Success Story Template

Calendar Year *(year activity is completed; if not completed, enter latest active year)*
2014
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)*
Europe, Brazil, Argentina, South Korea, Japan
HQ State *(state where headquarters of cooperator or non-cooperator organization is located)*
Alexandria, VA
Producing/exporting state(s) *(attempt to determine exporting state; if number of states is greater than 5, enter top 5)*
IA, MO, CA, KS, IN, IL
Export dollars/projected sales *(provide the dollar value/projected sales in the current program year and comparable data from previous program year)*
2014 - $1.67B, 2013 - $1.62B, 2012 - $1.52B
Congressional district(s) *(Example: CA-04; TX-11. Attempt to determine congressional districts of producing/exporting areas; enter n/a if unknown; if number of districts is greater than 5, enter top 5)*
Story type *(focus of story: small company, cooperator, FAS/post, program, trade show)*
Cooperator
For branded, company name, if applicable
Success Story most recently updated on:

Guidance for FAS Success Stories

Goal: Increase the acceptance of molecular markers in the plant variety protection application process and during enforcement cases, which will provide additional global intellectual property rights protection for US exporters.

Key Highlights:

How did FAS help achieve this success? By using FMD funds, ASTA was able to send two leading experts to the UPOV Working Group on Biochemical and Molecular Techniques and DNA Profiling in Particular meeting in South Korea. At this meeting the viability of using these techniques was discussed in Plant Variety Protection application and enforcement cases. The US seed industry expertise was critical in advancing the adoption of these techniques.

Specifically, who and how did U.S. agriculture benefit? This will help all plant breeders. In the near term it will help corn, soybean, and lettuce breeders, because they will be better able to protect their intellectual property. Multi-nationals like Monsanto and DuPont Pioneer will benefit as well as regional companies like Beck's Hybrids, Wyffels Hyrids, and Stine Seeds.

Highlight the USDA or FAS program that was used. ASTA spent $7,473.70 to send the two subject matter experts to South Korea for this meeting. During the trip they were able to convince the Associate Secretary General of UPOV to bring this topic up at the next Technical Committee meeting for review. UPOV is receptive to additional data from the US seed industry, which can be used as the basis for using molecular markers in PVP applications and enforcement cases.

Market Access. ASTA continues to work with the USPTO and PVPO offices on molecular markers. The first region that will adopt molecular markers will be Europe and South America. The anti-intellectual property rights movements that are spreading throughout South American have led to serious declines in soybean sales to Brazil and Argentina, where US exporters are struggling to protect their investment. Between the two countries, field crop seed exports declined from $20.5 million in 2013 to $15.3 million in 2014. Using molecular markers in PVP applications and enforcement cases will help reverse this trend.

Budget Impact and Return on Investment. US soybean exports to Brazil and Argentina have declined by 25% between 2013 and 2014. If using molecular markers restores field crop exports to their 2013 level, this activities' return on investment will be 660%. This does not account for increases in lettuce exports or corn and soybean exports to other parts of the world. This activity is critical to regain and safeguard current markets that US exporters depend on.

Economic Impact of Exports. The US seed industry is a $12.5 billion industry; over 10% of the value is exported. The highest threat to US export markets is insufficient intellectual property rights. Molecular markers will keep current markets open, and help re-open lost markets.

Time frame. This UPOV committee has met 14 times. This 2014/15 FMD-funded activity was the first time that ASTA sent a representative to this meeting. ASTA sends representatives to other committees. ASTA expects the results of this meeting to be shared with the broader UPOV membership in 2015/16.