



REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

AMERICAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION
2009-2010 Annual Report

asta
first-the seed®

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MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERSHIP



Dear ASTA Members:

It's been 127 years since the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) was formed on an idea that a trade association would enhance communication; serve to distribute important information about seed trade to its members; protect members' interests; and assist in influencing national and international legislation and regulations and legislation governing the industry.

Supported by members, partners and cooperators, who together are the lifeblood of our organization, ASTA has seen success every year since its founding. We've brought members together to tackle issues, monitored legislative bills that could have negatively impacted the seed industry at the state and national levels, and promoted U.S. seed and intellectual property rights in priority markets.

These are truly achievements that can only be accomplished when we work together as a team and look for opportunities to partner with other businesses, associations, organizations, agencies and governments, culminating areas of expertise for an outcome sure to surpass expectations.

While we look back at the last year in the next few pages, let us also look forward. Let's remember we must be flexible enough to seize opportunities and to approach new ideas and programs with open minds. Let us support our association and each other. Like geese flying in formation, we will be more efficient and effective in achieving our goals. We'll reach new heights with our successes and maintain our position as the world's leader in providing quality seed, innovation and leadership.

Thank you for your support and encouragement during the last year and in the future. Your investment in ASTA is making a difference and bringing success to farmers here in the United States and around the globe.



Jerry Monk, Warner Seeds Inc.
Chairman



Andrew W. LaVigne
President & CEO

ASTA's Board of Directors

adopted a strategic plan in 2005 identifying the association's priorities.

The 10 strategic goals are designed to help the association achieve its mission. Together, they guide the efforts put forth by its members and staff. ASTA is committed to these goals, working hard for its members, stakeholders and, ultimately, the consumer. The 10 strategic issues (not in any order) are on the right.



GOALS

MAKE NEW HEIGHTS ACHIEVABLE

State & Local Issues

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

Domestic Policy

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

Global Agricultural Policy

Provide effective leadership on global policy, agricultural, trade and other policy issues affecting the seed industry.

Intellectual Property

Advocate and defend the intellectual property interests of the U.S. seed industry, domestically and internationally, which includes educating dealers, growers, legislators, government officials and customers.

Membership

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

Financial Health

Continue to strengthen ASTA's financial health to achieve and maintain targeted financial reserves.

Seed Association of the Americas

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.

ASTA Publics

Deal more effectively with media, government, industry, customers and the public at large with an emphasis on supporting seed industry views deeper in the value chain.

Responsiveness

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

ASTA Staff

Keep ASTA staff current in terms of number and skill sets to accomplish the association's goals in a changing commercial and political environment.



LEADING THE FLOCK

Officers

Chairman, **Jerry Monk**, Warner Seeds, Inc.
First Vice Chairman, **John Nelsen**, RiceTec, Inc.
Second Vice Chairman, **Mike Gumina**, Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business

Regional Vice Presidents

Northeastern Region, **Fred Mohr**, Seedway, Inc.
Southeastern Region, **Terry Dulaney**, AgVenture, Inc.
Central Region, **Craig Newman**, AgReliant Genetics, LLC
Southern Region, **Blake Curtis**, Curtis & Curtis, Inc.
Northwest Region, **Risa DeMasi**, Grassland Oregon
Western Region, **John Schoenecker**, Harris Moran Seed Company
North Central Region, **Wayne Vassar**, BCAP Seeds, LLC
Vice President to Canada, **Jim Schweigert**, GroAlliance, LLC
Vice President to Mexico, **Ed Aguilar**, Harris Moran Seed Company
CSTA Representative, **Alexandre Mailloux**, La Coop Fédérée
AMSAC Representative, **Roberto Fraile**, MAR Seed Company
State/Regional Representative, **Richard Denhart**, Illinois Seed Trade Association

Division Chairmen

Associates, **John Mizicko**, Eurofins STA Laboratories, Inc.
Brokers & Agents, **Tim O'Leary**, Corn States, LLC
Corn & Sorghum Seed, **Steve Schuetz**, AgReliant Genetics, LLC
Farm Seed, **Kirk Whittig**, Forage Genetics
Lawn Seed, **David Lundell**, New Seed
Soybean Seed, **Greg Gerard**, JGL, Inc.
Vegetable & Flower Seed, **Rick Falconer**, American Takii

Directors at Large

Jack Bernens, Syngenta Seeds, Inc.
Marc Cool, Seeds of Change
Mark Herrmann, Corn States, LLC
Don Wertman, Seedway, Inc.
Tom Wilttrout, Dow AgroSciences

When the lead goose fires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position. It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing the leadership role. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique assortment of gifts, talents and resources. Each individual listed brings special talents and experiences to the table. This allows us, as an industry, to share leadership responsibilities and capitalize on each others' skills, capabilities and talents.

SOARING TO SUCCESS

It was an outstanding year for ASTA.

Monumental strides were made on many fronts, from successfully managing legislative issues at the state and federal level to the fruition of an international seed re-export agreement. ASTA diligently identifies practical solutions and brings them to government representatives with global partners to achieve the results your business needs. We also are partnering with state associations on many issues and fostering these relationships.

During the 2009/2010 fiscal year, ASTA conducted more than 200 congressional visits to establish and strengthen relationships with key policymakers. More than 800 legislative bills, potentially impacting the seed industry, were monitored and steps, such as writing testimony and providing supporting information, were taken to protect a healthy operating system for the U.S. seed industry.

Together, we facilitated the process to make sure the National Conference of Weights & Measures passed an amendment standardizing testing methods and procedures for seed count labeling. A standardized method for labeling, testing and enforcement benefits all members and promotes precision planting. This has a direct impact on our members' bottom lines.

We partnered with Iowa State University researchers to address the high number of false positives for Stewart's wilt, which caused the rejection of U.S. corn seed shipments. The effort was assisted by an \$85,000 grant from USDA. This collaboration set the course for seed production to be considered a specialty crop, meaning seed production qualifies under the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops program to facilitate the resolution of disruptive trade practices.



ASTA launched, through First-the Seed Foundation, the Grow Seed Career Program, which distributed nearly 2,000 career handbooks, seed industry

representative profiles and information about employment opportunities in the seed industry to academic advisors at the high school and collegiate levels. More than half a million students nationwide have been exposed to the opportunities within this innovative industry.



We campaigned for the creation of a seed specific standard in the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to address the major exporting needs of the industry. From these efforts, IPPC adopted the development of such a standard into its working program. An internationally recognized seed standard will provide a more efficient and safe trading environment for the global movement of seed.

Our association coordinated a program for seed industry representatives to travel to Washington D.C., to lobby for funding for the Germplasm Enhancement of Maize program, a joint partnership between members of the seed industry and USDA that contributes \$3 billion in germplasm contributions and more than \$500,000 of in-kind support. Funding for the program currently stands at more than \$2.3 million. The program broadens the germplasm base and increases genetic diversity of corn hybrids grown by U.S. farmers.

As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the birds that follow. By flying in a V-shaped formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew alone. People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of another. Individuals, organizations and companies collaborating and working together reach their destination much quicker while using fewer resources than working alone. Use each person as a springboard for ideas, networking and continuous learning. Each person will propel the other forward and eventually we'll achieve our common goal.



We debuted the *Beyond the Seed* Web site in October to reach the industry's many stakeholders about the value of seed today and the need for continued innovation for tomorrow. Like many other areas, the seed industry has experienced a dramatic evolution of the use of science to provide farmers with new and improved seed varieties. This evolution challenges the industry to keep growers, legislators, regulators, the public and media informed that today's seed is not the seed of previous generations. The Web site, www.beyondtheseed.org, is designed to serve as an information portal.

ASTA teamed up with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in March to host the eighth annual Conservation Seed Workshop for seed companies with a stake in the government's conservation and environmental programs. More than 20 seed industry representatives met with officials from the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Transportation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NRCS. These agencies all play a role in land preservation, reclamation, restoration and rehabilitation. ASTA members sell more than 70 percent of the seed for land restoration projects. ASTA also reauthorized its Memorandum of Understanding with NRCS, which formalized the groups' commitment to increased communication and collaboration.

Your association hosted Advocacy Matters II, a fly-in, which brought more than 30 seed industry representatives to Capitol Hill to meet with members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. More than 50 meetings were held. The group had briefings with Ranking Member of the House Agriculture Committee Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) and staff regarding the 2012 Farm Bill. We also talked with Senate Agriculture Committee staff to identify ways the seed industry can influence the upcoming farm bill in the areas of research, conservation and energy.



SUCCESS CONTINUED

ASTA tackled numerous phytosanitary issues impacting the movement of seed into and out of the United States. One such issue was the movement of sunflower seed to the European Union (EU). Inspectors would not issue export certificates because, in their opinion, the EU required certain pests to be certified “free from” based on official pest free areas. ASTA quickly intervened and worked with the California Seed Association and USDA to investigate the situation and clarify the EU phytosanitary entry requirements through its European attachés. Within days, the issue was resolved and the company was able to obtain the proper certificates to ship seed to the EU. It is estimated this resolution saved the company \$3 million. Had they not been able to ship, much of the EU sunflower market would have been lost to other competitors.

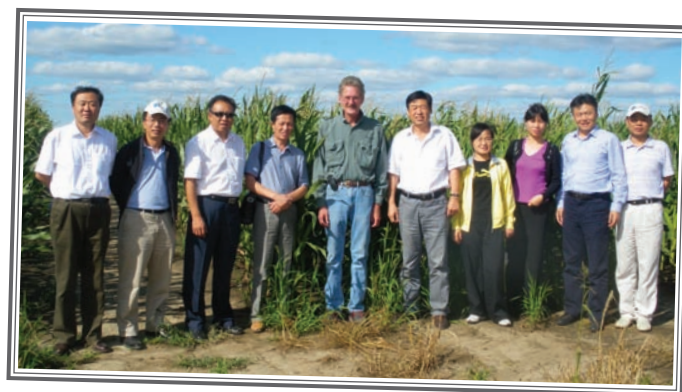


paying royalty fees for seeds and investing in research. After the first phase of the campaign, which began in March 2010, 50 face-to-face interviews were conducted with farmers. The report from these interviews states, “For the first time in years, we see a change in farmers’ perception about the need for IP recognition.”



We organized priority country working groups to provide specific advice and guidance on program planning in key markets (Argentina, Brazil, China, India and Mexico). These groups provide an interactive forum for ASTA members, staff and regional contacts in each country to discuss country-specific issues, identify international program goals and implement activities specific to each of ASTA’s priority markets.

We petitioned the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) to establish a seed panel to begin developing regional standards for the movement of seed consignments among Canada, the United States and Mexico. Ric Dunkle, ASTA’s senior director of seed health and trade, was selected to be the U.S. seed industry’s representative on the panel. The panel is developing a standard on seed re-export, with the goal of adopting the standard at the 2011 NAPPO annual meeting. The panel also works to harmonize diagnostic methods and phytosanitary import requirements for a variety of seed pathogens.



ASTA, for many years, encouraged China to clarify key aspects of their Plant Variety Protection (PVP) application process, specifically seed deposit requirements. These clarifications finally came in April 2010, after a great deal of work advocating for strong intellectual property rights policies and enforcement in China and providing technical training and outreach. China is an important market for the U.S. seed industry and these clarifications are very important for members seeking to do business in China. There was a significant increase in China PVP applications from U.S. companies in a very short period of time.

With the Seed Association of the Americas (SAA), we organized a Seed Adventitious Presence (AP) and Low Level Presence (LLP) workshop, in Buenos Aires. Here, industry and government representatives from eight different countries in the region discussed and developed action items regarding seed AP and LLP. This was the first time government and industry leaders in the region came together to address biotechnology. The countries of the Americas represent 90 percent of the biotechnology crops planted in the world and some of the largest seed producers and seed exporters. At this meeting, participants agreed to form a group made up of government and industry to create a seed LLP and AP strategy.



Your International Affairs Team conducted an intellectual property rights campaign in Argentina called “Campeones de la Semillas” or Seed Champs. Working with the Argentina Seed Association (ASA) and a third party communications firm, ASTA created an industry magazine, Web site and newsletter for growers emphasizing the importance of

INFLUENCING ISSUES

Food Safety

ASTA, working through its Food Safety Pathogen Working Group, developed and submitted comments to a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Federal Register notice regarding standards that the agency should develop and enforce to prevent outbreaks of human pathogens potentially associated with the production, harvesting and packing of fresh fruits and vegetables. ASTA's comments emphasized that the seed industry remains diligent and proactive in efforts to produce high quality and safe seed. The group also completed a paper explaining that according to existing data, there is no significant value in requiring seed lots to be tested for the presence of human pathogens and that such testing would not prevent future food illnesses emanating from produce.

Immigration Reform

ASTA plays an active role in an agriculture based coalition supporting congressional debate and action on immigration issues and reform. Agriculture has a vested interest in the immigration debate and it is imperative that the association be at the table.

Mexican Trucking Issue

Recent action by the U.S. Congress reversed the ability of certain Mexican trucks to bring goods across the U.S. border. This action caused the Mexican government to retaliate against U.S. goods and services, which dramatically reduced exports, eliminated jobs and impacted opportunities to expand exports in an economy growing much more quickly than the U.S. economy. ASTA is a coalition partner working with the administration to settle the dispute.

Free Trade Agreements

ASTA supported, through a trade coalition, the ratification of free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea to help aid the movement of seed and agricultural products between countries. Exports of seed for planting are valued at more than \$1 billion annually, according to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. However, seed exports in all sectors of the industry were down significantly compared to the 2009/2010 period. Part of ASTA's mission is to promote global sales of U.S. seeds and 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.

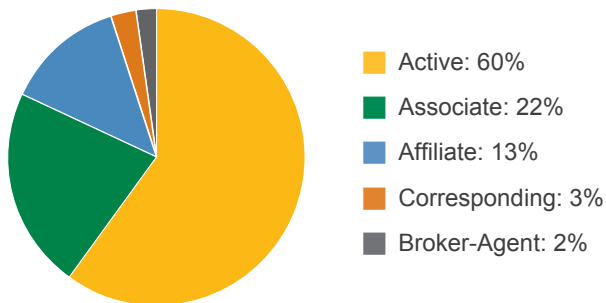


MEMBERSHIP

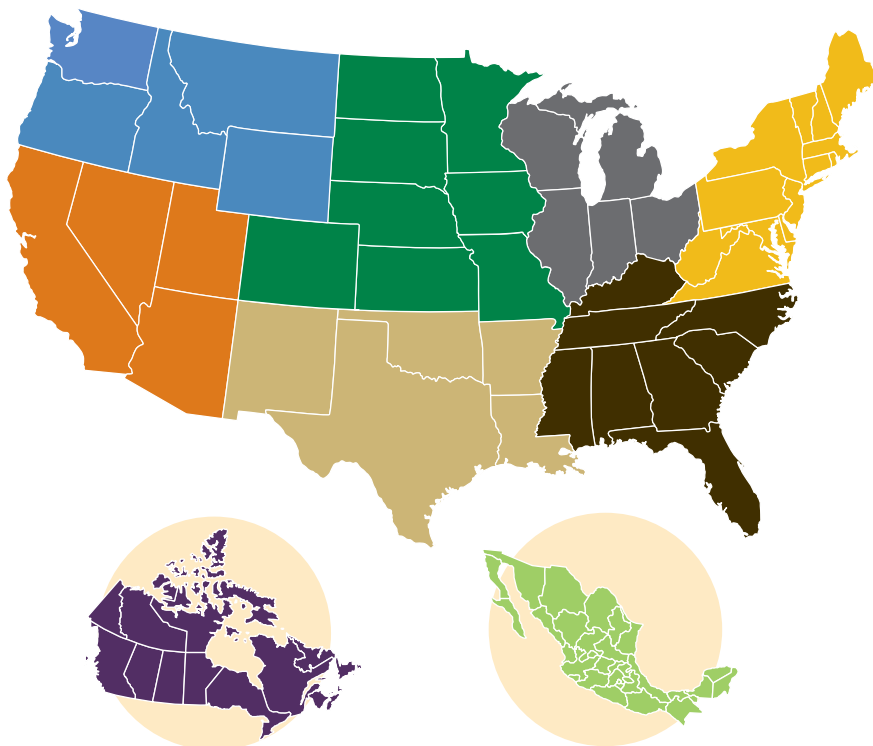
ASTA remains committed to retaining and growing membership and rounded out the 2009/2010 fiscal year with 694 members.

In April 2010, ASTA announced Cindy Hinton as director of membership services. She is responsible for developing and implementing the association's membership recruitment and retention plan and making sure members have a solid understanding of member benefits, programs, products and services.

ASTA Membership by Type



ASTA Membership by Region



Region	No. of members
Central	159
North Central	145
Northeast	63
Northwest	67
South	49
Southeast	48
West	110
Canada	28
Mexico	1
Foreign	24
Total	694

FINANCIAL HEALTH

ASTA's budget is based on input from ASTA leadership, priorities from divisions and committees and staff.

ASTA strives to maintain transparency with membership about the association's budget and financial status. The Board of Directors approved and regularly reviews the association's reserve policy and strategy, which allows ASTA to maintain its targeted financial reserve.

The annual ASTA audit was conducted by Stanfield & Phillips, LLC in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States. The 2010 audit confirmed the financial health of the association. ASTA began its fiscal year with unrestricted net assets of \$3,624,563 and ended with \$3,762,062, an increase of \$137,499.

Investment Policy

ASTA's investment policy is structured to preserve and protect the invested assets of ASTA; build reserves through capital appreciation and interest dividends; build reserves to cover two years of operating budget with operating surpluses and investment gains, in case of economic disruptions; and provide a source of funds to cover unbudgeted and extraordinary expenses brought about by unexpected challenges and opportunities

ASTA Revenue Sources

Dues	\$2,172,964
Meetings	\$1,042,286
Exhibits	\$272,287
Government Reimbursements	\$366,392
Investment Gain	\$391,146
Assessment	\$13,326
Miscellaneous	\$1,685
Administrative Service Fees	\$25,000

TOTAL REVENUE **\$4,285,086**

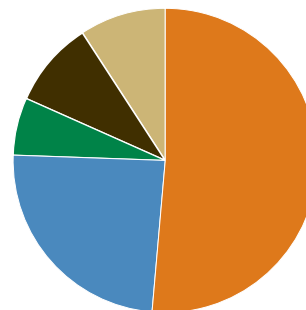
ASTA Expenses

Corn & Sorghum Seed Division	\$135,562
Soybean Seed Division	\$51,919
Farm Seed Division	\$4,293
Lawn Seed Division	\$2,865
Vegetable & Flower Seed Division	\$128,118
Export Market Development	\$13,326
Foreign Agricultural Services	\$366,392
Convention	\$215,079
Future Seed Executives Committee	\$14,097
Other Programs	\$63,164
General and Administrative	\$3,152,772

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$4,147,587**

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS **\$137,499**

Total Revenue



- Dues: 51%
- Meetings: 24%
- Exhibits: 6%
- Gov. Reimbursements: 9%
- Investment Gain: 9%



ASTA STAFF

AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Executive Office

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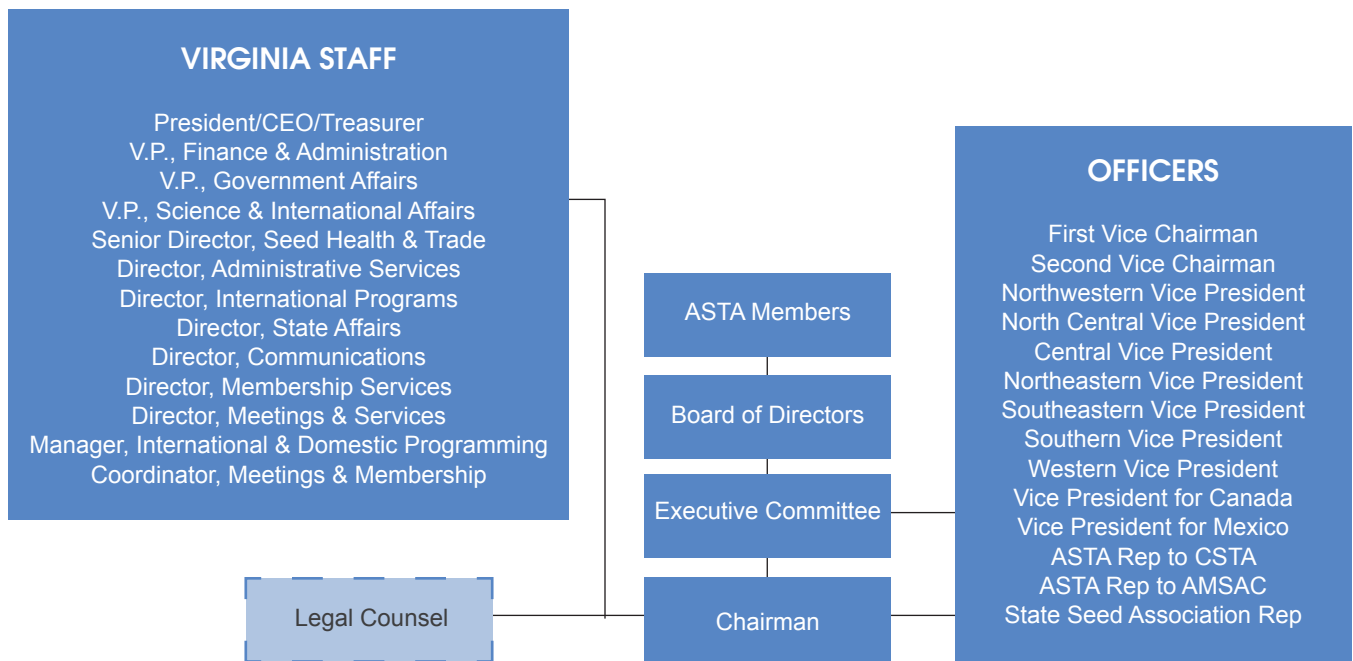
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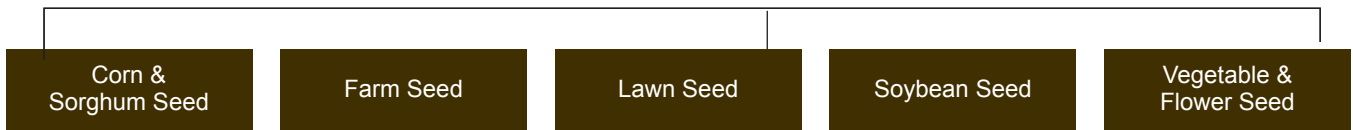
Julie Douglas

Director, Communications
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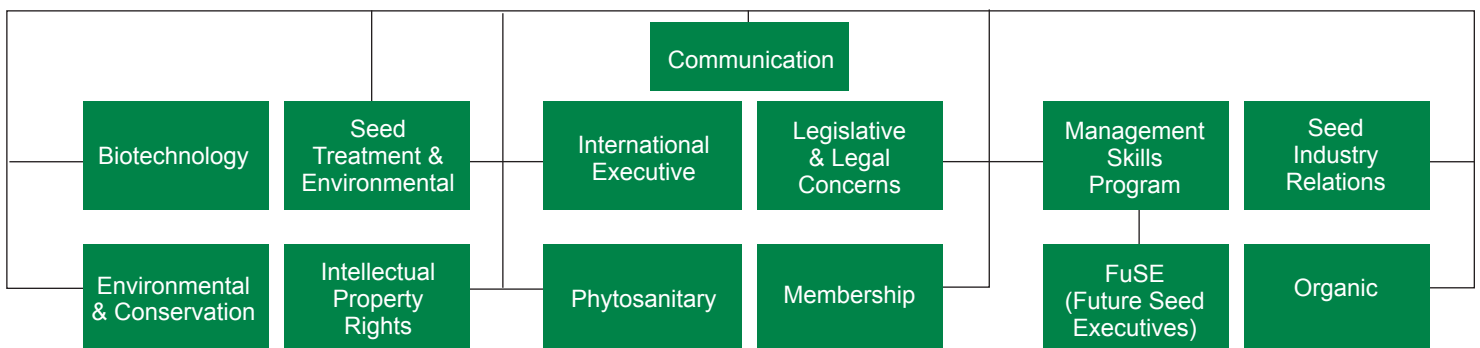
SEED DIVISIONS



SERVICE DIVISIONS



STANDING COMMITTEES



CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

2009 Farm & Lawn Seed Conference

The 55th Farm and Lawn Seed Conference, held in cooperation with the 110th Western Seed Association Annual Convention, brought more than 700 seed industry representatives to Kansas City, Mo. ASTA had 86 registrants for its portion of the programming, three exhibitors and five sponsors. The conference featured presentations on DNA markers in grass seed production, breeding cool season forage grasses, the new California rules on Plant Variety Protection labeling notations, and a profile of programs by lawn care companies. A special wheat session featured an overview on the wheat industry's goal to increase production by Dana Peterson of Kansas Wheat and a wheat industry pipeline presentation by Ron Uehland of Westbred LLC.

2009 CSS & Seed Expo

The Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference had more than 2,500 registrants and a sold out Seed Expo with 114 exhibitors promoting their company's products and services. We also debuted the ASTA media room and the use of social media to engage registrants and exhibitors before and after the meeting.



49th Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference

Held in Las Vegas, Nev., this conference brought together more than 700 seed industry professionals—a record number—with the highest percentage of international attendees ever.

ASTA Gives Back

Seed industry volunteers attending the 49th Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference spent half a day at the Springs Preserve cleaning seed for plant propagation and creating an educational activity for youth.

The Springs Preserve, located on 180 acres of land in the middle of Las Vegas, Nev., is comprised of 150 plants species native to the Mojave Desert and promotes a more sustainable environment through educational programming. Demonstration projects at the preserve, such as solar panels that collect 70 percent of the energy used by the facilities and a desert wetland that collects water for processing and reuse, are key to educating the public about the local ecosystem.

Twenty-six volunteers cleaned *Penstemon pinifolius* seed, commonly known as pineleaf penstemon, and developed an educational tool encouraging local kids to plant native grasses in the spring. Participants extracted seed from cut plants and conditioned seed to improve germination.



127th Annual Convention

ASTA's 127th Annual Convention brought more than 400 seed industry representatives together in San Antonio, Texas, to identify issues, propose policies and create solutions. ASTA member seed companies donated seed for the ASTA Legacy Garden on the new resort's property. This was also the inaugural year for the First-the Seed Foundation Sport Shooting event. The convention had a great line up of speakers including Michael Specter, author and reporter who spoke about the public's irrationality, politically-inspired fear and misplaced skepticism and how it undermines public acceptance of scientific advancement and innovation; and Raymond Gilmartin, professor of management practices at the Harvard Business School, who talked about his experiences of "Growing Through Disruptive Innovation."

Eight new seedsmen entered into leadership positions

ASTA is a member-driven organization and this is reflected in the many volunteers who donate their time, unique skill sets and expertise for the betterment of the industry. ASTA members are the foundation of the association and its activities. New officers include:

- ▶ Tracy Tally, president of Justin Seed Company, Inc., serving as Southern regional vice president.
- ▶ Jerry Flint, senior director of biotechnology regulatory affairs with Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business, serving as International Executive Committee chair.
- ▶ Fred Mohr, turf seed manager at Seedway LLC, serving as Legislative and Legal Committee chair.
- ▶ John Latham, director of marketing for Latham Hi-Tech Seeds, Inc., serving as Corn & Sorghum Seed Division chair.
- ▶ Dan Sharp of Sharp Brothers Seed Company serving as Farm Seed Division chair.
- ▶ Kris Mantey, senior regulatory specialist at The Scotts Company, serving as Lawn Seed Division chair.
- ▶ Matt Sowder, regional product manager at Winfield Solutions LLC, serving as Soybean Seed Division chair.
- ▶ Tim O'Leary, broker at Corn States LLC, serving as Brokers & Agents Division chair.



CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

Distinguished Service Award

ASTA recognized Marcus McElvaine, senior export specialist, United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, with the Distinguished Service Award for his leadership in the resolution of many phytosanitary issues associated with the international movement of seed, which has saved the industry millions of dollars that would otherwise have been lost due to shipments destroyed unnecessarily or lost market opportunities.

Honorary Member

ASTA named Arcadio Lozano Martinez as an Honorary Member for his efforts and leadership in the seed industry in solving many challenges, especially in the phytosanitary and importation arena. During his time at the Mexican Seed Trade Association, he was fundamental in helping form the Seed Association of the Americas and served as the AMSAC representative to the ASTA Board.

Future Giant Award

Seed World together with ASTA's Future Seed Executives honored Doug Hubner of West Lebanon, Ind., with the 2010 Future Giants of the Seed Industry Award. Hubner has demonstrated the potential to make significant contributions to the seed industry. His outreach to farmers through crop clinics, field days and grower presentations throughout the Corn Belt has led to an ongoing and very significant increase in the number of growers now profiting from Hubner products.



REACH NEW HEIGHTS

WITH ASTA

ASTA's success depends on member involvement.

Grassroots efforts, quality discussions on policy issues, strategic goals and actions are the cornerstone to ASTA's ability to advocate for the industry. "To be up on it, you have to be in on it," says Jerry Monk and there's never been a more critical time for agriculture and for the seed industry. Go ahead and get in on it with these opportunities.

Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference

Held in late January or early February, this conference brings together approximately 800 vegetable and flower seed producers and service providers from the U.S. and international seed arena. Leading industry and government representatives discuss issues; excellent networking opportunities; and committee meetings covering a variety of topics from organic production to biotechnology, are all featured here.

Annual Convention

The event focuses on the planning and development of policies and strategies that impact all aspects of the seed industry – from organic to biotechnology and from phytosanitary issues to stewardship issues. Special events, such as the welcome reception, opening breakfast and gala banquet provide an opportunity to mingle and network with members. This is the ceremonial event where ASTA officers rotate positions and a new chairman of the board is installed. This is the only conference that brings together all sectors of the industry.

Farm and Lawn Seed Conference

This conference convenes in Kansas City in November and is held jointly with the Western Seed Association. It draws about 600 seed producers who focus on turf, forage and farm seed. ASTA programming is held for two days and includes meetings of the Farm Seed and Lawn Seed divisions, Invasive Species Working Group and the Environmental and Conservation Seed Committee.



REACH NEW HEIGHTS

WITH ASTA CONTINUED

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

The largest U.S. seed industry convention, CSS & Seed Expo brings approximately 2,500 executives, agronomists, researchers, sales and marketing teams, operational/logistical employees, and service providers to Chicago each December. Attendees learn about the latest happenings and research in the areas of corn, sorghum and soybean, including biotechnology, management and production, breeding and genetics, and pest management. The Seed Expo consists of about 115 exhibitors representing all areas of the seed research, production, harvesting and distribution channels. Attendees have the opportunity to earn Certified Crop Advisor Credits.

ASTA Management Academy

The ASTA-Purdue Management Academy, held in West Lafayette, Ind., focuses on the practical application of general management concepts that are critical to the long-term success of seed firms. The core curriculum is designed to broaden general management abilities. Special issue seminars are scheduled throughout the program to allow an in-depth look at current issues critical to the seed industry. Case studies and group activities create ample opportunity for intensive interaction and discussion with faculty, speakers and other seed industry managers.

Future Seed Executives (FuSE)

FuSE, a sub-committee of the Management Skills Committee, is comprised of more than 300 members interested in developing their skills to be the next generation of seed industry leaders. FuSE programs are designed as regional opportunities to expand learning, promote networking and improve general understanding of the seed industry. The FuSE Committee hosts educational units, roundtable discussion groups and is responsible for the Campus Connections program.



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