays a crucial role as American agriculture rises to meet the challenges to provide food, feed, fiber and fuel to growing worldwide demand. The time is ripe to deliver the positive message of our collective commitment to agriculture and innovation.

Today's seed industry is more dynamic and innovative than ever, and ASTA is reflective of this. Building on the foundation of 125 years, ASTA continues to provide a forum, a network and a voice for the seed industry. As seed companies continue to evolve and address the issues facing American agriculture, we unite the industry, tackle the challenges of today and lead the membership into the future.

Our advocacy efforts focus up and down the entire food and value chain. Very few people today understand where the food on their tables actually comes from, let alone the role seed plays in delivering the food, feed, fiber and fuel needs of the world. We – as an industry – carry the message extolling the value that seed provides to growers, who in turn produce better crops for a better quality life. We are all advocates for the seed industry: from the corporate office, to the breeder, and down to the truck driver. Only then can all of our stakeholders understand the value of seed innovations which are the building blocks for tomorrow's agriculture.

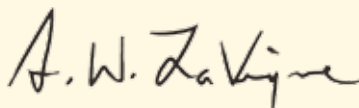
This past year was monumental. Yes, it was a special anniversary, but also, ASTA has undertaken many initiatives that address specific goals of the seed industry outlined in ASTA's Strategic Plan. Together, we have improved cultivation of our stakeholders, launched the First the Seed Foundation and finalized ASTA's Guide to Seed Quality Management Practices, just to name a few of our activities.

The First the Seed Foundation is a major cornerstone in delivering our message of value and our continued commitment to the world. As our message continues to flourish and evolve, the First the Seed Foundation will provide a new avenue to communicate creatively to grade schools, high schools, colleges, service organizations and to the general public, at a much greater level than ever before.

Please take a moment to review this summary of the many efforts of ASTA in 2007-2008 in your backyard, at the nation's capital and around the globe. It's about VALUE! The seed industry is committed to bringing value to our customers and understanding of this value to all stakeholders. ASTA hopes each member continues to find value in ASTA. The future holds many opportunities and challenges for the seed industry. ASTA is ready to continue to advocate on your behalf so that the next 125 years are as vibrant as the past. Thank you for your support!



Mike Peterson
Chairman



Andy W. LaVigne
President & CEO



GOALS

SERVE THE SEED INDUSTRY



In January, 2005, ASTA's Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan that clearly identified the Association's priorities. The 10 strategic goals outlined in ASTA's Strategic Plan are geared to meet the objectives of the Association's mission statement. Together, they guide the efforts put forth by its members and staff. With the integrity of the seed industry and the talented people who are a part of it, ASTA is committed to these goals, working hard for its members, stakeholders and ultimately to the consumers. Looking back over the 125th year of the Association, ASTA has advanced the agenda of the American seed industry, charting the direction of American agriculture through seed quality, technology and innovation. Here are a few of the highlights among each of the 10 goals in ASTA's Strategic Plan.

The 10 strategic issues, not listed with any order of importance are:

Global Agricultural Policy

Provide effective leadership on global issues, in addition to domestic, agricultural, trade and other policy issues affecting the seed industry

Domestic Policy

Provide effective leadership on domestic policy and funding issues important to the U.S. seed industry, in general, and to ASTA members in particular

Intellectual Property

Advocate and defend the intellectual property interests of the U.S. seed industry, domestically and internationally, including providing education to dealers, growers, legislators, government officials and customers

State & Local Issues

Effectively manage the increasing number of state and local government actions impacting the seed industry

ASTA Publics

Deal more effectively with ASTA publics – media, government, industry, customers and the public at large with increasing emphasis on supporting seed industry views deeper in the value chain

Seed Association of the Americas (SAA)

Establish and support Seed Association of the Americas to improve the effectiveness and value of seed trade among and within countries in the Americas

Membership

Achieve growth in the number, increase member involvement and manage the diversity of members (size, geography, crop, etc.) in ASTA

Responsiveness

Increase the responsiveness of ASTA in identifying and resolving issues affecting ASTA members

ASTA Staff

Keep ASTA staff "current" in terms of number and skill sets to accomplish goals in a changing commercial and policy environment

Financial Health

Continue to strengthen the financial health of the Association to achieve and maintain targeted financial reserves

ASTA Drives Policy

Domestic Policy

When seed is being discussed, ASTA is there. Whether it is on Capitol Hill or in the halls of USDA, **ASTA is well positioned** to familiarize policy makers and Congressional members on seed industry issues and priorities. Topics range, but the focus is on intellectual property rights, patent reform, immigration, farm bill implementation, energy, trade and food safety. Outreach and education now go beyond the traditional partners of the seed industry in particular government agencies, so that their representatives better understand how the seed industry may be impacted through their various activities.

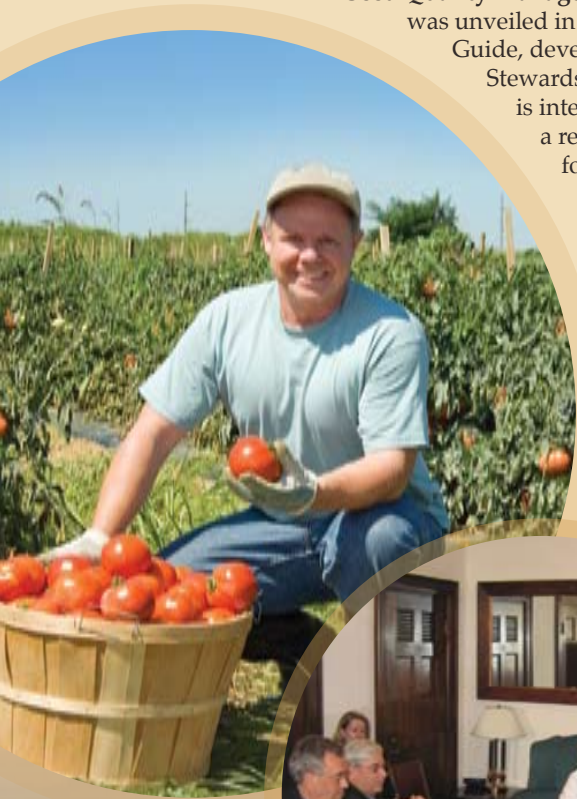
Grassroots activities are essential with much more effort at the district level and in Washington; therefore, close interaction with state associations are critical to these efforts of ASTA. ASTA has seen successes with continued funding for important seed initiatives such as Genetic Enhancement of Maize (GEM), the National Plan Germplasm System, Global Crop Diversity Trust, National Seed Health System and special projects on diseases like soybean rust and watermelon fruit blotch.

Stewardship is an important part of business that the seed industry is committed to. The **ASTA Guide to Seed Quality Management Practices** was unveiled in June 2008. The Guide, developed by the ASTA Stewardship Committee, is intended to serve as a reference document for companies developing individual quality manage-

ment practices and operating procedures for seed from the point of incorporation of a trait into a breeding program through commercial seed production and sale. The Guide is maintained in a dynamic and interactive format on the ASTA Web site.

Food safety has emerged as a top priority among policy makers after recent outbreaks over the last year. ASTA established the Ad Hoc Food Safety Working Group tasked to look at the role of seed in relation to food safety. In June 2008, the ASTA Board of Directors approved a **“Statement on Field and Greenhouse Planted Seeds and Human Pathogens.”** Recognizing the concern of consumers with the safety of their food, the U.S. seed industry developed the statement to emphasize that existing data do not show that human pathogens pose a risk for seed planted for field or greenhouse production of fresh produce or that these pathogens are transmitted from seed to this produce.

ASTA continues to increase **advocacy and education** opportunities for ASTA members via contacts and interaction with key government policy and regulatory officials. ASTA has excellent representation of government officials at their meetings and conferences. The annual exchanges at the meetings of the Environmental & Conservation Seed Committee and the Phytosanitary Committee provide an open forum for industry and government to identify issues related to the seed trade and propose solutions. ASTA plans to expand the number of ASTA workshops with U.S. government agencies, while creating new opportunities for these beneficial exchanges, as well as increase the presence of ASTA members serving on U.S. government advisory committees.



A Global Network Strengthens Strategy

Global Agricultural Policy

ASTA reorganized and invigorated the **International Executive Committee (IEC)** to more effectively provide leadership globally in agriculture, trade and other policy issues affecting the seed industry. The IEC sets international priorities and directs ASTA's activities in support of these goals. Five countries have been identified as having high interest (Argentina, Brazil, China, Mexico and India). Specific issues addressed by ASTA's international programs include protection of intellectual property, phytosanitary issues and adventitious presence in the context of biotech seed.

Extremely beneficial to ASTA's efforts is the involvement of member volunteers with international efforts. **Country Working Groups** have recently been formed for each of the priority markets. Members provide the ground truthing and insight into the many issues that occur in each country. ASTA continues to recruit member volunteers to further enhance these very important programs.



Partnerships Further ASTA Goals

State and Local Issues

ASTA recognizes the **value and resources** of state and regional seed associations. There is a great need and benefit to communicate, coordinate and work together, as each organization has unique strengths and resources available to them. ASTA has committed to a lead role in enhancing this synergy.

In addition to having ASTA staff and leadership represented at state and regional seed association meetings, ASTA provides opportunities for **state and regional seed association executives** to meet on a regular basis and discuss various seed issues. The sessions have enabled ASTA to assist in strategically planning and positioning the seed industry to address challenges at the local, state and national levels. The workshops reflect the interests, concerns and priorities of a very diverse seed industry. Creating synergy helps ensure that the seed industry is well-positioned, while ASTA remains an effective advocate for all our members.



Seed Association of the Americas

The Seed Association of the Americas (SAA) has made a name for itself over the last year. SAA identified a part-time executive secretary and hired Diego Risso as SAA's secretary general in January 2008. Annually, the SAA Board of Directors proposes an action plan to the General Assembly for approval. The four committees of SAA play a key role in developing the priorities and strategies to reach the goals in the action plan. Each committee has a "leader country," with the responsibility to inform the outcomes of the committee to all member countries through the SAA Web site. The first SAA Congress was held in September 2007 and brought exchanges of information and direction to the issues SAA would address in the future.

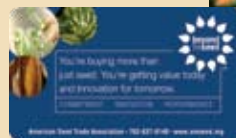
An Environment to Encourage Further Investment

Intellectual Property Rights

As in any industry in the U.S., the legal protection of **intellectual property** encourages investment by companies to bring new innovations to market. The seed industry is no different, and it is important that the customers who benefit from these innovations better understand how this protection and further investment benefits them directly. Seed is evolving rapidly thanks to new innovations and technologies that have enabled the seed industry to provide higher quality, better performing varieties and hybrids to America's farmers. The seed industry is working hard to deliver a consistent, high quality product that benefits everyone today and tomorrow.

ASTA is developing tools for its members to create informed discussions between the seed industry and their first customers, the growers, about the value seed brings to their operations. With the launch of the **Beyond the Seed** program at the 2008 ASTA Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference, the program will help to explain how the purchase of quality seed, not only helps the growers' production today, but also invests in the innovation of seed for tomorrow. Beyond the Seed program tools will include a brochure, wallet card, Web site and presentation materials for members to use.

ASTA also addresses the importance of intellectual property rights to the seed industry in **domestic and international forums**. ASTA staff and members work together in various international and governmental venues, such as International Seed Federation, the International Union for the Protection of Plant Varieties (UPOV), the U.S. Patent and Trade Office (USPTO), and the Plant Variety Protection Advisory Board, where the protection of intellectual property is discussed.



Communication Channels to Inform and Respond

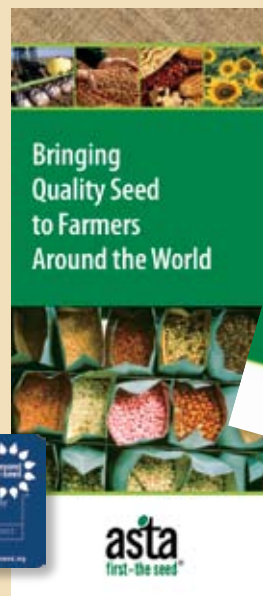
ASTA Communications

A **Communications Steering Committee** has been formed and will have direct interaction with the Board of Directors due to the strategic importance of communication both inside and outside of ASTA. Drawing from its diverse membership, this newly formed committee will forge forward with strategies to deal more effectively with ASTA publics.

In addition, ASTA has been **developing the tools** to better represent the Association and the seed industry. From a new trade show booth to a public relations software system to directly communicate with over 1200 media on a regular basis, ASTA is well equipped to effectively deliver important messages to broad audiences about the seed industry.

Responsiveness

Technology has certainly impacted the seed offered to growers. Technology also helps the **seed industry respond** to identifying and resolving issues affecting ASTA members. ASTA staff utilizes technology, such as conference calls, to move issues and expedite results. Divisions and committees are able to interact almost instantaneously, devising strategies, addressing issues and identifying solutions. These same communication channels are employed to funnel these grassroots activities up to the ASTA officers, Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. Meeting "virtually" makes ASTA more responsive while saving money!



Members Are Our Strength

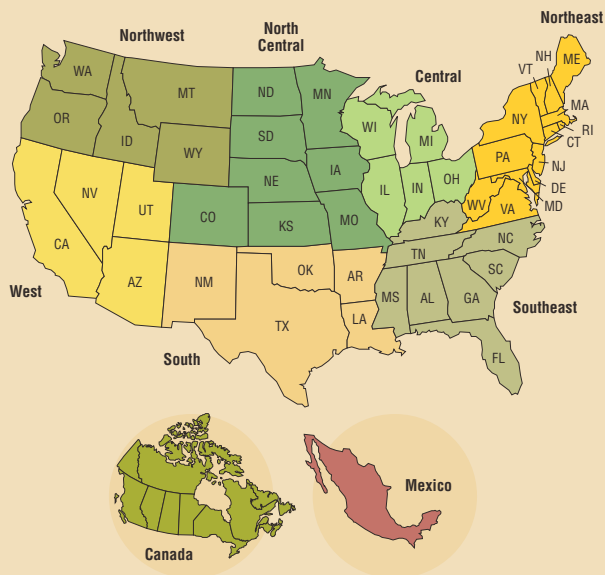
Membership

Without members, an association cannot exist. ASTA is committed to **retaining and growing its membership**, but also to bringing value to its members. ASTA has developed a plan which focuses on retention and member satisfaction, including increased recruitment activities and the identification of potential members.

The **value** of the Association to its members is key. ASTA continues to provide value to its **760 members** through various channels — timely information through meetings, educational programming and opportunities for member participation with policy makers. ASTA also conducted a 2008 Membership Survey to evaluate the satisfaction, priorities and benefits of the Association as plans are developed for future strategies and activities.

ASTA seeks **diversity** in officers, board members and committee chairmen that reflects the wide range of the seed industry and addresses the needs of these members such as conservation policy, organic production, regulations and commercial opportunities. The commitment to the diversity of ASTA includes ongoing review of dues to equate value and increase participation of membership. With better communication and outreach to seed dealers and smaller seed companies, ASTA can continue to address the many needs of its members, bringing value to all.

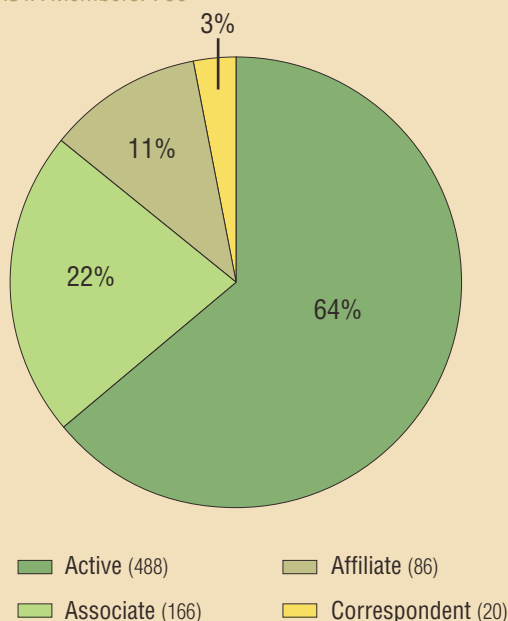
Membership by Region



| | |
|--|---|
| Northeast (70) | South (49) |
| Southeast (51) | Northwest (76) |
| Central (197) | West (112) |
| North Central (155) | Canada, Mexico, Foreign (50) |

Membership by Participation

Total ASTA Members: 760



Membership by Seed Type

| | | | |
|-------------|-----|----------------|----|
| Corn | 212 | Flower | 86 |
| Farm | 180 | Sunflower | 47 |
| Soybean | 172 | Native Grasses | 22 |
| Vegetable | 165 | Wildflower | 18 |
| Alfalfa | 159 | Cotton | 11 |
| Lawn | 130 | Tree | 9 |
| Field Grass | 124 | Peanut | 7 |
| Clover | 99 | Rice | 4 |
| Sorghum | 91 | | |

Resources Fuel Effectiveness

ASTA Staff

ASTA members look to the Association's staff to keep the ball rolling on the priorities of the seed industry. The structure and staffing levels have been adjusted to meet the goals of the strategic plan and yet stay consistent with financial resources. This includes recruiting strong talent and building on the talent already in place by updating job descriptions and organizational structure, setting goals and reviewing performance, and identifying opportunities for training.

Executive Office

Andrew W. LaVigne
President and Chief Executive Officer

Barbara Surian
Director, Administrative Services

Federal and State Government Affairs

Leslie Cahill
Vice President, Government Affairs

Pat Miller
Director, State Affairs

Science and International Affairs

Bernice Slutsky
Vice President, Science and International Affairs

Ric Dunkle
Senior Director, Seed Health and Trade

Lisa Nichols
Director, International Programs

Finance and Administration

Ann Jorss
Vice President, Finance and Administration

Candice McCullough
Staff Assistant

Membership and Meetings

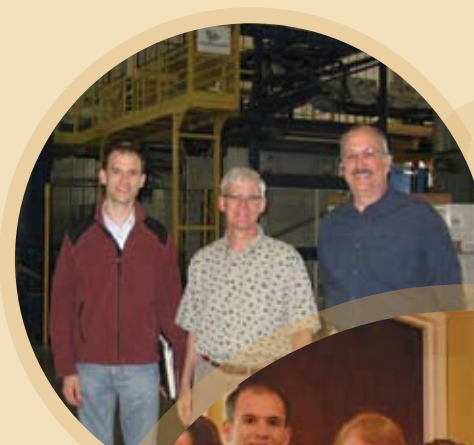
Jason Laney
Director, Membership Services

Jennifer Lord
Director, Meetings and Services

Hiranthie Stanford
Meetings & Membership Coordinator

Communications

Gretchen E. Flanley
Vice President,
Communications



ASTA staff in Oregon on a field visit to member companies (top left). Staff members commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month (left).

Financial Health

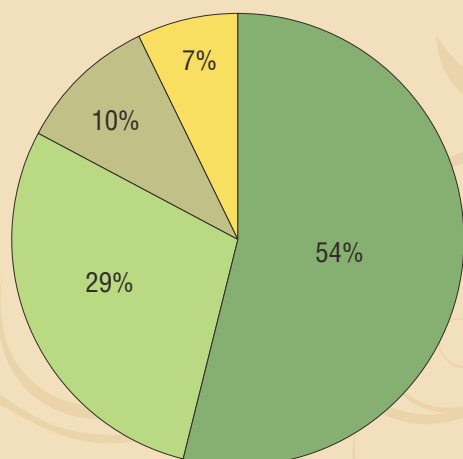
Fiscal health is never more important than in the current economic conditions. ASTA has established a solid budget process developed by gathering input from staff, divisions and ASTA leadership which is then referred to the Board of Directors for approval. ASTA maintains a complete openness with membership about the Association's budget and financial status. ASTA has now achieved its goal for a financial reserve. The Board of Directors approved a reserve policy and strategy, which includes reviewing proposals for leveraging financial health and member services tied to ASTA objectives.

The ASTA audit was conducted in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards by Strack Stanfield, LLC. The 2008 audit confirmed the financial health of the Association. ASTA began its fiscal year with unrestricted net assets of \$4,660,891 and ended with \$4,460,805, a decrease of \$200,086 mainly due to an increased staff and resulting additional activity during this financial year as well as losses in investments due to the economy.

Investment Policy of ASTA

- To preserve and protect the invested assets of ASTA
- To build reserves through capital appreciation and interest dividends
- To build reserves to cover two years of operating budget with operating surpluses and investment gains, in case of economic disruptions
- To provide a source of funds to cover unbudgeted and extraordinary expenses brought about by unanticipated challenges or opportunities

ASTA Revenue Sources



Revenue

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Dues | \$2,289,037 |
| Meetings | 1,243,800 |
| Exhibits | 262,193 |
| Assessment | 48,272 |
| Government Reimbursements | 439,942 |
| Miscellaneous | 33,794 |
| Administrative Service Fees | 25,000 |
| Investment (loss) Income | (87,624) |
| TOTAL REVENUES | \$4,254,415 |

Expenses

| PROGRAMS | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Corn & Sorghum Seed | \$115,632 |
| Farm Seed | 2,322 |
| Lawn Seed | 3,106 |
| Soybean Seed | 35,264 |
| Vegetable & Flower Seed | 115,376 |
| Annual Convention | 498,848 |
| Management Skills | 111,530 |
| Future Seed Executives (FuSE) | 17,203 |
| Export Market Development | 119,226 |
| Foreign Agricultural Services | 439,942 |
| Other Programs | 44,882 |
| GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE | \$2,951,170 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$4,454,501 |

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (\$200,086)

- Dues (\$2,289,037)
- Meetings (\$1,243,800)
- Government Reimbursements (\$439,942)
- Other (\$281,636)

Celebrating 125 YEARS *of the* AMERICAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION



Germination 1883 - 1908

By 1883, as the business of growing and marketing seeds expanded, seedsmen meeting in Rochester, N.Y., decided to hold a large seed convention. Ethan Allan Chase, of Rochester, is credited with the original idea for the convention. Other strongly supportive members included B. K. Bliss and Peter Henderson (of New York), Joseph A. Bolgiano (of Maryland) and E. B. Clark, William Meggat and Richard A. Robbins (of Connecticut). Once the idea was adopted, invitations went out to seedsmen across the country in May. The response was so favorable that by the next month, June 12 to 14, a group of 35 men representing 33 seed trade firms — mainly those concerned with vegetable seeds — gathered for the first assemblage of the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA). The initial meeting was held in New York City at the Gilsey House, the first hotel in that city to offer telephone service to guests. The group discussed three major topics of eminent concern to seedsmen of the time: protection against unjust claims for damages; postage on seeds and seed tariffs. The introductory passage of ASTA's 1883 official record states, "We desire to enroll every seedsman from Maine to California, and respectfully invite you to apply for admission." The founding members convened the group to bring together seedsmen spread over "the geographical limits of this mighty continent" who remained "unacquainted with those with whom they do business." The records from that initial meeting express a hope that the fledgling association "will at once become just what it ought to be, what it is intended to be — a national organization."



Tender Shoots 1908 - 1933

Heading into the 20th century, the major concerns facing American seed companies were largely the same as those in the 1800s: seed legislation, tariff issues, postal laws, free seed distribution by the government and the disclaimer. However, the world war presented seed companies with additional problems. After the United States entered the conflict in April

1917, government war councils in each state took steps to ensure greater food production. At the 1917 convention, ASTA stressed the importance of cooperating with government war councils in order "to more fully meet the present emergency." ASTA's leadership and members demonstrated a strong sense of patriotism. They adopted the following resolution unanimously in 1917:

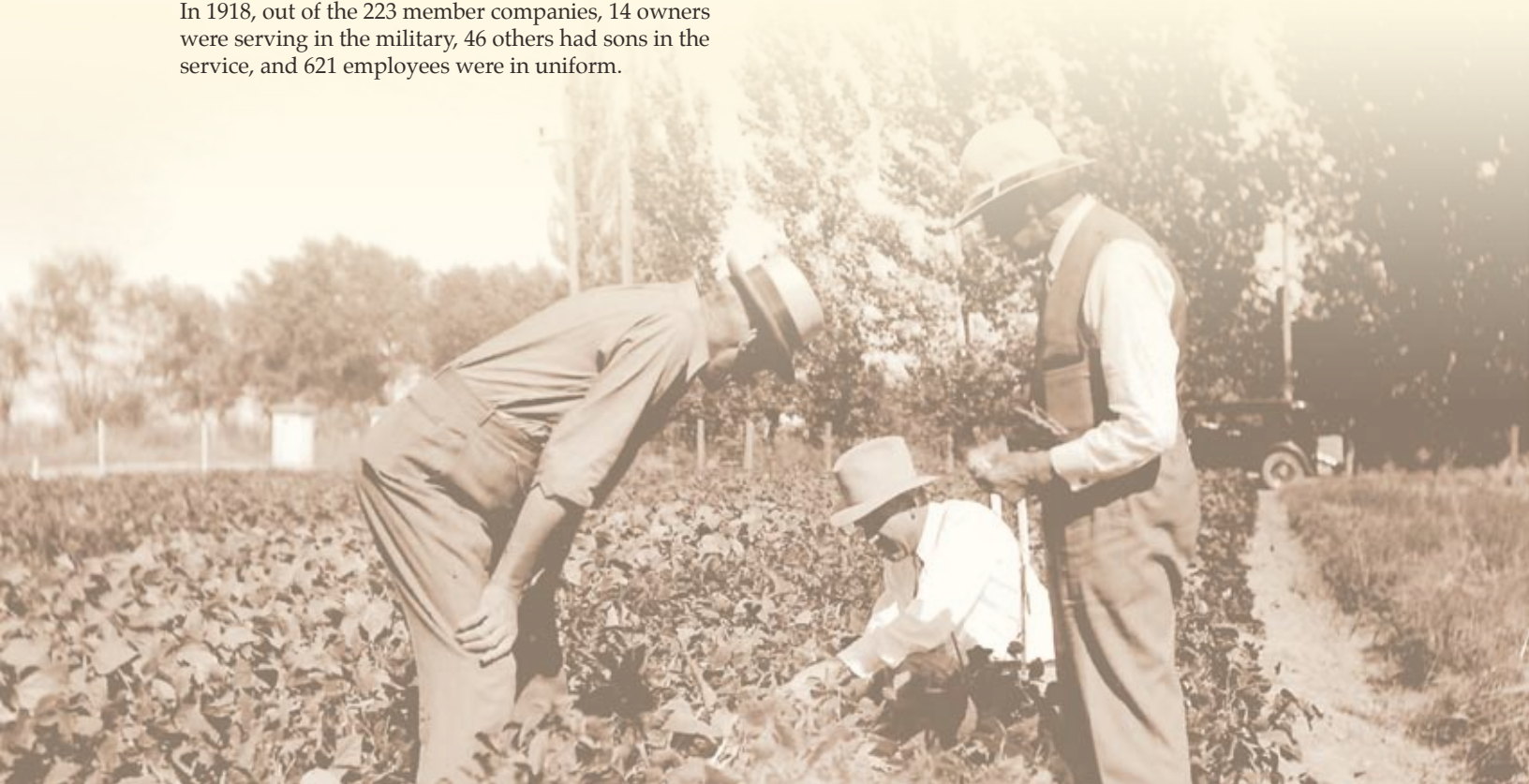
That the President of the United States and the Secretary of Agriculture be tendered the support of this Association in all reasonable measures designed to prosecute the war with the utmost vigor. We count ourselves fortunate to be able to do our full share in supplying men and money, but our greatest service may well be in maintaining, under extraordinary strain, the machinery of producing and the distributing of seeds, without which agriculture must fail. Because we realize in some measure the magnitude of the task to which our country is committed, we are the more earnest in pledging to it our entire resources.

ASTA member companies contributed to the Great War not just with resources and seeds, but also with lives. In 1918, out of the 223 member companies, 14 owners were serving in the military, 46 others had sons in the service, and 621 employees were in uniform.

Deepening Roots 1933 - 1958

During World War II, many people migrated from rural areas to U.S. cities, where industrial jobs related to the war effort were readily available. But as the United States recovered from war, it became increasingly popular to move away from cities into the surrounding areas, which were neither rural nor urban, but suburban. In the postwar years, American citizens enjoyed economic success, in part because demand for goods from the United States, a country comparatively untouched by war, remained high. The growing popularity of suburbs and a suburban style of living in the United States — with the accompanying lawns, flowers and gardens — created a much higher demand for seeds of this type. Business for lawn and garden seed companies soon boomed, and in the early 1950s, ASTA established a special committee specifically committed to lawn and turf seed. By 1957, this committee had become the Lawn and Turfgrass Division. One curious result of the war was that in 1945, for the first time since its organization 63 years before, ASTA held no general annual meeting of its membership. Instead, in Chicago, from May 31 through June 2, the Executive Committee and other committees met. ASTA's records for that year do not include a report of the annual convention, just a Report of Activities, which states:

The reason for not holding a Summer meeting, or convention, was that Federal regulations prohibited the holding of conventions or other meetings with 50 or more persons in attendance. The maintenance of complete and uninterrupted activities, of course, required the holding of a meeting of the Association's Executive Committee and urgent war requirements of the industry made necessary several other Committee sessions in order that definite policies regarding the seed industry and the war effort might be thoroughly defined and considered.



Branching Out 1958 - 1983

By the 75th anniversary of the Association, held in St. Louis, Mo., ASTA membership had reached 731 companies. This next chapter brought the arrival of a massive increase in food production referred to as the Green Revolution, as use of hybrid breeding techniques pioneered by Norman Borlaug, a Nobel laureate and later an ASTA convention speaker, were widely adopted, drastically changing the industry. With this widespread use of hybrids came issues surrounding intellectual property rights.

ASTA began to further expand its reach in order to coordinate efforts to address new technologies and the government regulations that came with them. The ASTA headquarters was relocated in 1959 to Washington, D.C. A stronger working relationship was forged with the Canadian Seed Trade Association, the Mexican Association of Seed, the International Seed Federation and the host of regional seed associations that worked around the United States. In 1959, ASTA established the American Seed Research Foundation to promote scientific research in seeds, and in 1967, a partnership with the National Council of Commercial Plant Breeders was put in place.

The greatest legislative achievement of this era was the passing of the Plant Variety Protection Act of 1970, which protected breeders' rights on new seed varieties for 17 years from the date of issuance. ASTA would eventually add a permanent staff legislative position in 1980 and continued to diligently monitor later amendments to this crucial act.



Full Blossom 1983 - 2008

The Centennial Anniversary of ASTA was celebrated in San Francisco, Calif., at which the Association could boast 55 standing committees, 20 liaison committees, seven divisions, and eight permanent staff. As ASTA headed into the 21st century, advances in science and technology reshaped the realms of plant breeding and seed marketing. The industry was forever changed with the advent of biotechnology in seed. ASTA appointed a Biotechnology Committee in 1985, which worked to unlock the "mysteries" of the budding scientific field for member companies with an educational program that discussed biotechnology's processes, applications, regulatory issues and the challenges to its widespread acceptance. As the world began to feel smaller, international trade relations grew in importance. New laws affecting seed production and distribution were enacted as nations strove to find appropriate ways to manage and regulate innovations. ASTA participated at national and international levels, keeping its membership apprised of trade developments and providing educational opportunities, facilitating import and export of seeds and debating and establishing global policies and laws.

Meanwhile, ASTA was growing and modernizing. The ASTA office was outfitted with computers in 1986, followed later by the creation of its Web site. In 1992, ASTA relocated to a new building in downtown Washington, D.C., the area where the Association had been headquartered since 1960. Before 10 years had passed, ASTA moved again, to a still larger office located in the District's suburbs, in Alexandria, Va. Staff grew in number and the head of the staff office became known as President and CEO, beginning with Dick Crowder in 2003. Continuing to keep up with rapid changes in the seed business, ASTA made it a higher priority to prepare and involve the next generation of seed industry professionals and established the Future Seed Executives (FuSE) subcommittee within its standing Management Skills Committee to address topics relevant to those who had been in the seed industry for less than seven years.



Marking a Monumental Year

As the founding fathers of ASTA did in 1883, 125 years ago, ASTA members gathered together to “Celebrate a Commitment to Agriculture & Innovation,” the theme marking this monumental year. The 125th Annual Convention of ASTA was held June 21-25, 2008, in Kissimmee, Fla., with a program of events that reflected on the Association’s long history and demonstrated the promise the seed industry holds for the future. ASTA Chairman Mike Peterson reinforced this message at the many special events and outreach opportunities over the course of the quasiquicentennial anniversary of the Association.

The 125th Annual Convention provided an opportunity to look at the many accomplishments of the seed industry and to prepare for the future of agriculture. From theatric portrayals of the seedsmen of yesterday to a glimpse into what the over 400 attendees can only imagine for the seed industry of tomorrow, the convention was the culmination of a year’s celebration of this historic anniversary. ASTA members were able to share a pride in the accomplishments they have been responsible for, far beyond what the founding fathers of the Association could have ever imagined 125 years ago.

Highlights of the program included noted author and environmentalist Bjorn Lomborg who provided the Keynote Address at the Opening General Session offering a look ahead at the environment of the future. A panel discussion, “The State of Agribusiness,” offered members various perspectives of five industry leaders: the moderator, Greg Duerksen, Kincannon & Reed; Davis Anderson, GROWMARK, Inc.; Andrew Carlton, Makhteshim Agan of North America, Inc.; Don Orr, JBS United, Inc. and Stuart Woolf, Woolf Enterprises. Presenting their thoughts on both the inputs and outputs of agriculture today and the future of the industry, the panel fielded many questions which helped members gain insight into these experts’ take on the trends during this dynamic time in agricultural production.



2008-2009 ASTA Elected Officers

- **Kelly Keithly**, Keithly-Williams Seeds, Chairman
- **Jerry Monk**, Warner Seeds, Inc., First Vice Chairman
- **John Nelsen**, RiceTec, Inc., Second Vice Chairman
- **Risa DeMasi**, Grassland Oregon, Regional Vice President, Northwestern
- **Terry Dulaney**, AgVenture & Dulaney Seeds, Regional Vice President, Southeastern
- **Craig Newman**, AgReliant Genetics, Regional Vice President, Central
- **Wayne Unger**, Brett Young Seeds, Ltd., Vice President from Canada

ASTA Awards of Highest Honors to Members and Industry Leaders

- **Distinguished Service Award:**
Gary Beil, Minnesota Crop Improvement Association, and Charles Leamons, Texas Seed Trade Association
- **Honorary Lifetime Member Award:**
Bill Latham, Latham Seeds, Inc.
- **Recognition of Longest Consecutive Membership:**
W. Atlee Burpee & Company, which joined ASTA in 1886



Seed Industry Announces New Foundation to Support Education

On June 23, 2008, ASTA announced the formation of the First the Seed Foundation, officially launched at the 125th Annual Convention of the Association. The seed industry established the Foundation to provide education and outreach about today's vibrant seed industry and its promise for the future. The food, feed, fiber and fuel demands of an ever increasing population make it more important than ever to educate the general public about the story of agriculture and the role of seed, as well as attract the best and brightest minds to agricultural fields of study. Bud Hughes of Verdant Partners was named president of the board for the Foundation.

The mission of the First the Seed Foundation is to conduct education, outreach and communication on the value of crops and food produced from seed. The seed industry has a great story to tell about the contributions made to American agriculture, and ultimately, to the lives of people around the world. The Foundation will provide a platform to educate today's world and tomorrow's work force about the importance of the seed industry.

Today's consumers demand healthy food for their bodies, improved feed for livestock, better fiber for the clothes they wear and cleaner fuel for the vehicles they drive. Recent advancements in seed innovation using plant technologies have helped to meet the growing market demand for agricultural products. The progress made by the seed industry in the last 20 years is greater than ever before; however, very few people are aware of the contributions of the industry to their everyday lives.



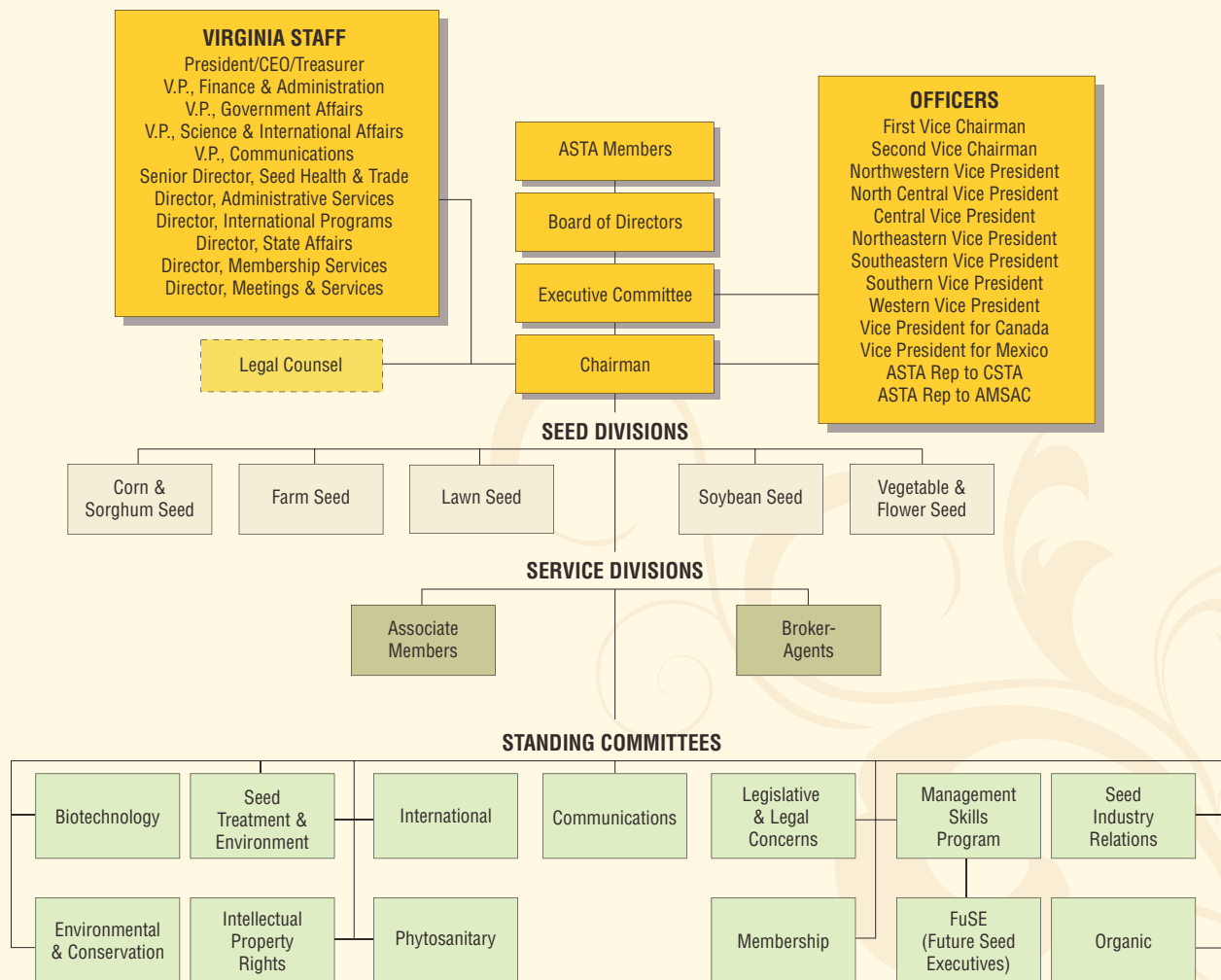
Fewer than 2 million Americans are actively engaged in farming, yet agriculture generates some 22 million jobs in the United States, mostly located off-farm. The efficiency of today's U.S. farmers allows them to produce 16 percent of the world's food supply, freeing others to pursue other occupations and career paths. Many are not aware of the science and technology that drives agriculture, solves its many challenges and offers many opportunities.

The highest priority of the First the Seed Foundation is the education of today's youth. Efforts of the Foundation will begin with outreach about seed to grade schools through multimedia and Web-based curriculum to be used in classrooms, development of an introductory video on the seed industry's role in American agriculture, the distribution of seed and informational kits to schools and youth organizations and the promotion of the value of quality seed and the impacts of the seed industry on every person's life who eats food or uses agricultural products.

Contributions can be made to the First the Seed Foundation by contacting the ASTA office.

ASTA Organizational Structure

ASTA members identify issues and priorities for the Association. ASTA has seven divisions to which any member can belong. Each division has its own governing body elected by its members that identifies relevant issues and projects specific to that segment of the seed industry. ASTA divisions and standing committees address key seed science, policy, education and trade issues. The ASTA Board of Directors includes all officers as well as all past presidents of the Association elected as president (or chairman, as applicable) before June 1, 2003, the three most recent past chairman elected after that date, the directors at large, the chairman of each division as well as those of certain standing committees outlined by ASTA ByLaws. ASTA's Executive Committee, which has authority to act for the Board of Directors on certain matters, consists of the officers, the three immediate past chairmen as well as the directors at large.



ASTA Leadership

Members of the ASTA Board of Directors and Executive Committee

Officers

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Chairman | Mike Peterson | Peterson Genetics |
| First Vice Chairman | Kelly Keithly | Keithly-Williams Seeds |
| Second Vice Chairman | Jerry Monk | Warner Seeds |
| Northwestern Vice President | Kevin Turn | The Scott's Company |
| North Central Vice President | Wayne Vassar | Sharp Brothers Seed Co. |
| Central Vice President | Tim Johnson | IL Foundation Seeds/SGI |
| Northeastern Vice President | Fred Mohr | Seedway, Inc. |
| Southeastern Vice President | Danny Mixon | Mixon Seeds |
| Southern Vice President | Blake Curtis | Curtis Seed |
| Western Vice President | John Schoenecker | Harris Moran |
| Vice President to Canada | Bryan Gerard | JGL, Inc. |
| Vice President to Mexico | Ed Aguilar | Zeraim Gedera (Syngenta) |
| Vice President for Canada | David Sippell | Syngenta Seeds Canada |
| Vice President for Mexico | Arcadio Lozano | Sakata Mexico |

Directors at Large

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Dan Burdett | Syngenta Seeds, Inc. |
| Marc Cool | Seeds of Change |
| Dean Oestreich | Pioneer Hi-Bred (DuPont) |
| Don Wertman | Seedway |
| Tom Wiltrout | Dow AgroSciences |

Chairmen

Past Chairmen/Presidents

ASTA Board of Directors Members

*Denotes Executive Committee Member

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| *Paul Bennett | Sakata Seed |
| *Jim Tobin | Monsanto Company |
| *Harry Collins | Delta & Pine Land/Monsanto Co. |
| Sonny Beck | Beck's Superior Hybrids |
| Nathan Boardman | Crosbyton Seed Co. |
| Wayne Beck | Pioneer Hi-Bred (DuPont) |
| Bill Whitacre | J.R. Simplot Co. |
| Bill Latham | Latham Seed Co. |
| J. Stephen Byrum | Retired |
| Fred Clark | Retired |
| Noble Koepp | Triumph Seed Co. |
| Dietrich Schmidt | Retired |





Past Chairmen/Presidents – *continued*

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| John Studebaker | Cibus LLC |
| George Jones | Retired |
| Jerry Peterson | Retired |
| Don McGillivary | Retired |
| John Zajac | Mountain View Seeds, Ltd. |
| Owen Newlin | Pioneer Hi-Bred (DuPont) |
| Bill Schapaugh | Retired |
| Bob Thedinger | Retired |
| Harvey Mauth | Retired |
| Owen Gilbreath | Retired |

2007-2008 Division Chairmen
ASTA Board of Directors Members

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Associates | Bob Jondle | Jondle & Associates |
| Brokers & Agents | Sandee Sinnot | Peterson Genetics |
| Corn & Sorghum Seed | Lynn McDonald | Triumph Seed Co. |
| Farm Seed | Maurice Miller | Sharp Seeds |
| Lawn Seed | Nancy Aerni | Seeds, Inc. |
| Soybean Seed | Jack Carlson | Winfield Solutions, LLC |
| Vegetable & Flower Seed | John Schoenecker | Harris Moran |

2007-2008 Committee Chairmen

*Denotes ASTA Board of Directors Member

| | | |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|
| *Biotechnology | Keith Redenbaugh | Seminis |
| Corn & Sorghum Basic Research | Hobart Beeghly | Monsanto Company |
| Corn & Sorghum Export Develop | Steve Hageman | Remington Hybrid Seed Co. |
| Corn & Sorghum Planning | David Gibson | Texas Corn Producers |
| Corn Variety Identification | Steve Thompson | Dow AgroSciences |
| *Environment & Conservation Seed | Dave Stock | Stock Seed Farms |
| Future Seed Executives | Mindy DeVries | Monsanto Company |
| *Intellectual Property Rights | Mike Chapman | Pioneer Hi-Bred (DuPont) |
| *International | Brad Shurdut | Dow AgroSciences |
| Joint Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Machinery | Jonathan C. Popp | Popp Engineering |
| *Legislative & Legal Concerns | Risa DeMasi | Grassland Oregon, LLC |
| Management Skills | Jim Schweigert | Grow Alliance |
| Organic | Dave Pickenpaugh | INCOTEC |
| Phytosanitary | William Dolezal | Pioneer Hi-Bred (DuPont) |
| Seed Industry Relations | Greg Kegler | Greenleaf Genetics, LLC |
| Seed Treatment & Environment | Larry Butler | Becker Underwood |
| Soybean Basic Research | Hunt Wiley | Dairyland Seed Co. |
| Soybean Planning | Greg Gerard | JGL, Inc. |
| Stewardship | Bryan Gerard | JGL, Inc. |

Opportunities for All

ASTA Members Direct Seed Industry Future through Active Participation

The success of ASTA depends on the active involvement of its members. Grassroots efforts, quality discussions on policy issues and strategic goals and actions are the cornerstone to ASTA's ability to advocate for the seed industry.

ASTA offers four meetings annually, spanning seed types while culminating in the Annual Convention which brings all of the seed industry together. The organizational structure of the Association, ASTA's divisions and committees, enable all segments of the seed industry to prioritize what opportunities and challenges are tackled by ASTA. Divisions include Associates, Corn & Sorghum, Farm Seed, Lawn Seed, Soybean Seed and Vegetable & Flower Seed. Broad subject committees, as well as those that are born out of a division, provide a forum for members to direct the Association. Committee meetings are open to all unless otherwise noted. Specific information on ASTA committees and their current activities can be obtained through the ASTA office.

ASTA Meetings

Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference

Held in late January or early February, the Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference features cutting-edge industry and government speakers focusing on vegetable and flower industry issues, plus a networking reception and committee meetings covering a full range of topics from organic to phytosanitary to biotechnology. The Trading Room, which is the focal point of this conference, is constantly filled to capacity with all-day networking and business appointments.

Annual Convention

Held in June, the Annual Convention brings together all segments of the industry across all seed types. Plenary sessions feature prominent speakers, both within and outside the seed industry, which complement a streamlined schedule of all ASTA standing committees and divisions. There are a number of special event that provide an opportunity to mingle and meet members and their families. In addition to this convention being the ceremonial event in which the ASTA leadership is elected, policy and issues of strategic importance to the continued growth of the seed industry are discussed and addressed.



Farm and Lawn Seed Conference

Held in November, the Farm and Lawn Seed Conference is conducted in conjunction with the Western Seed Association's Annual Convention. Attendance is drawn mostly from seed producers of the Midwest who focus on turf, forage and farm seeds, and the conference is almost entirely trading and business appointments. ASTA events include meetings of the Farm Seed Division, Lawn Seed Division, Invasive Species Working Group and the Environmental & Conservation Seed Committees.



Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference (CSS) & Seed EXPO

Held in December, the Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference (CSS) & Seed EXPO is the largest ASTA event and the largest seed industry convention in the Western Hemisphere! The two research conferences feature a series of industry and university presentations on contemporary issues related to the corn, sorghum and soybean trade, including biotechnology, management and production, breeding and genetics, pest management and many more. The Seed EXPO features approximately 115 exhibitors and additional features such as meeting suites, an opening reception and other events.



Future Seed Executives (FuSE)

The FuSE initiative became an official sub-committee of ASTA's Management Skills Committee in 2004. FuSE focuses on educating and supporting future seed industry executives, namely those with fewer than seven years of seed industry experience.

Education Units are one-day events co-hosted by ASTA member companies. A typical event showcases the host company's business and operations followed by a case-study presented by a local university. These units are designed as regional opportunities to expand learning, promote networking and improve general understanding of the seed industry. 2008 Educational Unit hosts were:

- Syngenta Seeds Inc. & University of Florida/Purdue University
- AgReliant Genetics, LLC & University of Illinois
- Seminis Inc. & Cal Poly/UC Davis

Round Table Discussion Groups have been a great success. This series of conference calls, moderated by senior industry members, aims at educating Future Seed Executives on recent major events and happenings in the industry. Each one-hour long conference call focuses on a specific topic and, holding true to the round table format, new topics can be introduced for discussion by those on the call.

FuSE once again offered **Campus Connections**, which provides the unique opportunity for undergraduate students (juniors) working towards a career in the seed industry to interact with seed industry professionals and senior executives to investigate various aspects of the seed business. Through this program, FuSE awarded students a grant to attend ASTA's 125th Annual Convention in June 2008.



Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) Credits

ASTA members attending the 2007 Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference & Seed EXPO were able to earn Certified Crop Advisor Credits. The CCA program is the largest certification program in agriculture with more than 14,000 individuals certified through the U.S. and Canada.



ASTA Management Academy Fosters Seed Industry Leaders

ASTA continued its longstanding relationship with Purdue University's Center for Food and Agriculture Business. The academy focuses on the practical application of general management concepts critical to the long-term success of the seed industry. In February 2008, 47 seed industry professionals gathered at Purdue for the 21st ASTA Management Academy. The group hailed from France, Uganda and 18 of the United States. Mike Peterson, ASTA chairman and president of Peterson Genetics, Inc., spoke to the class and provided perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing the seed industry. Like the seed industry itself, the class of participants becomes a dynamic group — networking, learning, sharing ideas and discussing challenging issues. As participants return to their roles, their enthusiasm is clear as to how the skills they have gained will benefit not only the individual but the seed industry as a whole.

Roger Krueger Scholarship

The first scholarship of the Roger Krueger Scholarship Endowment was awarded to Jose Luis Rotundo at ASTA's 125th Annual Convention. A Doctoral candidate at Iowa State University, he is pursuing a degree in crop production and physiology. The Roger Krueger Scholarship Endowment was established by the American Seed Research Foundation (ASRF) to honor and remember Dr. Roger Krueger, from Monsanto Company, whose professional career was devoted to seeds. He passionately advocated the role of science in feeding the world and lived to make the world a better place and to make agriculture more able to feed the world. Seeds are small things, but as Roger's colleagues, friends and family all testify, this seed we knew as Roger Krueger was a small thing done with great love. The interest from the permanent endowment will be used as scholarships for students in agriculture — the future of the seed industry.



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to Agriculture & Innovation*

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