



BRIGHTEN YOUR FUTURE  
with ASTA



AMERICAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION

2008 - 2009 Annual Report





# Charting the Direction of AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

**The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) leads the way by driving:**

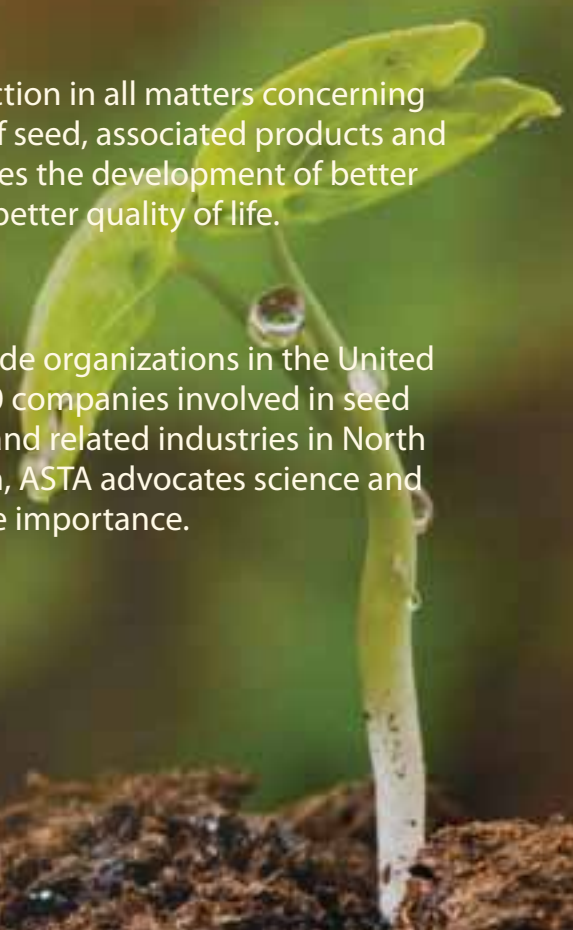
Regulatory and legislative matters at the state, national and international levels.  
New technology and innovation across all seed types.  
An understanding of the value of quality seed.

## **Our Mission**

ASTA's mission is to be an effective voice of action in all matters concerning the development, marketing and 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.

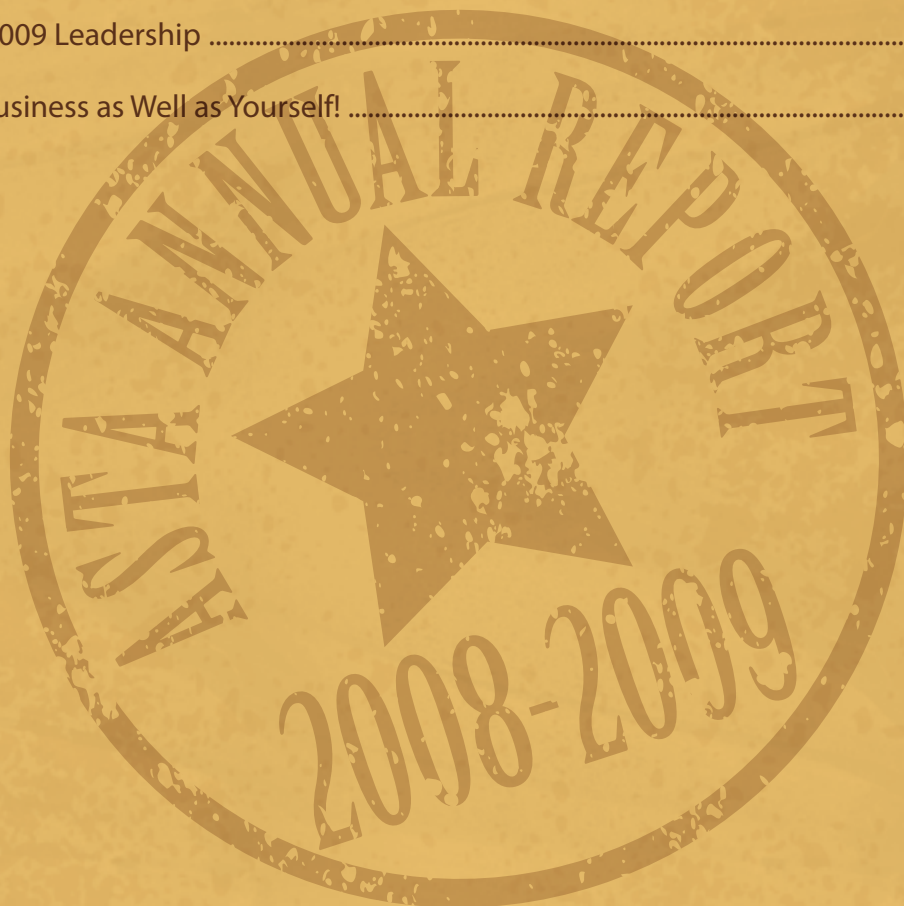
## **Who We Are**

Founded in 1883, ASTA is one of the oldest trade organizations in the United States. Its membership consists of about 740 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:

Over the past year, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) has focused on increasing membership involvement, always aspiring to “Brighten Your Future with ASTA.” We all benefit from being involved in ASTA! ASTA is our association, the association of the seed industry, bringing together the broad interests of our industry and driving the change needed to make all of us more efficient in delivering what the customer needs.

We must always be aware of the challenges that may be thrown at us, as well as look for new opportunities that build the vitality of the seed industry. Our joint efforts allow us to speak with one voice with the strength of the entire seed industry to lead the industry, bring solutions to the problems we face and identify the opportunities yet to be discovered.

ASTA is tremendously well positioned to represent our interests and work for us, its members, on all issues that lay ahead – both the known and the unknown. Where domestic and international issues intersect is where you can find ASTA working hardest for you. As agriculture continues to evolve rapidly, ASTA’s ability to keep a finger on the pulse of these developments will serve each of its members and the seed industry as a whole.

The complex network of the global seed market has created even more challenges. ASTA is diligent on our behalf, identifying practical solutions and taking them to government representatives with our global partners to produce the results our businesses need. Policies and regulations set forth by state, federal and foreign governments, such as phytosanitary decisions, intellectual property rights, preemption, sustainability, stewardship and labor all impact the way the seed industry operates to meet today’s demand and responds through innovation to the growing demands of tomorrow.

ASTA brings us together, allows us to make a difference so that we can continue on a path of growth and prosperity. Many member companies can attest to ASTA’s ability to manage these various issues and advocate solutions that enable the seed industry to grow. But we make greater gains when we work together and have members involved. ASTA staff alone cannot carry the burden of growing our industry. ASTA needs the input of its member volunteers!

As the executive leadership, we are excited about the many opportunities for the Association in driving innovation through seed to meet the needs of agriculture. Agriculture has a great story to tell, and seed plays a leading role critical to the success of agricultural production. The seed industry can respond to the needs of the grower and the consumer. We address the challenges that hamper progress in reaping the opportunities seed has to offer.

We ask that you join us and get involved in ASTA. You must be at the table to help direct and drive change that nurtures the growth and future of the seed industry. And, when you have the chance, be a spokesperson for what ASTA can do for your company and the many opportunities it provides. ASTA is driven by our members — we need you at the wheel continuing to **brighten ALL OUR futures with ASTA!**



*Kelly B. Keithly*  
**Kelly Keithly**  
Chairman



*A. W. LaVigne*  
**Andrew W. LaVigne**  
President & CEO

# GOALS

## ENLIGHTEN & BRIGHTEN THE ROAD AHEAD

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 the consumers. ASTA continues to advance the agenda of the American seed industry, charting the direction of American agriculture through the production of quality seed and the use of technology and innovation. This Annual Report features highlights spanning 2008-2009 among each of the 10 goals in ASTA's Strategic Plan.



**The 10 strategic issues, not listed in any order of priority are:**

### **Global Agricultural Policy**

Provide effective leadership on global policy, 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 the 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 of members, 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'S STRENGTH BEGINS IN THE BACKYARD

### Domestic Policy

ASTA's strength rests in its membership, in the collective voice of the seed industry. Yet, it comes down to one on one relationships built at the grassroots level that make the difference. ASTA helps to foster these relationships and provide information and materials to members so they can best represent and advocate for the seed industry.

The seed industry is confronted with many challenges — intellectual property rights, energy, conservation, trade, stewardship and immigration to name only a few. The audience is broad, from Capitol Hill to federal agencies including, but not limited to, the Departments of Agriculture, Interior and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. ASTA members are in the best position to explain the changing face of the seed industry, an industry that is dynamic, innovative, supportive and economically critical at the state, national and international levels.

Over this year, ASTA has organized a full slate of activities for members to engage with elected officials and government representatives. In April 2009, ASTA sponsored the first ever Seed Industry Washington DC Fly-in to provide the opportunity for ASTA members to educate and inform those in the capital of the multiple issues facing the seed industry. Held in partnership with state and regional seed trade associations, the fly-in was an opportunity to present the realities of this dynamic industry to the new administration officials in Washington, D.C., as they navigate the many challenges before them and seek factual information to make critical decisions. ASTA purposely holds the bi-annual meetings of the Executive Committee in Washington, D.C., to give ASTA leadership the opportunity to meet with these same officials in addition to conducting operational business of the Association.

Many ASTA efforts target a specific sector of the seed industry. For example, the 7th ASTA-USDA Conservation Workshop, held March 9-10, 2009, brought more than 20 seed professionals to Washington, D.C., to participate in a series of briefings at USDA and meetings with Members of Congress.

ASTA members shared their support of the current conservation programs outlined in the 2008 farm bill and expressed their view that the seed industry can be most helpful if there is a continued dialogue on program expectations, sign-ups and funding discussions. To demonstrate the continued commitment to this dialogue, ASTA and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) renewed a Memorandum of Understanding, first established in 2004, which stipulates coordination, communication and partnerships between the two organizations.



### State & Local Issues

Success in state legislatures is often based on what does not happen. The defeat of bills that could be onerous to the seed industry can require the bulk of the effort. However, pro-active efforts also pay off in a positive manner on behalf of the industry. ASTA provides legislative-language suggestions, legal positions, hearing testimony and technical interpretations to assist state associations with their legislative activity. And, upon request, ASTA has provided numerous testimony letters to support the cause of the seed industry in the states. It's definitely a team effort. For example, ASTA and its regional and local partners succeeded on two specific occasions. In New York, efforts by the seed industry removed a proposed seed sales fee (\$0.20 per \$100 sales) from the 2009 Governor's Budget. Subsequent outreach to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets provided an opportunity for industry representatives to discuss their common challenges and set a basis for further discussions toward mutual solutions as issues arise. In Maryland, efforts culminated in the passage of 2009 legislation to change cool season grass seed labeling requirements from "Test Date" to "Sell By" notations, which is similar to food expiration date labeling. The legislation also allows a change of the re-testing requirement from nine months to 15 months for cool season grass seed.

## Responsiveness

The seed industry sees opportunities and faces challenges. ASTA responds by addressing issues and providing information and valuable tools to ASTA members, seed industry customers and policy makers. ASTA broadly distributed information and offered public access to the new Guide to Quality Seed Management Practices. In the halls of Congress, along the agriculture value chain and among nations setting standards in international forums, ASTA staff and members demonstrated and explained how the multimedia, interactive resource guide addressed the development and production of seed products intended for food, feed, fiber or fuel use and for the maintenance of product integrity and purity of both biotechnology-derived seed and non-biotechnology seed.

Commercial growers of fruits and vegetables face many challenges in cultivating, harvesting, transporting and marketing their products to consumers. Pressure from diseases can have an impact on their harvest in either quantity, quality or both. Ongoing discussions by ASTA members with their customers — the commercial grower community — made it clear that the seed industry could play a role in helping to rid or mitigate some of the most devastating diseases facing growers today. ASTA has now made available commercial grower guides on two of these diseases, bacterial fruit blotch (BFB) and bacterial cancer of tomato (Cmm). The guides were developed to provide recommendations to growers in understanding, preventing, identifying, controlling and eliminating these two diseases. Compiled with contributions from academic and industry experts in the area of BFB and Cmm, these education pamphlets are available on ASTA's Web site. They are intended for broad distribution including posting on seed company Web sites or through local printing capabilities for trade shows and other opportunities to pass along to customers.

The "Retailers Guide for Proper Handling and Storage of Lawn Seed Products" provides direction to the retailer on how to properly handle and store lawn seed in a retail store environment. Representatives of ASTA's Lawn Seed Division, the USDA's Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch, the Association of American Seed Control Officials (AASCO) and several regional seed associations developed the guide through a collaborative effort. This resource assists the retailer to understand the regulatory requirements related

to labeling, lot numbers and overstickers, as well as provides direction to the retailer when dealing with state seed control agencies in cases such as Stop Sale Notices. Seed industry members are encouraged to utilize and promote the guide, also posted on the ASTA Web site, when discussing lawn seed handling and storage in a retail environment.

## ASTA Communications

Outreach to all of ASTA's audiences — members, policy makers, media, customers and consumers — is critical in every aspect of ASTA's efforts. This year marked the beginning of ASTA's Communications Steering Committee which draws from its diverse membership and 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 the new trade show booth to public relations software, ASTA is well equipped to effectively deliver important messages to broad audiences about the seed industry. For example, in December 2008, ASTA received a special salute from *AgriMarketing*, the only magazine that covers the unique interests of corporate agribusiness executives, their marketing communications agencies, the agricultural media, agricultural trade associations and other agriculture-related professionals. The publication has nearly 8,000 subscribers throughout the U.S. and Canada. To keep ASTA members better informed about issues facing the seed industry, the Seed PodCast was launched in January 2009. It is a monthly broadcast from the ASTA President & CEO Andy LaVigne. Topics have included legislative affairs, international activities and membership opportunities. The Seed PodCast is distributed electronically and hosted on the ASTA Web site in the Members Only section.



## ASTA'S FINESSE CULTIVATES GLOBAL IMPACT

### Global Agricultural Policy

The establishment of effective international policies enables the seed industry to conduct research, produce quality seed and transport seed and related materials to ensure continued innovation in the products the seed industry delivers. ASTA participates in a number of forums to help build these policies both in the U.S. and around the globe. ASTA has engaged in a full court press in support of the ratification of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture by the U.S. Senate. The Treaty, adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on November 3, 2001, aims to ensure food security through the conservation, exchange and sustainable use of the world's plant genetic resources for the production of food and agriculture. Forwarded to the Senate by President Bush in July 2008, confirmation by the Senate is required before a treaty is officially ratified. The Treaty addresses both the conservation of genetic resources and their use with equitable benefits which are crucial to secure their availability to plant breeders in order to bring improved crop yields and profitability to farmers. ASTA believes it essential that the U.S. Government be fully engaged as a Party to the Treaty so that the issues of importance to the seed industry and American agriculture are effectively addressed. Although the Treaty has yet to be ratified as of June 2009, ASTA is hopeful that its many efforts to inform Congress on the position of the U.S. seed industry will be successful in gaining the needed support for ratification.

Transboundary movement of seed is critical to the growth of the industry and the success of agriculture to meet the demand for food, feed, fiber and fuel. ASTA works to make sure the decisions made at the international bodies that address trade, policy and standards enable future innovation and use of new technologies, such as biotechnology. The Harmonization of Regulatory Oversight in Biotechnology Working Group of the Organisation for Economic and Cooperation Development (OECD) has undertaken a project to address low level presence (LLP) in seed. Both ASTA and the International Seed Federation (ISF) have advocated for such a project with this

working group because of the trade effects resulting from asynchronous approvals for biotechnology events. The scope of the project will address, from the perspective of the environmental risk assessment, biotechnology events approved in at least one country and found in low levels in the importing country although not yet approved in that country. The project will also address mechanisms of information exchange among regulators.

However, solutions to some transboundary issues can be less complex, and yet, can still take a tremendous effort to resolve. Sometimes, it just takes getting the right people around the table. Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are members of the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), a regional phytosanitary standards setting body that operates under the auspices of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Regional standards developed by NAPPO to harmonize agricultural trade among the three countries are often brought to the IPPC for adoption as global standards. Over the past eight to 10 years, little to no attention was given to the needs of the seed industry even though international movement of seed has increased drastically over this period. At the meeting held in October 2008, ASTA proposed that NAPPO establish a seed technical panel to focus on the issues associated with the movement of seed among NAPPO countries. As a result, the commitment was made to establish a panel to look at the development of relevant standards for seed. In particular, three immediate issues will be addressed: seed re-export, accreditation of third parties (including seed companies) to conduct activities that support the issuance of phytosanitary certificates (such as what is currently practiced in the U.S. through the National Seed Health System) and development of harmonized seed health testing methods and associated protocols. Industry experts will be called upon to participate in this panel, along with regulatory and public sector research experts. The panel will have representatives from all three NAPPO countries. Regional and global standards specifically for seed will even the playing field, remove technical barriers, and achieve more certainty and predictability that ASTA member companies need to effectively conduct business internationally.





## Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual property rights (IPR) is a fundamental tool used by breeders, both private and public, to allow and promote research that brings further innovation. IPR is critical to the innovation of any industry, and the same is true in the seed industry. Through the Beyond the Seed program, officially launched in December 2008, ASTA has developed tools for its members to facilitate informed discussions between the seed industry and their first customers, the growers, about the value seed brings to their operations. Program tools include a brochure, wallet card, Web site and presentation materials that help explain how the purchase of quality seed not only helps the growers' production today, but also invests in the innovation of seed for tomorrow.

This investment in innovation is not equally guarded around the world. Because of the vital role IPR plays in the seed industry, ASTA has dedicated significant resources to international outreach in key markets. One example is China. Several exchanges between ASTA representatives and national and provincial government officials, as well as other seed experts from the private and public sectors, have established a base from which issues surrounding the protection of intellectual property in China can be addressed. Through these newly built and growing relationships, ASTA has made inroads on the plant variety protection process in China and how the regulatory climate in China affects the ability of the seed industry to bring new, improved varieties to Chinese farmers.

## Seed Association of the Americas



The founding and success of the Seed Association of the Americas (SAA) is a result of the international efforts undertaken by ASTA. SAA has made a name for itself over the last year by not only hiring a

part-time executive secretary and securing Brazil's membership, but also by outlining specific goals to include phytosanitary issues (import/export matters), intellectual property rights education and outreach. ASTA is partnering on several of these initiatives.

SAA took the first steps toward meeting its goals in phytosanitary matters for import and export. SAA's Phytosanitary Workshop, co-hosted by the Brazilian Association of Seed Producers (ABRASEM) took place in September 2008 in Brazil. Approximately 80 participants attended from SAA member countries of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Mexico, U.S. and Uruguay, as well as Paraguay and representatives from the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) and the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone (COSAVE). The workshop successfully brought together public and private sectors to discuss phytosanitary requirements, regulations of trade and how to best facilitate seed movement throughout the Americas.



# MEMBERSHIP VALUE IS THE ULTIMATE GOAL

## Membership

ASTA remains strongly committed to retaining and growing membership. The Association is also committed to brightening the future of the seed industry it serves, through timely and informative meetings, educational programming and opportunities for member participation at all levels. ASTA seeks the diversity in officers, board members and committee chairmen that reflects the wide range of the seed industry and addresses the needs of the membership.

ASTA's value to its members is vital to the success of the Association. In July 2008, a survey of seed industry representatives and past members was conducted to provide invaluable feedback to ASTA leadership and staff. Initiated by ASTA and conducted by the Marketing Research Department of GROWMARK, Inc., the survey results enable ASTA to make the changes needed to better serve its membership. With this information, ASTA will continue to bring quality programming and opportunities to its members and strategically address the seed industry's priorities today and in the future. The ultimate goal is to ensure value for membership in ASTA.

The survey, which was conducted electronically and sent to a very broad range of seed representatives, was an initial step in assessing how the Association meets the needs of its members and understands what is on their minds. Equipped with this information, further analysis and information collection will be continuously undertaken. The ASTA Executive Committee and Board of Directors will use the results of the study to guide further action and prioritization as they review future activities and ASTA's Strategic Plan. Other ASTA committees, such as the newly formed Communication Steering Committee and the Management Skills Committee, will utilize the information gathered to direct their efforts on new opportunities, resources and initiatives to benefit members.

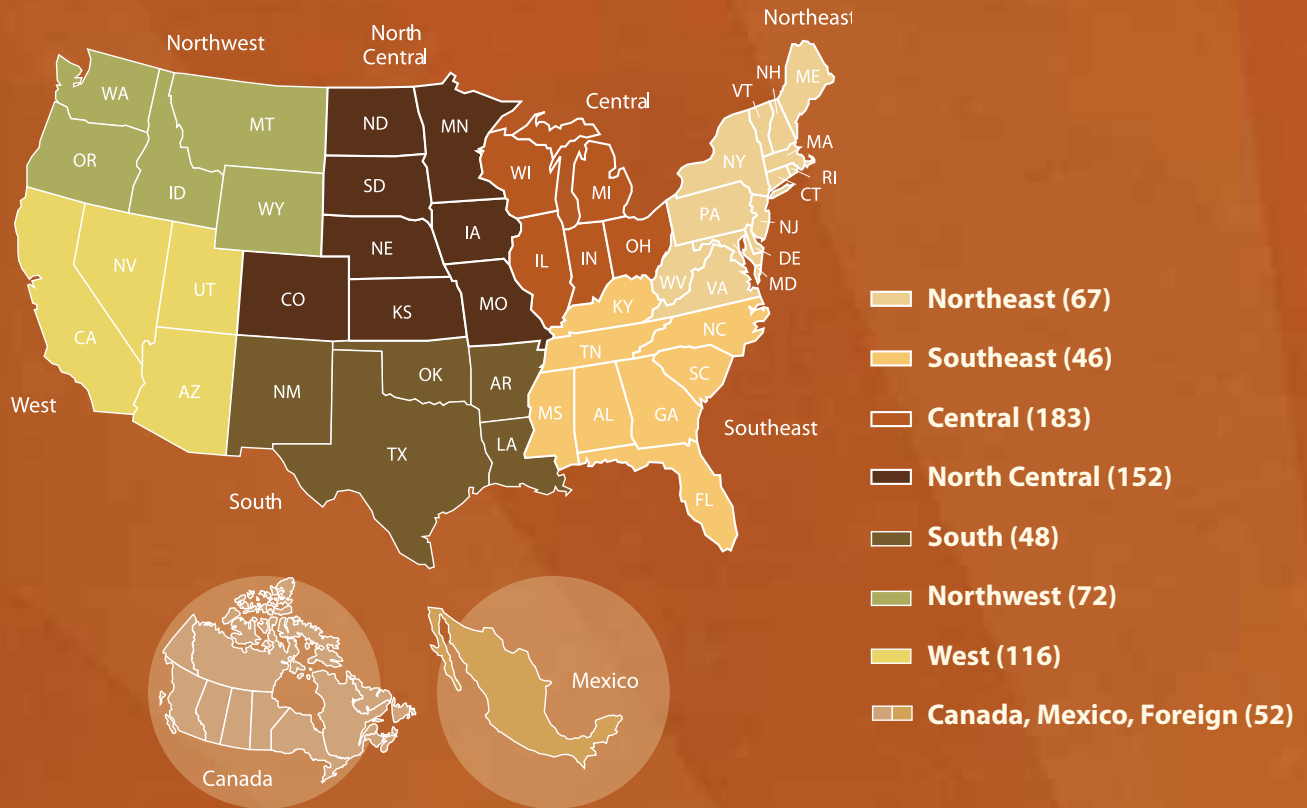


The overall results of the survey were very positive. The analysis conducted by GROWMARK, Inc., indicated a solid overall satisfaction by the members participating in the survey. Over 70% of the members are very satisfied or satisfied with ASTA as an organization. An easy measure of how an association is doing is to ask if someone would personally recommend a membership to a peer or a competitor, and in the case of ASTA, three out of four respondents said they would likely recommend a company join ASTA.

The survey indicated that seed representatives were most familiar with ASTA's meetings and conferences. While ASTA works diligently to put on high quality meetings and conferences, ASTA also has a mission that is much broader than this service. And although three quarters of the respondents said that they were quite satisfied with ASTA's ability to meet its mission, there were indications that ASTA needs to communicate more clearly the various activities and efforts it makes on behalf of its member companies and the seed industry at the state, national and international levels.

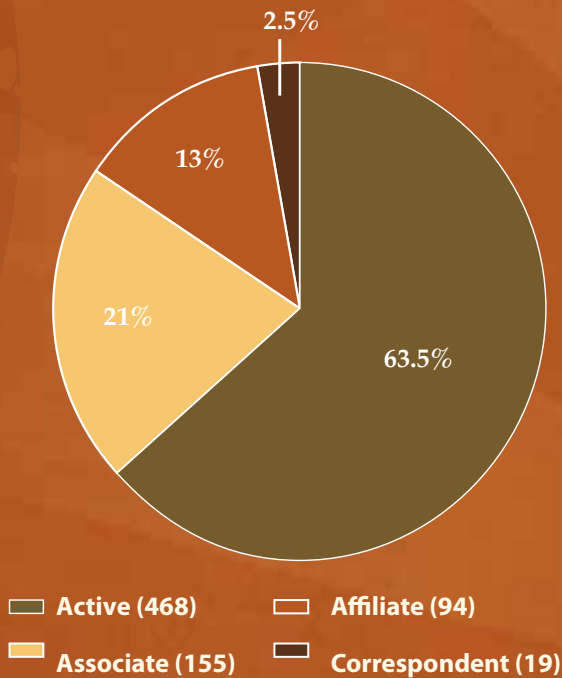
From issues facing the seed industry to providing educational opportunities to general association organization and communication, ASTA leadership and staff gained insight into how they may better allocate resources and address issues of most concern to the membership. Serving as a benchmark, the survey will guide future action of ASTA leadership and staff and provide a yardstick with which ongoing evaluation can be measured.

## Membership by Region



## Membership by Participation

Total ASTA Members: 736



## Membership by Seed Type

Corn	199	Flower	81
Farm	174	Sunflower	49
Vegetable	169	Native Grasses	23
Soybean	160	Wildflower	18
Alfalfa	146	Cotton	13
Lawn	127	Tree	9
Field Grass	123	Peanut	8
Clover	98	Rice	4
Sorghum	89		

# ASSOCIATION ASSETS ENABLE ACTION

## 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 professionalism of the staff are designed to meet the goals of ASTA's Strategic Plan and stay consistent with the financial resources provided by the members. This includes recruiting strong talent and building on the talent already in place by updating job descriptions and organizational structure, setting goals, 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 Governmental 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

**Jillian Barnett**  
Manager, International and Domestic Programming

### 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 and Membership Coordinator

### Communications

**Gretchen E. Flanley**  
Vice President, Communications



## Financial Health

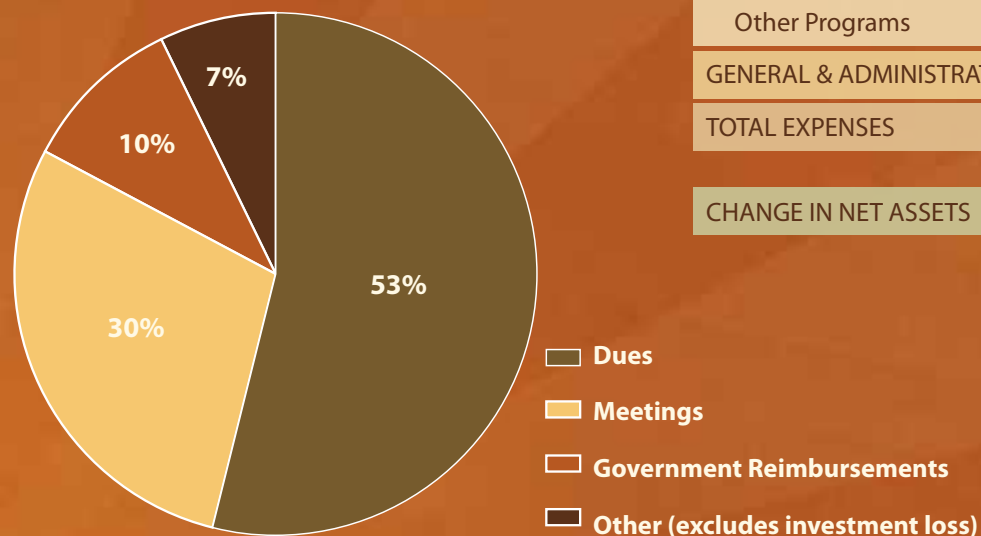
As a major goal of the Association, ASTA has established a solid budget process, based on input from staff, divisions and ASTA leadership which is then referred to the Board of Directors for approval. ASTA maintains complete openness with membership about the Association's budget and financial status. The Board of Directors approved a reserve policy and strategy, which enables ASTA to strive to maintain its targeted financial reserve.

The annual ASTA audit was conducted in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards by Strack Stanfield, LLC. The 2009 audit confirmed the financial health of the Association. ASTA began its fiscal year with unrestricted net assets of \$4,460,805 and ended with \$3,760,487, a decrease of \$700,318 mainly due to investment losses resulting from the economy as well as increased program activity by staff during this fiscal year.

## 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	\$2,326,457
Meetings	\$1,341,813
Exhibits	\$245,840
Assessment	\$29,157
Government Reimbursements	\$418,337
Miscellaneous	\$20,085
Administrative Service Fees	\$25,000
Investment (loss) Income	(\$679,225)
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$3,727,464</b>

## Expenses

<b>PROGRAMS</b>	
Corn & Sorghum Seed	\$119,244
Farm Seed	\$3,544
Lawn Seed	\$5,588
Soybean Seed	\$43,766
Vegetable & Flower Seed	\$122,267
Annual Convention	\$326,897
Management Skills	\$126,444
Future Seed Executives (FuSE)	\$12,034
Export Market Development	\$14,357
Foreign Agricultural Services	\$418,337
Other Programs	\$104,806
<b>GENERAL &amp; ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	<b>\$3,130,498</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$4,427,782</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>(\$700,318)</b>

## SEED RESEARCH SUMMIT SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESSES MAJOR FUTURE CHALLENGES

The first American Seed Research Summit brought together leaders in public and private sector seed research to outline a strategic plan to help address the various hurdles facing seed research — training and education, funding, research trends, prioritization and public-private partnerships. Finding solutions and providing resourceful partnerships is critical because seed innovation and technology plays a vital role in meeting the growing demand for food, feed, fiber and fuel.

The summit, held in Chicago on September 25-26, 2008, brought together research leaders from industry, academia and government to identify major seed research challenges and to develop a national strategy and action plan to solve those challenges. Over 40 representatives attended the two-day event sponsored by ASTA, the American Seed Research Foundation (ASRF) and the National Council of Commercial Plant Breeders (NCCPB). Following the summit, the participants will work together to implement the action plan and promote both public and private seed research agendas. Public-private partnerships among the U.S. seed industry, universities, USDA and others will advance seed technology and innovation by addressing these challenges, as well as outlining the many opportunities for coordination and collaboration for the best synergies in seed research in the U.S.

Keynote speakers provided a snapshot of seed research today and the potential for tomorrow. Breakout sessions allowed participants to identify the key issues facing the seed industry and possible strategies to address them, which were then discussed and prioritized by the group. The summit resulted in an outline of five strategic goals to enhance seed research opportunities. The participants defined key results and strategies to address each goal as well as near term actions to jump start the plan. In addition, specific gaps in seed research were reviewed, and priorities were identified.

As a result of the summit, a white paper was unveiled on December 10, 2008, entitled, "Strategic Research, Education and Policy Goals for Seed and Crop Improvement." Today, research and development in plant breeding are conducted in both the public and private sectors. The summit organizers made a conscious effort to balance different constituencies and crops in order to

reach a broad consensus on the most pressing issues impacting seed research and policy that must be addressed to enable agriculture to meet future demands in a sustainable manner. The white paper outlines a summary of five prioritized strategic goals and discussion and analysis of how to achieve those goals.

The five strategic goals are as follows:

- Strengthen public and private partnerships to accomplish national seed research priorities;
- Coordinate and engage industry stakeholders to support stable funding for seed and breeding education, research and development;
- Attract and develop a pool of diverse, high-quality plant researchers;
- Ensure that the regulatory system governing the development and implementation of the new technology is efficient, effective and science based; and
- Develop an education and advocacy program to communicate the value of seed and crop research to the public.

The American Seed Research Summit represents an important initial step in mobilizing the scientific and educational resources of the U.S. to address the food and energy challenges of the future. The seed industry can achieve dramatic improvements in crop productivity and quality while reducing inputs and promoting sustainability. The immediate challenge for seed industry stakeholders is ensuring resources are available to fully harness the knowledge, research and technology necessary to achieve the task at hand. This paper is meant to guide all involved in the seed industry, both public and private. It is critical to work together to bring the highest quality seed to farmers around the world.

Each sponsoring organization endorsed the paper which will guide future activities among the groups as well as the other participants of the summit. The goals of the white paper are encompassed in ASTA's Strategic Plan. ASTA leadership is committed to placing even more emphasis in these specific areas, articulating better the Association's position and needs for the seed industry and working together with public and private partners to advance research, education and policy that enables continued seed innovation and technology required to meet the growing global demand on agricultural production.

## INITIATIVES BOLSTER ASTA EFFORTS

### First the Seed Foundation (FTSF)

FTSF is a not-for-profit organization established in 2008 by ASTA

to inform today's consumers and tomorrow's workforce about the importance of the seed industry. The mission of FTSF is To conduct education, outreach, and communication on the value of crops and food produced from seed.



In June 2009, FTSF launched a new Web site ([www.firsttheseedfoundation.org](http://www.firsttheseedfoundation.org)), a tool to advance projects now underway as a result of founding donors who helped established the Foundation's initial funding. The Foundation's first projects include Web-based and multi-media educational curricula on the importance of seeds for grade schools, 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 promoting the impacts of quality seeds on every person's life who eats food or uses agricultural products.

### American Seed Research Foundation (ASRF)

ASRF celebrated its 50-year success story in June 2009. Established by ASTA in 1959, the efforts of ASRF have adapted and grown over time, but the mission remains com-

mitted to encouraging research in plant and seed biology and to facilitate the transfer of resulting technology to benefit the seed industry, farmers and consumers on a global basis. The Foundation has funded 54 project proposals. ASRF's total investment in support of basic seed research exceeds \$800,000, which stimulated other sources of research support. With a three to one multiplier effect, another \$2.5 million of matching funds were provided by other cooperating organizations. ASRF funds have been distributed to 32 public institutions and supported 69 individual seed researchers.



ASRF has expanded its activities to reach deeper into the research community through various initiatives. Operation Student Connection (OSC) encourages graduate students majoring in seed biology or seed science and technology to attend and participate in ASTA's annual convention. OSC allows students to receive valuable insight into the private sector and establishing personal contact with members of the seed trade. Students selected to participate in OSC may have the opportunity to apply for the Roger Krueger Memorial Scholarship, directed toward students in agriculture - the future of the seed industry. Peter Maloney, a doctoral candidate at North Carolina State University, was awarded the 2009 Roger Krueger Memorial Scholarship. Maloney is pursuing a degree in plant breeding, with a research focus on the new use of markers in common cultivated oats and their association with traits for increased winter hardiness.

### National Council of Commercial Plant Breeders (NCCPB)

The mission of NCCPB is to promote, technically and ethically, the interests



of professional U.S. plant breeders' worldwide. This includes fostering collaboration and cooperation among plant breeding and improvement organizations, encouraging public and private funding for plant breeding research and development, recognizing scientific achievement of plant breeders and supporting effective systems of intellectual property protection.

In December 2008, NCCPB recognized two graduate students with honorariums for their dedication and service to plant breeding. Aaron Lorenz, University of Wisconsin-Madison, has been an active researcher contributing to three different crop breeding programs in corn silage, maize and wheat. He already has six refereed journal publications and eight conference papers. In addition to his outstanding research, he has been the chairman of the university's Plant Breeding and Plant Genetics Journal Club and vice president of the Plant Sciences Graduate Student Council. Kristen Rinehart, Purdue University, was recognized for her high acumen in a challenging set of courses that have provided her with a solid theoretical and practical foundation for obtaining a doctorate degree in plant genetics and breeding. Kristen recently completed a full-time graduate research internship with Monsanto.

## 126TH ANNUAL CONVENTION “BRIGHTENS YOUR FUTURE WITH ASTA”

As ASTA members gathered for the 126th Annual Convention in Scottsdale, Ariz., June 20-24, 2009, the world was in a different place than a year before. The news had been filled with questions of agriculture's ability to meet the growing food, feed, fiber and fuel demand of the world. Agriculture, including the seed industry, came together to show that through innovation and a continued commitment to investment in research and development, farmers can produce enough to meet that demand.

But then the housing market slumped, financial institutions struggled, gas prices increased and consumers grew weary, while the booming agriculture industry enjoyed relative stability. However, because a boom can be short-lived, ASTA's 126th Annual Convention focused a lens into the seed industry's future with critical discussion on important topics that have an impact throughout agriculture. The meeting was structured to illuminate the convention theme, "Brighten Your Future with ASTA," and the important concept that members truly derive from ASTA what they put into it — participate more, benefit more.

The convention was robust. The Honorable Carlos Gutierrez, former U.S. Secretary of Commerce and former CEO and chairman of the board of the Kellogg Company, provided an in depth talk of the lessons learned from both public service and private employment in addressing the critical business principle of determining if the next hot issue is an enduring trend or just a fad. Michael Swanson, vice president of agricultural economics for Wells Fargo, provided a thought provoking and yet entertaining overview of the economy and what that means to agriculture. Building on the points made by Swanson, the State of Agribusiness Panel Discussion provided an overview as well as four viewpoints from different sectors within the industry, who clearly agreed about the increased volatility in agriculture but remained optimistic about the health of the industry.

The general sessions rounded out with two focused panels on the value of intellectual property rights (IPR) and sustainability. IPR is a fundamental tool used by seed breeders, both private and public, to allow and promote research to bring further innovation. This session featured the latest research on the relationship between IPR, reinvestment and value — value for the seed company, value to the grower, and ultimately,

value to the consumer. Panel members provided a variety of views that supported IPR and yet looked at how to get technology transferred efficiently and as broadly as possible. The Sustainability Discussion Panel provided an overview of the experiences and involvement of government and industry in different sustainability initiatives and how sustainability must encompass many aspects of life, including social, economic, environmental and ecological considerations. How sustainability is addressed in the future has a potentially tremendous impact on the seed industry.

### 2009-2010 ASTA Elected Officers & Appointed Board Representatives

- Jerry Monk, Warner Seeds, Inc., Chairman
- John Nelsen, RiceTec, Inc., First Vice Chairman
- Mike Gumina, Pioneer Hi-Bred (a DuPont business), Second Vice Chairman
- John Schoenecker, Harris Moran Seed Co., Western Regional Vice President
- Wayne Vassar, BCAP Seeds, LLC, North Central Regional Vice President
- Jim Schweigert, Gro Alliance, Vice President to Canada
- Ed Aguilar, Harris Moran Seed Co., Vice President to Mexico
- Alexandre Mailloux, La Coop fédérée, CSTA Representative to ASTA
- Roberto Fraile, MAR Seed Company, AMSAC Representative to ASTA
- Jack Bernens, Syngenta Seeds, Inc., Director at Large
- Mark Hermann, Corn States, LLC, Director at Large
- Richard Denhart, Illinois Seed Trade Assn., State/Regional Association Representative

### ASTA Awards of Highest Honors to Industry Leaders

#### Distinguished Service Award

Peter Bretting, USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

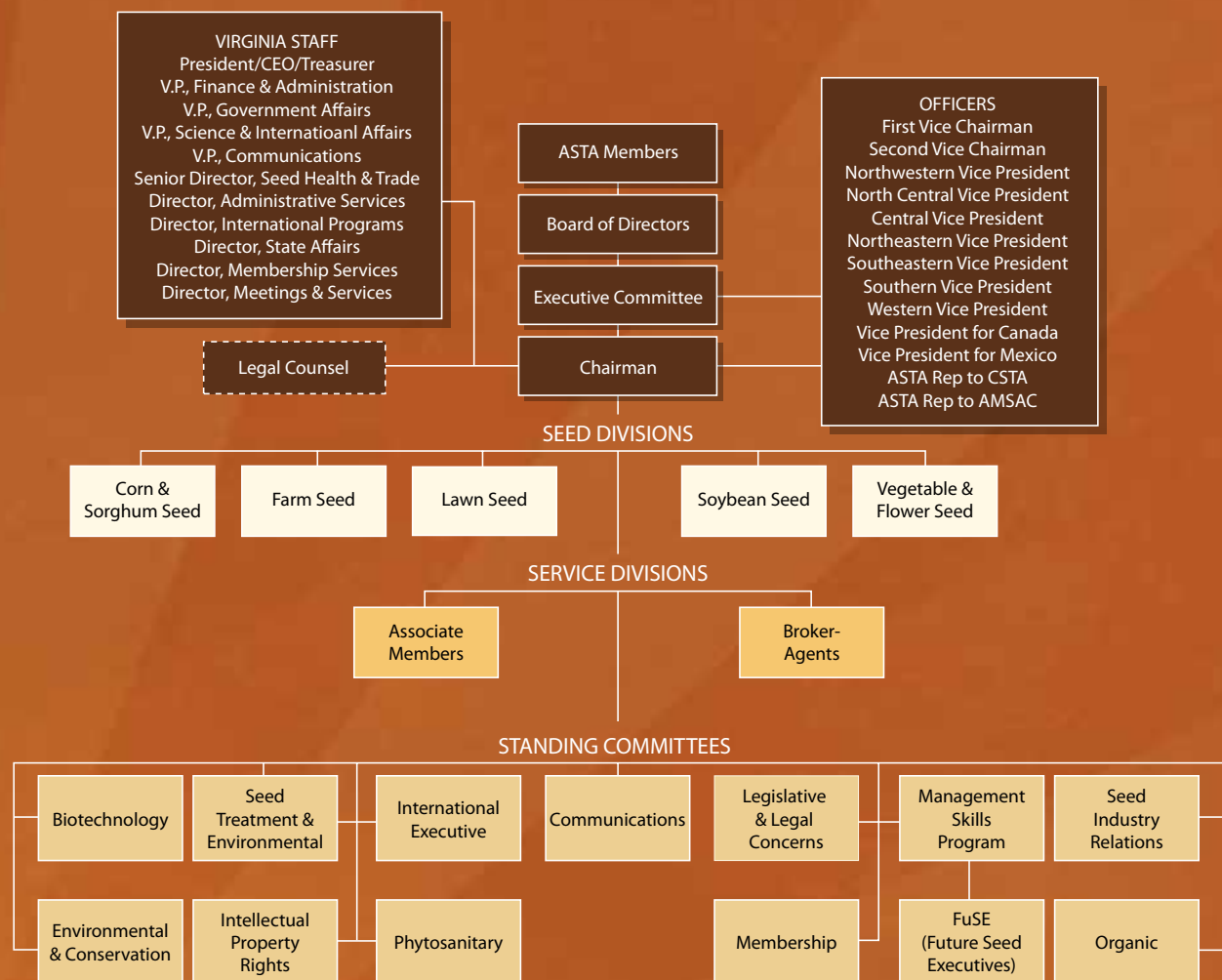
#### Honorary Lifetime Member Award

Gabe Patin, Sakata Seed America (retired)



# ASTA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

ASTA members identify the key issues and priorities on which the Association will focus. Following that identification, ASTA's seven divisions, of which any member can belong, will identify the relevant issues and projects specific to each 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 chairmen elected after that date, the directors at large, the chairman of each division, and certain standing committee chairmen 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 and the directors at large.



# ASTA 2008-2009 LEADERSHIP

## Members of the ASTA Board of Directors and Executive Committee

### Officers

Chairman	Kelly Keithly	Keithly-Williams Seeds
First Vice Chairman	Jerry Monk	Warner Seeds, Inc.
Second Vice Chairman	John Nelsen	RiceTec, Inc.
Northeastern Vice President	Fred Mohr	Seedway, Inc.
Southeastern Vice President	Terry Dulaney	AgVenture, Inc.
North Central Vice President	Wayne Vassar	BCAP Seeds, LLC
Central Vice President	Craig Newman	AgReliant Genetics, LLC
Southern Vice President	Blake Curtis	Curtis Seeds
Northwest Vice President	Risa DeMasi	Grassland Oregon
Western Vice President	John Schoenecker	Harris Moran Seed Co.
Vice President to Canada	Bryan Gerard	JGL, Inc.
Vice President to Mexico	Vacant	
Vice President from Canada	Wayne Unger	Brett Young Seeds, Ltd.
Vice President from Mexico	Arcadio Lozano	Sakata Mexico

### Directors at Large

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

## Chairmen on the ASTA Board of Directors

### Past Chairmen and Presidents

*\*Denotes Executive Committee Member*

Mike Peterson*	Peterson Genetics
Harry Collins*	Delta & Pine Land/Monsanto Co.
Jim Tobin*	Monsanto Co.
Sonny Beck	Beck's Superior Hybrids
Nathan Boardman	Crosbyton Seed Co.
Wayne Beck	Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business
Bill Whitacre	Simplot
Bill Latham	Latham Seed. Co.
J. Stephen Byrum	Retired
Fred Clark	Retired
Noble Koepp	Noble Koepp Consulting LLC



Dietrich Schmidt  
 John Studebaker  
 George Jones  
 Jerry Peterson  
 Don McGillivray  
 John Zajac  
 Owen Newlin  
 William Schapaugh  
 Bob Thedinger  
 Harvey Mauth  
 Owen Gilbreath

Retired  
 Cibus LLC  
 Retired  
 Retired  
 Retired  
 Mountain View Seeds, Ltd.  
 Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business  
 Retired  
 Retired  
 Retired  
 Retired



**Division Chairmen**

Associates  
 Brokers & Agents  
 Corn & Sorghum Seed  
 Farm Seed  
 Lawn Seed  
 Soybean Seed  
 Vegetable & Flower Seed

Bob Jondle  
 Tim O'Leary  
 Delmer Gross  
 Doug Bastian  
 Kathy McCarthy  
 Glenn Bowers  
 Ron Amarel

Jondle & Associates  
 Corn States, LLC  
 BASF Plant Science Breeding  
 Cal/West Seeds  
 The CISCO Companies  
 Syngenta Seeds, Inc.  
 Nunhems USA, Inc.

**Chairmen on the ASTA Board of Directors**

*\*Denotes ASTA Board of Directors Member*  
*\*\* ASTA Second Vice Chairman serves as Board Liaison*

\*Biotechnology  
 \*\*Communications Steering  
 Corn Basic Research  
 Corn & Sorghum Export Markets  
 Corn & Sorghum Planning  
 Corn Variety Identification Sub-Committee  
 \*Environmental & Conservation Seed  
 Future Seed Executives Sub-Committee  
 \*Intellectual Property Rights  
 \*International Executive  
 \*Legislative & Legal Concerns  
 Management Skills  
 Organic  
 Phytosanitary  
 Seed Industry Relations  
 Seed Treatment & Environment  
 Soybean Basic Research  
 Soybean Planning  
 Stewardship

Keith Redenbaugh  
 John Nelsen  
 Hobart Beeghly  
 David Anderson  
 G. Richard Johnson  
 Ronald Ferriss  
 Don Bermant  
 Peter Wolf  
 Mike Chapman  
 Bryan Gerard  
 Risa DeMasi  
 Jim Schweigert  
 Marc Cool  
 Tom Moore  
 Jennifer Rashed  
 Larry Butler  
 Hunt Wiley  
 Craig Grau  
 Bryan Gerard

Seminis, Inc.  
 RiceTec, Inc.  
 Monsanto Co.  
 Dow AgroSciences  
 University of Illinois  
 Syngenta Seeds, Inc.  
 Granite Seed Co.  
 Wolf & Wolf Seeds, Inc.  
 Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business  
 JGL, Inc.  
 Grassland Oregon  
 Gro Alliance, LLC  
 Seeds of Change  
 Enza Coastal Seeds , Inc.  
 Monsanto Co.  
 Becker Underwood  
 Dairyland Seed Co., Inc.  
 University of Wisconsin  
 JGL, Inc.



## GROW YOUR BUSINESS AS WELL AS YOURSELF!

### Brighten Your Future With Opportunities From ASTA

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 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 Seed, Farm Seed, Lawn Seed, Soybean Seed and Vegetable & Flower Seed. Broad subject committees, as well as those 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, a 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. 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 events that provide an



opportunity to mingle and meet members and their families. Policy and issues of strategic importance to the continued growth of the seed industry are discussed and addressed in addition to the ceremonial event where ASTA leadership is elected.

#### Farm & Lawn Seed Conference

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

#### Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference (CSS) & Seed Expo

Held in December, the Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference (CSS) and 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 research presentations on contemporary issues related to the corn, sorghum and soybean trade, including biotechnology, management and production, breeding and genetics, pest management and more. The Seed Expo features approximately 115 exhibitors, meeting suites, an opening reception and other events.

## Other Opportunities

### 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.

Educational 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.

2009 Education Unit hosts were:

- Beck's Hybrids
- The Scotts Company
- Harris Moran Seed Company

Round Table Discussion Groups are a series of conference calls, moderated by senior industry members, aimed at educating future seed executives on recent major events and happenings in the seed 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 126th Annual Convention in June 2009.



### ASTA Management Academy

The ASTA Management Academy is a partnership between ASTA and the Purdue University Center for Food and Agricultural Business. More than 1,050 managers, representing over 300 seed firms worldwide, have graduated from the program. Participating organizations have represented all segments of the seed business. More than 55 seed industry professionals challenged themselves to think strategically and expand their knowledge base at the 22nd ASTA Management Academy, held March 3-6, 2009, at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. Participants traveled from 18 states, Mexico and Argentina to explore key topics, such as marketing, business strategy, profitability management and organizational leadership. Purdue agribusiness faculty and industry experts, including ASTA Chairman Kelly Keithly, president and CEO of Keithly-Williams Seeds, used real-world knowledge to cover objectives that included the changing agribusiness environment, implications for seed companies in the future and strategies and tools to help make decisions and keep businesses profitable and growing.

### Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) Credits

Attendees of the 2008 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.







**American Seed Trade Association**

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**703-837-8140 · [www.amseed.org](http://www.amseed.org)**

