Success Story Template

Calendar Year *(year activity is completed; if not completed, enter latest active year)*
2015
Cooperator
American Seed Trade Association
Non-cooperator organization *(if you are not a cooperator, but you use FAS programs like EMP, TASC, or GSM)*
Organization type: private or public *(public means government)*
Private
FAS program(s) used/funding sources *(e.g. MAP, MAP/GBI, EMP, etc)*
FMD
Commodity *(if applicable, include if product is fresh, dried, concentrate, etc, like Fresh Sweet Cherries)*
Planting Seeds
Country/region *(to which you are exporting)*
China
HQ State *(state where headquarters of cooperator or non-cooperator organization is located)*
Virginia
Producing/exporting state(s) *(attempt to determine exporting state; can enter "multi" if number of states is greater than 5)*
California, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois
Export dollars/projected sales **(provide the dollar value/projected sales in the current program year and comparable data from previous program year)**
Congressional district(s) *(Example: CA-04;TX-11. Attempt to determine congressional districts of producing/exporting areas; enter n/a if unknown; can enter "multi" if number of districts is greater than 5.)*
Multi
Story type *(focus of story: trade show, small company, cooperator, FAS/post, program)*
Program
For branded, company name, if applicable

In 2012, ASTA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese National Seed Association (CNSA). Since then, all of ASTA's activities in the region have been planned and carried out under the MOU in conjunction with CNSA. During ASTA's February 2015 visit to China, CNSA and the US Embassy attaches arranged a meeting for ASTA with the Seed Management Bureau. Under the MOU, ASTA's relationship with CNSA has improved. In February, CNSA explained that the laws changed and that government employees can no longer be on trade association boards. Therefore, CNSA's board of

directors is changing. ASTA and CNSA plan to work together in the upcoming months to renew the MOU and develop a steering committee of US and Chinese companies to evaluate our joint programing.

How did FAS help achieve success? FMD funding covered most of the travel and translation costs associated with ASTA's biannual China visits. Relationship building is imperative in China and without FMD funding ASTA would not have been able to have a consistent in-country presence. FAS personnel in Beijing were critical in organizing meetings with senior officials and coordinating the transportation and translation logistics. Moreover, they have been closely following the Chinese seed law revisions and constantly keeping ASTA informed of changes. FAS will be vital in tracking the seed law changes between ASTA visits.

Specifically, how did U.S. agriculture benefit? There are two major modifications proposed in the current seed law revisions. First, there is a push for less regulation and more integrated companies. Moving forward there will be one license for breeding and trading instead of two separate licenses. Second, there will be a new chapter dedicated to plant variety protection, which will increase intellectual property protect to US companies operating in China.

Highlight the USDA or FAS program that was used: ASTA used $26,134.20 of FMD funds. Industry organizations and ASTA provided more than a 50% match to the FMD funds. This activity was evaluated internally by ASTA's China working group and ASTA's International Executive Committee.

Market Access: The changes to the seed law increase market access by reducing the onerous approval process for US companies to sell seeds in China. Companies will no longer need separate licenses for breeding and commercial seed trade. In addition, the new system will require non-major crops to be listed with the government, but not registered. This will increase vegetable seed sales to China. The proposed process will review applications quicker and will not reject new varieties. These changes will dramatically reduce the time to market for US seed companies, making them more competitive. Finally, UPOV 1991 provides significantly more intellectual property rights protection for seed companies. The new language expands the list of crops that can apply for a PVP and lays the framework for essentially derived traits which are used in PVP enforcement cases.

Budget impact and return on investment: Having ASTA's input solicited by the Chinese government officials that are revising the Chinese seed law is invaluable opportunity for the US seed industry. The Chinese are basing their new seed law on advice and input from ASTA and the US seed industry. Strong IP is critical to selling seeds to China. Sectors with stronger IP including vegetable and grass seeds have experienced increases in US exports to China in the last few years, while field crop seeds have declined. Field crop seed has dropped from $28 million in 2011 to under $10 million in 2014. The adoption of a seed law with strong IP could reverse that trend and reopen the market for US seed producers.

Timeframe: For the past six years ASTA has had meetings in China twice a year. In 2012, ASTA and CNSA signed an MOU together. Since then the cooperation and candidness between the two governments and seed associations has increased dramatically. Later this year we plan to renew our MOU with CNSA.