



ANNUAL
REPORT

20
21-22

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Message to the ASTA Membership

On behalf of the ASTA Board of Directors and staff, we are pleased to present to you the FY 2021–22 ASTA Annual Report. We cannot thank you enough for your strong, ongoing support for your association throughout this past year of continued challenges. While we have begun to emerge to a sense of “post pandemic” life, including a return to travel and in-person events, the residual impacts of this global event are certainly far from over, and the effects on our businesses and society at large will no doubt be long-lasting and widespread.

Yet, through all of it, we remain very optimistic—for the future of the American seed industry, American agriculture, and our nation. The challenges we’ve faced over these past few years have served to further demonstrate the critical role of seed in addressing the issues of today and tomorrow. As we’ve faced very real threats to global agriculture and food supply chain, including transportation and shipping backlogs, labor shortages, rising input costs, and increasing global unrest, the American industry has continued to rise to the challenge, through hard work and innovative solutions, to meet global demand for high-quality, resilient seed.

Whether it’s seed for food, feed, fiber, cover crops or native land restoration, our industry is leading the way in driving the next generation of research and breeding to meet the challenges facing our planet, health and food. We’re showing the world that seed is the ultimate sustainability solution.

When we experience such major events, we are reminded that the global food system is very interconnected. That’s one of the reasons why our engagement in discussions around the UN Food Systems Summit has been so critical over this past year. That is why we’re committed, along with a wide coalition of others in the agriculture, food and environmental community, to continue the momentum in the coming years. A truly sustainable agriculture and food system will require a global commitment by everyone along the food value chain. And as we know, it all starts with seed.

At the association level, we continue to make strides in key objectives and emerging priorities, including sustainability, treated seed and continuing education and leadership development. We hope you’ll take the time to read through the Annual Report to learn more about these and other priorities of your association. Please let us know your feedback, questions, or ideas about how we can continue to improve and better serve you moving forward.

Thank you, again, for all you do and for your continued strong investment in ASTA. We look forward to your partnership in the year ahead, and beyond!

Sincerely,



Brad May
BASF
ASTA Chair FY 2021–22



Andrew W. LaVigne
ASTA
President & CEO

Strategic Goals & Key Focus Areas



ASTA'S VISION

To contribute to global agriculture and food security by creating an environment where each ASTA member company has the opportunity to create an innovative, sustainable and successful business.



ASTA'S MISSION

To be the leading and 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.



ASTA'S CORE VALUES

Members drive the ASTA agenda and identify the issues relevant to the seed industry. ASTA's commitment to one company, one vote ensures that issues affecting the many are identified and result in effective and proactive advocacy and support.

Strategic Focus Areas

Domestic Policy

Be the leading voice on domestic policy issues impacting the seed industry. Implement a comprehensive government affairs program and regularly engage and communicate with ASTA members and stakeholders on federal, state and local issues. Determine action on active issues—identify where ASTA should lead, support or monitor.

Innovation

Advocate for a domestic and international environment that facilitates the development and implementation of innovation in breeding of seed crops and in seed associated products.

Communications

Reinforce ASTA's role as the authoritative voice and trusted resource for the U.S. seed industry. Maintain the association's position as the go-to source on seed matters for ASTA members, member organizations, state and federal government leaders, commodity groups, and media; while continuing to build its brand with consumers, consumer influencers, students, educators, and other stakeholder groups along the ag and food value chain.

Intellectual Property Rights

Advance the use and respect of intellectual property rights for the seed sector globally. Increase awareness for how intellectual property contributes to the success of seed systems and supports sustainability goals.

International

Improve the opportunities for ASTA member companies to do business in international markets.

ASTA Membership & Internal Matters

Maintain and grow strong plans for membership retention, engagement and recruitment; meetings structure and management; and human and financial resource management to ensure the key issues of membership are addressed through a sound association foundation.

Sustainability

Recognize the role of seed in sustainable agriculture as policies are developed in the public and private sectors at the local, national, and international levels.

FY 2021-22 Leadership



Chair

Brad May
BASF



First Vice Chair

Jim Schweigert
Gro Alliance



Second Vice Chair

David Armstrong
Sakata Seed America

Regional Vice Presidents

Northwest

Crystal Fricker
Pure Seed

North Central

Eric Woofert
Star Seed, Inc.

Central

Dan Foor
La Crosse Seed

Northeast

John Bozeman
Seedway LLC

Southeast

John Seymour
Roundstone Seeds

South

Coby Kriegshauser
Scott Seed Co.

West

John Marchese
The Kraft Heinz Company

Representative to AMSAC

Angel Saavedra
Corteva Agriscience

Directors-at-Large

Brian Barker, Corteva Agriscience

Dave Treinen, Syngenta/GreenLeaf Genetics

Gwyn Schramm, Bayer

Paul Nselel, AgReliant Genetics, LLC

Immediate Past Chairs

John Latham, Latham Hi-Tech Seeds, Inc.

Wayne Gale, Stokes Seed Limited

Jerry Flint, Acuity Consulting LLC

Division Chairs

Mark Hayes
Soybean, Corteva Agriscience

Jim Parks
Corn & Sorghum, Corteva Agriscience

Eric Nelson
Vegetable & Flower, BASF

Blake Croegaert
Associate Member, Verdant Partners LLC

Lisa Steere
Brokers/Agents, Peterson Genetics, Inc.

State & Local Issues

About half of the bills ASTA tracked in the 2022 state legislative sessions were focused on treated seed and required about 90% of ASTA's attention. While other seed-related issues arose from time to time, proposals to limit or ban treated seed were an all-too common theme; and unfortunately, the issue is not expected to wane anytime soon. Despite the attention on the issue, Vermont is the only state that passed treated seed legislation. The bill requires best management practices to be filed with the state for the use of neonicotinoid (neonic) treated seeds. In New York, a bill that would have banned neonics and neonic-treated seed came very close to passing, but ultimately did not advance to the final stage. A variety of other states considered bills that would have usurped U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) treated seed regulations, overridden the federal treated article exemption, created a cause of action for unsafe disposal of seed, or established an outright ban on treated seeds.

As we move into the 2023 state legislative sessions, ASTA's grassroots efforts will be more important than ever due to the increasing emphasis on environment, economics and world events. ASTA members and allies will continue to work together on issues to ensure quality seed is available to address grower's needs.

Significant Seed-Related Legislation Passed During 2022 State Legislative Sessions



Vermont

Require BMPs to be filed with the state for the use of neonic treated seeds.

Indiana

Create a new structure for seed testing fees by the state seed lab.

Colorado

Create a native pollinating insects protection study.

Virginia

Create a new law that mandates signs for retail establishments that sell plants to explain the benefits of native plants and the harm of noxious weeds and other invasive plants.

Kansas

Provide a comprehensive rewrite of the state seed law.

Maine

Change the state's Constitution to include "the right to save and exchange seeds."

Federal Legislative & Regulatory Affairs

Sustainability

ASTA remains heavily engaged in a variety of internal and external efforts relating to sustainability. The most recent version of ASTA's Strategic Plan included sustainability as a new strategic pillar, with the direction to develop tools and educational resources to support the development of science-based policy, and work collaboratively across the greater ag value chain to position the seed industry as a sustainability stakeholder. To carry out these directives, ASTA continues to develop guides and resources to assist in the prioritization of sustainable operations at the company level, host informational sustainability webinars for members, and remain a strong voice for the seed industry in the broader conversation around sustainable agriculture.

Sharing Sustainability Stories

In a collaborative effort between the Communications Committee and Sustainability Working Group, ASTA collected stories from members on sustainability initiatives within their operations. These stories will be used for a variety of outreach and education initiatives and highlight the seed industry's contributions and continued commitment to sustainability.

Sustainable Seed Production and Operations Guide

To assist companies in the advancement of sustainable practices within their operations, ASTA began development of a Sustainable Seed Production and Operations Guide. The guide is intended to serve as an educational tool with a step-by-step checklist of action items that can be used to evaluate and capture the sustainable practices within your organization.

Coalition Involvement

In tandem with ASTA's internal efforts, the association has prioritized involvement in several external groups and coalitions. ASTA remains a Steering Committee member of the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance (FACA), which is comprised of organizations representing farmers, ranchers, forest owners, agribusiness, manufacturers, the food and innovation sector, state governments, sportsmen, and environmental advocates. This unique collection of organizations has allowed ASTA to support the goal of defining and promoting shared climate priorities and gives a greater platform for the role of the seed industry in these conversations. As of June of 2022, ASTA is a new member of Field to Market, The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, which unites nearly 150 member organizations across the food and agriculture value chain with the mission of accelerating a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient food and agriculture system. Beyond these organizations, the association remains an engaged member of the U.S. Food Systems (USFS) Alliance, which continues to prioritize the sustainable development of food system strategies and pathways.

Federal Legislative & Regulatory Affairs, Continued

Conservation

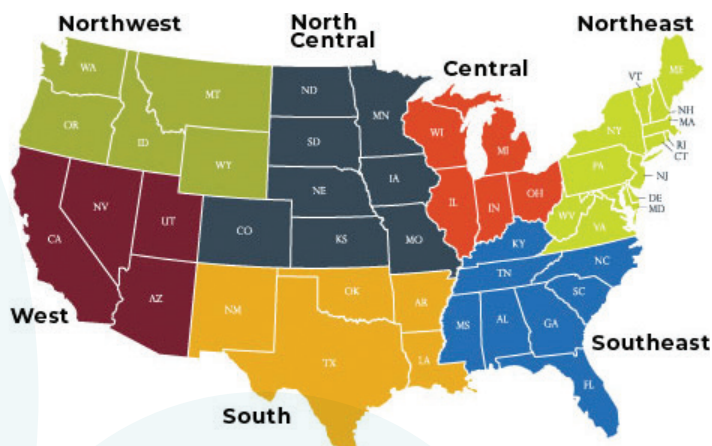
Over the past year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has unveiled several new initiatives and funding opportunities relating to conservation programs. Cover crops have been in the spotlight for many of these climate-focused conservation efforts. These initiatives have included the renewal of the Pandemic Cover Crop Program (PCCP), new and expanded opportunities within the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through a \$38 million cover crop initiative, and increased flexibility in enrollment within the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). As Congress moves toward the drafting of the next Farm Bill, ASTA expects that conservation programs, with specific focus on cover crops, will continue to be a priority. To prepare as an industry, ASTA created a Cover Crops Task Force to develop advocacy priorities for the upcoming Farm Bill.

Environmental, Conservation, and Cover Crop Seed Map

This year, ASTA unveiled a new resource for locating local, professionally-produced environmental, conservation, and cover crop seed. This interactive map, housed on the ASTA website, allows buyers to find lists of specific seed types by geographic location, ensuring the best quality seed to meet a buyer's specific production and sustainability goals. To access the map, visit <https://www.betterseed.org/resources/environment-and-conservation-seed-companies>.

Locate Quality, Professional Environmental, Conservation and Cover Crop Seed Dealers in Your Region

- Wholesale and Retail
- Cover Crop Seed
- Env. & Conservation Seed
- Pollinator Mixes



Farm Bill

With the current Farm Bill set to expire on September 30, 2023, industry is working to establish priorities for reauthorization. ASTA is engaged in an internal process to develop key positions for the seed industry, as well as actively participating in coalitions across the agriculture sector to build consensus around shared goals. These coalitions include a focus on sustainability, agricultural research, and agriculture export programs.

Plant Breeding Innovation

Federal Government Engagement

ASTA continues to actively engage with the U.S. government to advocate for science-based, consistent policies for plant breeding innovation (PBI).

ASTA engages regularly with USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) to ensure implementation of the revised biotech regulation is consistent with the intent and wording of the May 2020 Final Rule. In addition to meetings with BRS staff, ASTA submitted several rounds of formal comments and hired a consultant to develop petitions to BRS to expand the exemption categories.

The EPA 2020 proposed rule to exempt from registration certain plant-incorporated protectants derived from newer technologies is anticipated to be finalized soon. ASTA, along with the National Association of Plant Breeders and the International Fresh Produce Association, met with EPA leadership to present recommendations to ensure compliance does not become a barrier to entry to developers working with small acreage plant varieties.

ASTA, in conjunction with the Independent Professional Seed Association, initiated a series of dialogues with EPA to discuss the impact of the EPA December 2021 Lepidopteran Insect Resistance Management Framework. The biweekly discussion provided a forum for future registrants and licensees of current registrants to discuss a range of concerns, including: phasing down single mode of action products; shortening registration timeframes; and enforcing refuge compliance.

ASTA met with Food and Drug Administration (FDA) staff and leadership to continue to press for publication of guidance for *Foods Derived from Plants Produced Using Genome Editing: Draft Guidance for Industry*, as well as to consider process improvements to better the timeliness of the voluntary new plant variety consultations. To support ASTA advocacy with FDA, ASTA hired a consultant to manage the development and publication of a manuscript focusing on the safety of plant breeding and the legal basis of the FDA 1992 Statement of Policy on Foods Derived from New Plant Varieties.

Value Chain Collaboration

ASTA continues to take a leadership role in engaging with the domestic and international value chain around plant breeding innovation. ASTA participated in the introduction of the finalized Center for Food Integrity (CFI) Framework for the Responsible Use of Gene Editing in Agriculture its membership, grower associations, and other stakeholders. The association is active in the development of the Global Stewardship Group (GSG) Plant Breeding Innovation Management Program, a global program with the goal to enhance transparency with the value chain and other stakeholders supporting market acceptance.

International Advocacy

ASTA continues to chair the International Seed Federation's (ISF) PBI Coordinating Group, and actively participates in advancing policy alignment across countries. ASTA provided comments to several government regulatory initiatives on genome edited plants, including the European Commission's legislative roadmap for new genomic techniques, the Government of Korea's proposed revision to its Living Modified Organism Act, and the Government of Canada's attempts to clarify the scope of "novelty." ASTA sponsored and presented at several international meetings advocating for global regulatory harmonization, including the U.S.-EU Transatlantic Dialogue on the contribution of PBI to agriculture sustainability. In conjunction with the dialogue, ASTA and Euroseeds released a joint statement which outlines six key priorities for unlocking the potential of plant breeding innovation. The joint statement serves as the foundation for our engagement with the European Union.

International Programs and Policy

Representing The U.S. Seed Industry Globally

Collaboration with national and regional seed association partners remains a main mechanism to build alliances and advance ASTA policy positions around the world. In Europe, ASTA partnered with Euroseeds to build support for the European Commission legislative initiative on new genomic techniques (NGTs). ASTA and Euroseeds organized a series of webinars highlighting new genomic technologies and their contributions to sustainability and economic development for members of the European Parliament, representatives of EU member states, and key EU stakeholders.

China made changes to its seed laws which reflected positive outcomes from ASTA's many years of advocacy. Examples include revised regulations that enable commercialization of GM varieties and the adoption of the essentially derived varieties principle for intellectual property rights (IPR) protection. Despite inability to travel to China, ASTA's in-country representative attended the China Seed Congress as well as several other conferences and trade shows on our behalf. The China Seed Association (CSA) and ASTA met virtually and signed a new memorandum of understanding to continue cooperation on key issues such as plant breeding, intellectual property rights, germplasm exchange, marketing and seed trade.

In India, ASTA works with its colleagues at the Federation of Seed Industry India (FSII) and an in-country representative to advocate for IPR protection, PBI policy and a transparent phytosanitary system. With FSII, ASTA developed a white paper on challenges of protecting crop varieties and hybrids in India and a video on plant breeding innovation for an Indian audience. ASTA's representative has also played a critical role in advising on seed movement and phytosanitary issues.



FSII and ASTA collaborate on PBI video

International Programs and Policy, Continued



ASTA participates in APSA Mekong Workshop

In the Asia Pacific region, ASTA collaborated with the Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA) to host an annual virtual workshop among seed associations and ministries of agriculture in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos to discuss plant variety protection, lab accreditation, and phytosanitary regulations.

In the Americas, ASTA supported and participated in the Seed Associations of the Americas' (SAA) first in-person board meeting in two years at the CSS & Seed Expo in Chicago. Further, ASTA continues to push for progress with the systems approach and ReFreSH pilot projects.

ASTA worked to strengthen relationships with national seed associations through the use of subject matter experts located strategically in India, Japan and China. Local representation was a great benefit to ASTA's priorities in these key markets, despite the slow return of travel.

Representing U.S. Seed Industry to U.S. Government

In order to further ASTA's international movement of seed objectives, ASTA's International Executive Committee met with Jeanne Bailey, USDA Deputy Administrator of Trade and Geographic Affairs, Ambassador Gregg Doud, Former Chief Agriculture Negotiator at USDA, and Daniel Whitely, USDA FAS Administrator.

Additionally, ASTA was actively engaged with the Aggies for WTO Reform Coalition, a group established to focus on reforming, improving market access, and eliminating trade barriers at the World Trade Organization (WTO). The coalition met with key representatives from the office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) as well as other agriculture and trade officials from countries such as Brazil, Australia, and Canada.

At the federal level, ASTA staff serve on advisory committees to the USDA FAS and USTR including representation on the Agriculture Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) for Trade and Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) for Trade in Grains, Feed, Oilseeds, and Planting Seeds. ASTA continues to share priorities on international trade policies and key seed issues with USDA and USTR, including the development of new materials outlining the association's priorities for potential trade agreements, current trade barriers, and conditions for global seed production.

Global Seed Movement

ASTA provides strong support and representation at the national and global levels for its members to address and resolve critical phytosanitary issues and challenges that impact the import, export, and re-export of seed consignments. Throughout the year numerous WTO notifications announcing new and more restrictive phytosanitary requirements were published that necessitated in-depth analysis and response by ASTA. Many key trading partners including Brazil, Chile, the EU, New Zealand, Morocco, and Japan issued notices impacting many different vegetable, grass, row crop, and flower seed species.

The trend of countries discontinuing acceptance of phytosanitary field inspections as a basis for export certification in favor of pest free areas (PFA) or pest-free places of production (PFPP) for more pests has driven the industry toward increased reliance on molecular seed health testing. Because these methods are so sensitive and can detect fragments of DNA/RNA without any reference to their biological relevance, it has become apparent that more needs to be done to properly interpret molecular test data. To that end, ASTA has been working closely with the Seed Science Foundation (SSF) to support research to develop a micro bioassay system to quickly determine whether a molecular test result represents a viable pathogen. A new project to develop a prototype “bioassay on a chip” was recently funded.

ASTA remained actively involved in the NAPPO tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV) seed testing harmonization project. The association successfully recruited Texas A&M University (TAMU), an active participant in USDA’s National Plant Pest Diagnostic Network, to help design and participate in the ring test. This project is ongoing and will be completed before the end of 2022.

In August of 2021, ASTA published its Phytosanitary Export Database (PEDs) on its website for all to access. The association hosted a workshop to instruct participants on how to use this database along with the ISF Regulated Pest Database and the APHIS phytosanitary export (PExD) and import databases.

In early 2022, APHIS published for stakeholder comment its long-awaited pest risk assessment (Phase 1) on the pospiviroid pests of tomato and pepper seed. ASTA, ISF, and regional seed associations, developed a comprehensive science-based response. APHIS plans to publish a summary of all comments with its responses, along with a revised Phase 1 PRA later in 2022 and begin Phase 2 (identification and analysis of phytosanitary risk mitigation measures). APHIS also published its ReFreSH Standard and Participant Manual (developed through a joint WG that included ASTA participants) for stakeholder comment, which was likewise reviewed and commented on by ASTA.

At the international level, ASTA partnered with ISF and several regional seed associations to provide needed information to the IPPC for the development of an annex to the international seed standard, ISPM 38, that will provide guidance to NPPOs on how to use the systems approach as a phytosanitary measure. ASTA was active with ISF in the development of ISF’s concept paper on the systems approach and addressing global phytosanitary issues through its member participations in ISF Expert Groups on phytosanitary, seed health, and seed innovation. In 2022, a new and significant phytosanitary trade issue has emerged regarding certification of corn and sweet corn seed for export to New Zealand and Chile for freedom from high plains virus (HPV). HPV, although of minimal economic consequence in the U.S., is considered a quarantine pest by several trading partners, and the only feasible and acceptable measure now is molecular seed health testing. Efforts are underway to organize and fund critical research with university scientists.

Finally, ASTA has launched an effort to work with seed companies and the academic community to identify what scientific and technical training and instruction in seed pathology is needed, and to develop a plan to establish and deliver needed curricula to academia, the seed industry, and the regulatory community.

Communications



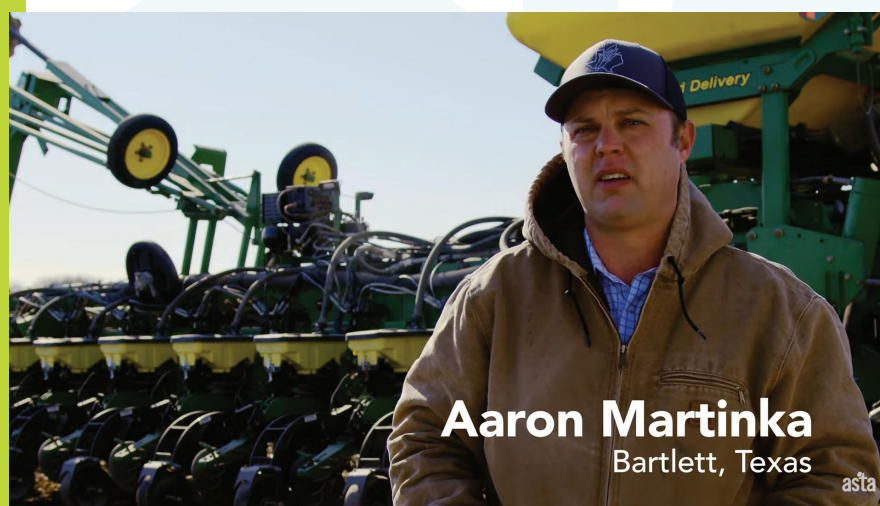
Treated Seed

As treated seed increasingly came under attack in the press and in state legislatures, ASTA stepped up proactive efforts to communicate about the benefits, and safety, of these critical tools. To ensure stakeholder alignment around public messaging, ASTA worked closely with its Joint Treated Seed Task Force, including members of ASTA, CropLife America (CLA) and the Ag Retailers Association, to update resources and develop new communications tools to address common, and often misguided, narratives being reported by the media.

To inform industry's core messaging, ASTA collaborated with CLA on a series of focus groups on pesticides and treated seed. Two rounds of listening sessions took place in Sacramento, Indianapolis and Washington, D.C. The learnings were compiled into a messaging toolkit which was shared internally with members and stakeholders and used to update and refine ASTA's messaging moving forward.

Additionally, ASTA was successful in securing a grant through the Texas Department of Agriculture to engage in a public outreach campaign around treated seed stewardship. The campaign included the creation of a new educational video, updated stewardship graphics, digital ads, trade and regional media outreach, and a set of PSAs targeting local farmers. The content created through the grant was leveraged to support a national outreach campaign, including a new ASTA treated seed landing page focused on benefits and safety. The site—promoted through a paid-search and digital ad campaign—including Q&As, safety and efficacy data, farmer testimonials and links to third-party state, federal and industry resources.

These efforts were supplemented by ASTA's regular stakeholder outreach campaigns tied to planting and harvesting season to remind everyone who handles treated seed about the proper steps for stewardship.



Communications, Continued

Plant Breeding Innovation

At the international level, ASTA coordinated with ISF on the development and rollout of a set of one-pagers addressing common myths about gene editing. The key themes and graphics were leveraged as part of a coordinated international social media campaign.

Domestically, ASTA continued to communicate about the benefits of plant breeding innovation through its public-facing Innovature program. Formerly a joint project of ASTA and BIO, ASTA took over full ownership of the platform this past fiscal year. In addition to regularly posting original content on the website and social channels, Innovature was featured in a UK Wired article on the future of food, and an Innovature-backed Op-ed titled “Gene-Editing Helps Feed the World—and Save It Too” was published in the national outlet, RealClear Policy.

Public Outreach and Education

In March, ASTA joined partners in the agriculture, sustainability and equipment manufacturing community in Washington, D.C. to showcase the role of agriculture innovation in enabling sustainability. The Celebration of Modern Agriculture on the National Mall took place outside USDA headquarters between the Smithsonian Museums. Representatives from USDA, EPA, and FDA, along with members of Congress, the public, and local media outlets attended to learn more about the role that science and technology play in agriculture. ASTA’s interactive display highlighted the role of plant breeding in providing more sustainable outcomes for farmers and the environment. Roughly 2,000 people walked through the Mall per day.

In October, ASTA staff attended the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis to promote First the Seed Foundation student educational resources and careers in the seed industry.

ASTA participated in and sponsored the National Association of Farm Broadcasting (NAFB) convention in Kansas City. During NAFB’s Trade Talk expo, ASTA hosted a booth and participated in interviews with farm broadcasters from across the nation. The association also connected with farm broadcasters at the NAFB Washington Watch Issues Forum in Washington, D.C., where staff hosted a booth and discussed the latest policy issues impacting the seed industry.

Internally, ASTA continued training new members for its growing Seed Ambassador Leadership Team (SALT)—now 100 and counting. Full-day training workshops were held in conjunction with ASTA’s CSS & Seed Expo in Chicago and Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference in San Diego. Following the workshops, ASTA hosted a continuing education webinar for new and existing SALT members.



ASTA staff participate in Ag on the Mall in Washington, D.C.



Handouts at National FFA Convention and Expo in Indianapolis, IN



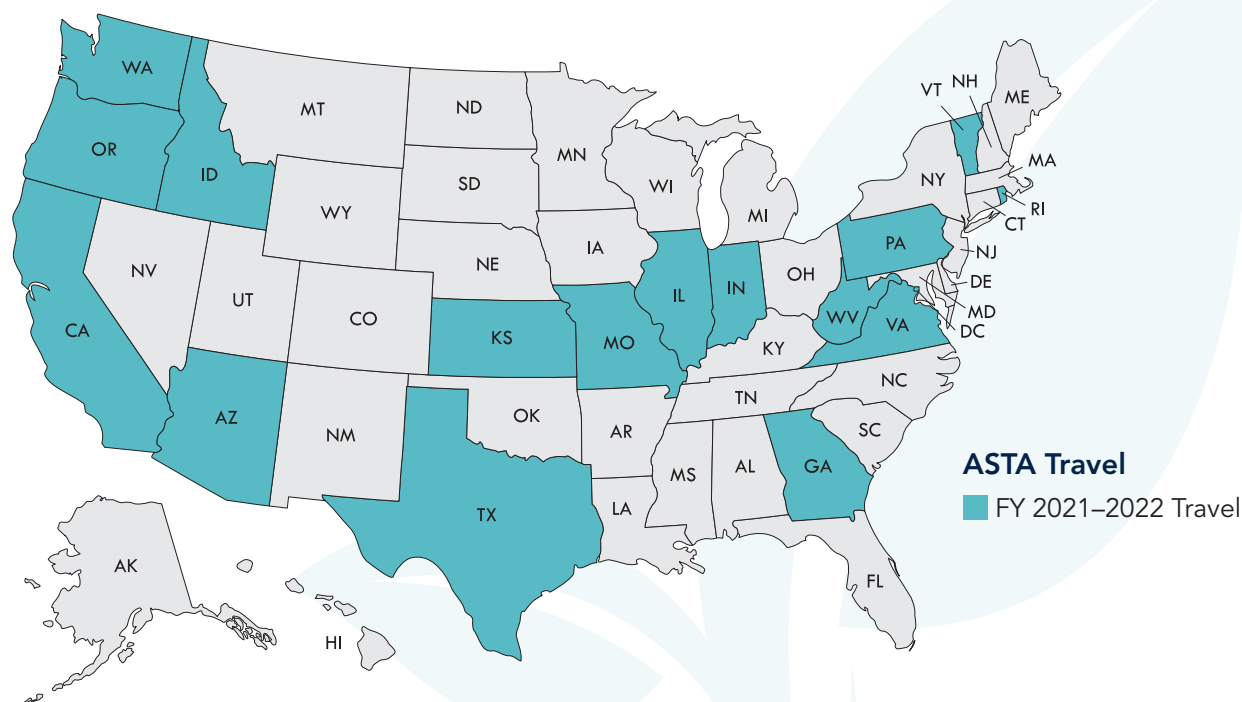
Andy LaVigne (right) talks with Gale Cunningham, WYXY FM Radio, (left) at the NAFB Washington Watch Issues Forum

Membership Engagement

With restrictions from COVID-19 lifting, ASTA spent the last year focusing on engaging members in person and regaining members who did not renew due to pandemic conditions. ASTA is a member-led organization and our commitment to bettering the seed industry begins with understanding the challenges and priorities of its membership. Following the adoption of the updated Strategic Plan, ASTA has renewed its objectives for maintaining and growing a strong membership by providing education and leadership opportunities, enhancing accessibility to updated resources, and promoting diverse and active participation in committees and meetings.

Member and Partner Visits

The ASTA staff traveled the nation visiting with state and regional associations, updating them on the seed industry's activities from a federal perspective, as well as ASTA organizational activities. During these visits, staff spent time traveling to individual members to learn more about the issues they faced in their day-to-day business. In total, staff visited over 18 states in the last year. ASTA will continue to make these strategic visits and engage with their members to provide the highest standard of support for the industry.



Student Membership

ASTA is pleased to cultivate the future of the seed industry through its student membership, currently with more than 100 members ranging from FFA students to PhD candidates. Partner universities are helping to promote the membership to students in relevant programs. ASTA's Communications Committee and Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD) Committee worked to develop different ways to engage the association's student members through events and contests. The monthly student newsletter is another way of delivering benefits to these young members. The newsletter includes industry news and updates, company spotlights, student member spotlights, scholarship programs and internship and full-time career openings.

Intellectual Property



International Leadership

ASTA continues to advocate for the implementation of molecular marker methods for soybean. Association members presented about the history and use of soybean molecular markers at the December 2021 Plant Variety Protection (PVP) Board meeting.

After two years of collaboration between the UPOV Working Group on Essentially Derived Varieties (EDV) and the industry EDV Task Force, in October 2021 the UPOV CAJ (Administrative and Legal Committee) completed and accepted draft 3 of the EDV Explanatory Notes under the UPOV Act of 1991. While ASTA anticipated adoption of the draft in December 2021, objections led by Switzerland were raised late in the process and prevented its adoption. In the meantime, the U.S. government reversed its long-standing supportive stance towards draft 3. ASTA remains supportive of the draft and has raised concerns with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) and U.S. PVPO about the U.S. government's reversal in position. At this point, the future of the draft remains uncertain.



Domestic Engagement

ASTA submitted comments in response to the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) request for public comment on Competition and the Intellectual Property System: Seeds and Other Agricultural Inputs. The association's comments supported the enforcement of strong intellectual property rights protections, domestically and internationally; emphasized that strong and sustained investments in public sector plant research are critical to furthering innovation in plant breeding, seed development, and production; and asked for, at both the domestic and international levels, the implementation of science-based regulatory approaches that are risk proportionate and predictable and the removal of unjustified regulatory barriers that impede innovation.

ASTA Affiliates & Partners

Seed Science Foundation

The mission of the Seed Science Foundation (SSF) is to address seed and plant science challenges and to encourage plant breeding education and seed research in support of the ever-changing needs of the global seed industry.

The foundation seeks to solve scientific challenges while supporting research and identifying funding mechanisms and creating technical information. It fosters networking and external agreements, recognizes professional and student achievement, and supports ASTA student programs.



The SSF has identified six subject matter areas of priority:

1. Breeding Systems
2. Seed Quality
3. Seed Production and Technology
4. Seed Health and Pathology
5. Digital Agriculture
6. Seed Applied Technology

First the Seed Foundation

The First the Seed Foundation (FTSF) is a not-for-profit organization established by ASTA in 2008 to inform today's consumers and tomorrow's workforce about the importance of the seed industry. Its mission is to conduct education, outreach, and communication on the value of crops and food produced from seed.



Key programs include:

TOMATOSPHERE™

A partnership with NASA that educates and inspires young students, building their capacity and understanding of scientific inquiry and opening the door to extended space exploration.

8,091
participating
classrooms
200,004
students
served

GROW A SEED

A free career education program developed to help students explore their talents and become successful in the workplace by providing participants with a career handbook including: career opportunities and profiles; checklists; parent handouts; and other resources.

134
participating
classrooms
5,371
students
served

PLANTING THE SEED

This curriculum was developed to assist teachers in growing the next generation of seed scientists and environmental innovators by letting students explore how tiny seeds can solve some of the planet's biggest problems.

154
participating
classrooms
5,304
students
served

BACK TO EARTH

This program allows students to learn about the Space Station and the importance of studying plant growth for long-term space travel to constructing their own greenhouse.

11
participating
classrooms
682
students
served

ASTA Honors Seed Industry Leaders

ASTA honored past and present seed industry groundbreakers during the inaugural 2022 ASTA Leadership Summit in June in Indianapolis. In addition to the time-honored Lifetime Honorary Member and Distinguished Service Awards, the slate of honors included the all-new Heritage Award and the Seed Science Foundation's Excellence in Science Award. For more information on these awards, including past recipients, visit betterseed.org/seed-industry-honors.

Distinguished Service Award

Dr. Edward Podleckis received his B.S. in Plant Pathology from Cook College, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; his M.Sc in Plant Science from the University of Delaware; and earned his Ph.D. in Plant Pathology/Plant Virology from the University of Maryland. In April 2022, Dr. Podleckis retired after over 33 years of Federal service and has been an incredible friend to the seed industry.



Dr. Edward Podleckis, Ph.D.
USDA-APHIS

Past Recipients:

- Chet Boruff, AOSCA (2020–21)
- Dr. Barb Glenn, NASDA (2020–21)
- Mary Smith, Arkansas State Plant Board (2019–20)
- Wayne Parrott, University of Georgia (2019–20)
- Alan Galbreth, ICIA (2018–19)
- Osama El-Lissy, USDA APHIS (2017–18)
- Joe Funk, SEED TODAY (2016–17)

Honorary Lifetime Member Award

Rick Turner has forty-five years of experience in the agriculture industry, having worked in sales, marketing, product development and various leadership roles in North American and Global businesses.

Richard Denhart graduated in 1964 from Southern Illinois University with a Bachelor of Science in General Agriculture. He served as the first Chair of the ASTA State Government Affairs Working Group and was the first State Association representative to the ASTA Board of Directors.



Rick Turner
BASF



Richard Denhart
Illinois Seed Trade
Association

Past Recipients:

- Tim Johnson, Illinois Foundation Seeds, Inc. (2020–21)
- John Schoenecker, HM.CLAUSE (2020–21)
- Bernice Slutsky, ASTA (2019–20)
- Tom Moore, HM.CLAUSE (2019–20)
- John Duesing, Ph.D., Corteva Agriscience (2018–19)
- Blake Curtis, Curtis & Curtis, Inc. (2018–19)
- Wendell Howard, Warner Seed, Inc. (2017–18)
- Dr. Stephen Smith (2016–17)

ASTA Honors Seed Industry Leaders, Continued

Heritage Awards

The Heritage Award was created this year to preserve and build history and to honor and recognize individuals who have significantly impacted ASTA and the seed industry. It seeks to inspire the next generation of leaders and instill a sense of pride in the rich history of the seed industry and ASTA. For more information about the award and this year's recipients, visit betterseed.org/astas-seed-industry-heritage-award.



Norman Borlaug



W. Atlee Burpee



Dr. Harry Collins



Dr. Owen Newlin



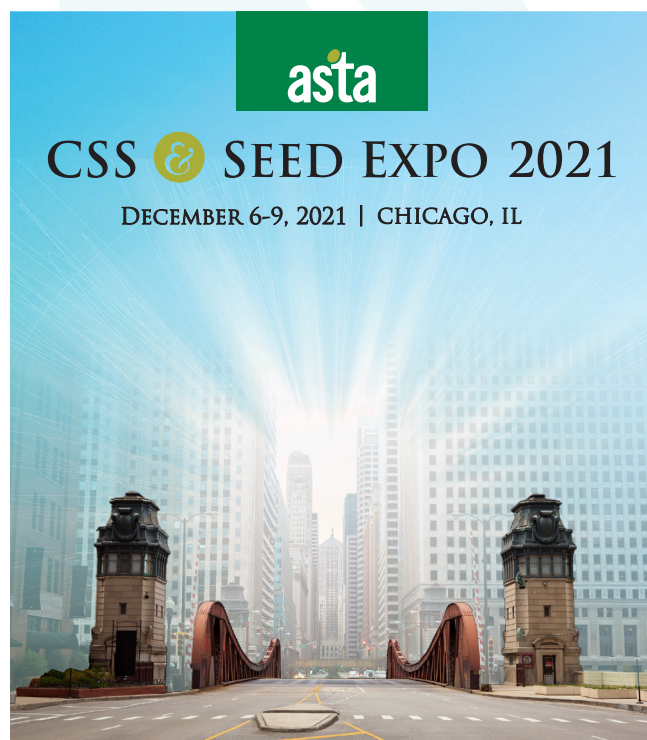
Jerry Peterson

Conventions & Meetings

The 2021–2022 year marked the return of ASTA conventions and meetings to largely in-person formats. The ongoing coronavirus pandemic continued to impact attendance and participation options, with lower overall in-person attendance and virtual elements being offered for those who were unable to travel.

2021 Farm and Lawn Seed Conference

ASTA's 67th Farm and Lawn Seed Conference returned to an in-person format and was held once again in conjunction with the Western Seed Association Conference, which returned after being cancelled in 2020. The ASTA program included policy updates provided by ASTA staff, government officials, and key partner organizations; along with meetings of the ASTA Environmental and Conservation Seed Committee and the Cover Crop Working Group.



CSS & Seed Expo 2021

ASTA's CSS & Seed Expo 2021 was held in a hybrid virtual format, with roughly 70 percent of the usual overall attendance, including approximately 150 virtual registrations. Due to a surge in pandemic concerns nationwide that fell over the winter 2021 months, ASTA took precautions to spread out the event setup into a design called the "Villages," whereby separate ballrooms and stages were created, matching session topics with relevant exhibitors to those topics in the same room. A leadership development track included sessions on communicating effectively and managing through the "turnover tsunami." Seed Expo showcase events included exhibitor presentations on ag tech innovations, logistics and supply chain issues, seed labs and seed treatment.

Conventions & Meetings, Continued



61st Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference

In 2022, ASTA's Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference was held in-person in San Diego. Like the CSS & Seed Expo before it, in-person attendance was limited due to pandemic-related effects on business travel, and therefore only gathered 77% of the usual attendance. Nevertheless, registrants hailed from 30 different countries and the Trading Room was abuzz with networking activities. The general session featured two segments: one on logistics, and the other on value-chain sustainability. The Women in Seed luncheon was highly attended and featured two prominent female ASTA members sharing their career path experiences.

ASTA Leadership Summit 2022

In 2022, ASTA launched its all-new Leadership Summit, replacing the former Policy & Leadership Development Conference. The Leadership Summit was developed to respond to members' expressed need for internal leadership development within the seed industry.

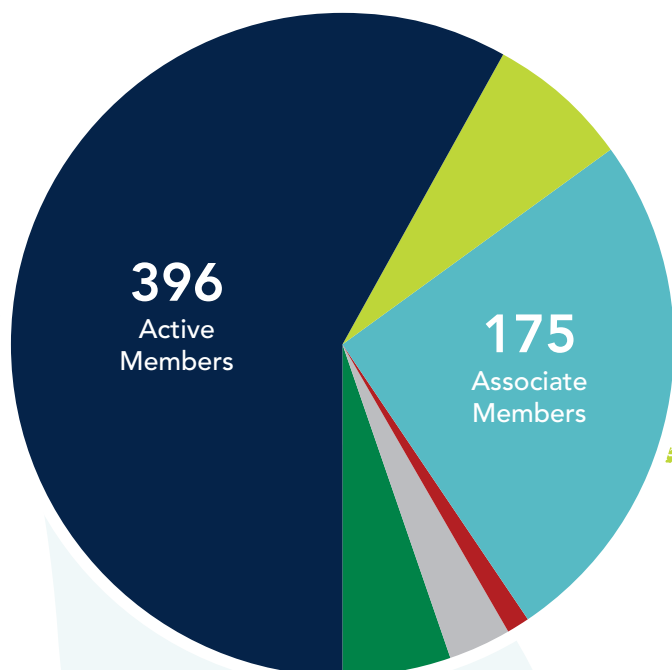
The new event featured interactive, educational, future-focused "horizon" sessions to prepare ASTA members for the new and emerging issues impacting their businesses in the short and long-term.

Corporate futurist Sheryl Connelly, Ford Motor Company, kicked off the event with a popular keynote presentation on "managing through transition." Other sessions covered topics ranging from identifying your work values, to critical thinking and the workforce of the future. The event unveiled a new series of awards, including the ASTA Heritage Awards, the Seed Science Foundation's Excellence in Science Award and the awards of various state and regional associations. The new conference format met with rave reviews from the members in attendance and achieved the highest June ASTA meeting attendance since 2017. Fewer than 10 members participated virtually, so limited virtual participation options were offered. Thus, the ASTA Leadership Summit represented the first full-force return to in-person ASTA Events to round out the year.



Membership Breakdown

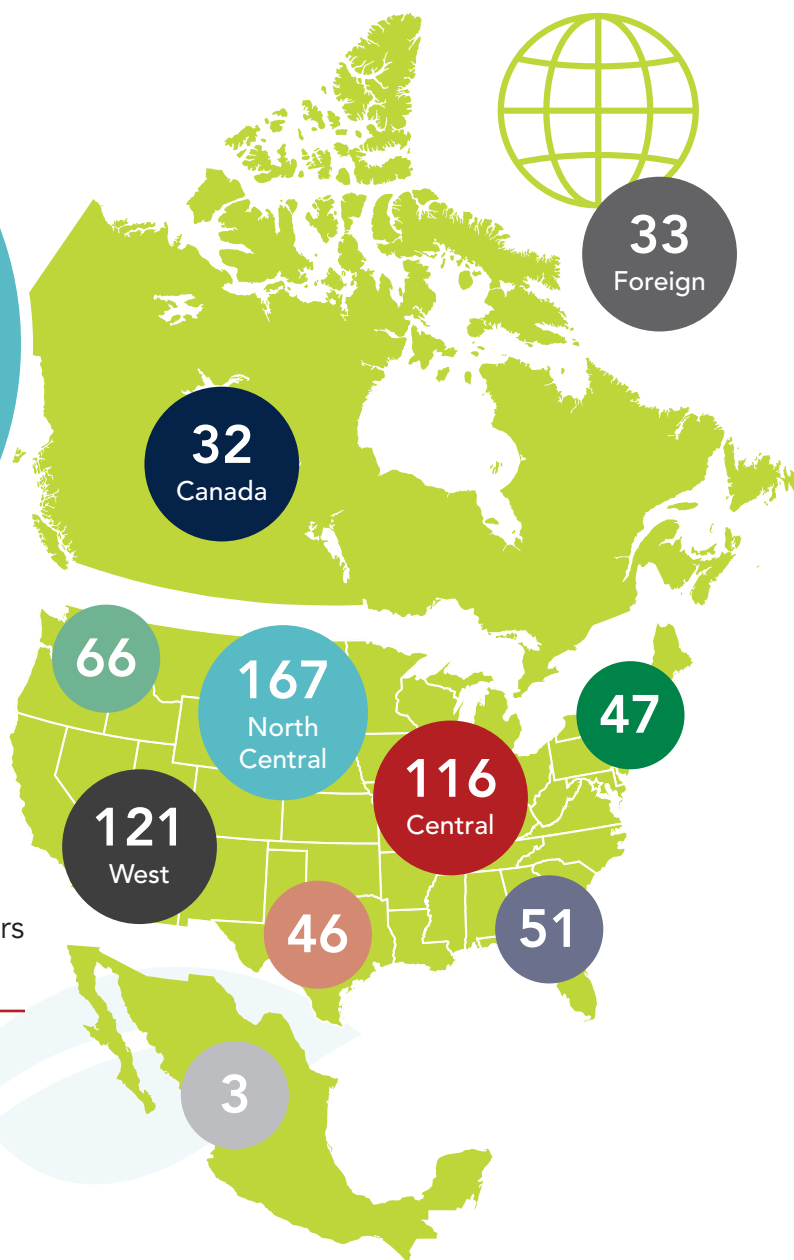
Membership by Type



- 396 Active Members
- 48 Affiliate Members
- 175 Associate Members
- 7 Broker-Agent Members
- 21 Corresponding International Members
- 35 Reciprocal Members

682 Total Members

Membership by Region



Student Members



- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| ● 32 Canada | ● 47 Northeast |
| ● 116 Central | ● 66 Northwest |
| ● 33 Foreign | ● 46 South |
| ● 3 Mexico | ● 51 Southeast |
| ● 167 North Central | ● 121 West |

Financial Position

ASTA's 2021-22 Budget

The ASTA budget is based on guidance and approval from the Board of Directors according to determined priorities and the Strategic Plan. ASTA strives to maintain transparency with its membership regarding the association's budget and financial status. The Board of Directors approves and reviews the financial status, which enables the association to maintain a strong and focused direction. The annual audit was conducted by ASTA's auditors, MARCUM, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, GAAP. The 2020-21 audit confirmed the financial health of the association, which ended its fiscal year with \$6,170,125 in net assets. In addition, it calculated in-kind contributions from member companies related to the international activities of the association of \$10,045,480. This includes promotion, travel, research and professional services that the audit firm included in the FY 2020-21 audit.

Investment and Reserve Policy

The Board of Directors has established guidelines for ASTA's investment and reserve accounts, striving to maintain a balance of one-and-a-half to two times the annual ASTA operating budget. Of that reserve, the target allocation for the balance is 40% in fixed income and 60% in equity which includes U.S. Small and Mid-Caps, Global and U.S. Large Caps. \$500,000 is maintained in an operating reserve. Expenditures from those reserves are vetted through the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee. Under this policy, when authorizing expenditures from the long-term reserves, the Board will approve a plan to replenish the amount expended.

Operating Revenue and Support

In-kind contributions	\$10,045,480
Membership dues	\$3,919,469
Registration fees	\$140,463
Government grants and contracts.....	\$1,262,988
Exhibit fees	\$136,606
Contributions and sponsorships	\$342,029
Administrative service fees	\$10,000
Other income	\$5,222
Total Operating Revenue	\$15,862,257
and Support	

Operating Expenses

Program Services

International initiatives.....	\$11,511,279
Meetings	\$510,754
Policy	\$1,462,595
Legislation	\$513,566
Membership	\$100,793
Other	\$69,749
Total Program Services	\$14,168,738

Supporting Service

General and administrative.....	\$1,859,236
Total Operating Expenses.....	\$16,027,974
Change in Net Assets	\$(165,717)
from Operations	

Non-operating Activities

Investment income, net	\$1,227,640
Change in net assets.....	\$1,061,923
Net assets, beginning of year.....	\$5,108,202
Net assets, end of year	\$6,170,125

ASTA Staff



Executive Office

Andrew W. LaVigne
President and CEO

Libby Hogen-Heath
Executive Assistant

Domestic & International Policy

Fan-Li Chou
Vice President, Scientific Affairs & Policy

Janae Brady
Senior Director, Government Affairs

Ric Dunkle, Ph.D
Senior Director, Seed Health and Trade

Abigail Struxness
Senior Director, International Programs and Policy

Pat Miller
Director, State Government Affairs

Payton Englert
Director, Government Affairs

Lainey Wolf
Manager, International Programs

Finance & Administration

Ann Jorss
Chief Operating Officer

Ann Ward
Assistant to the COO

Communications

Bethany Shively
Vice President, Strategic Communications

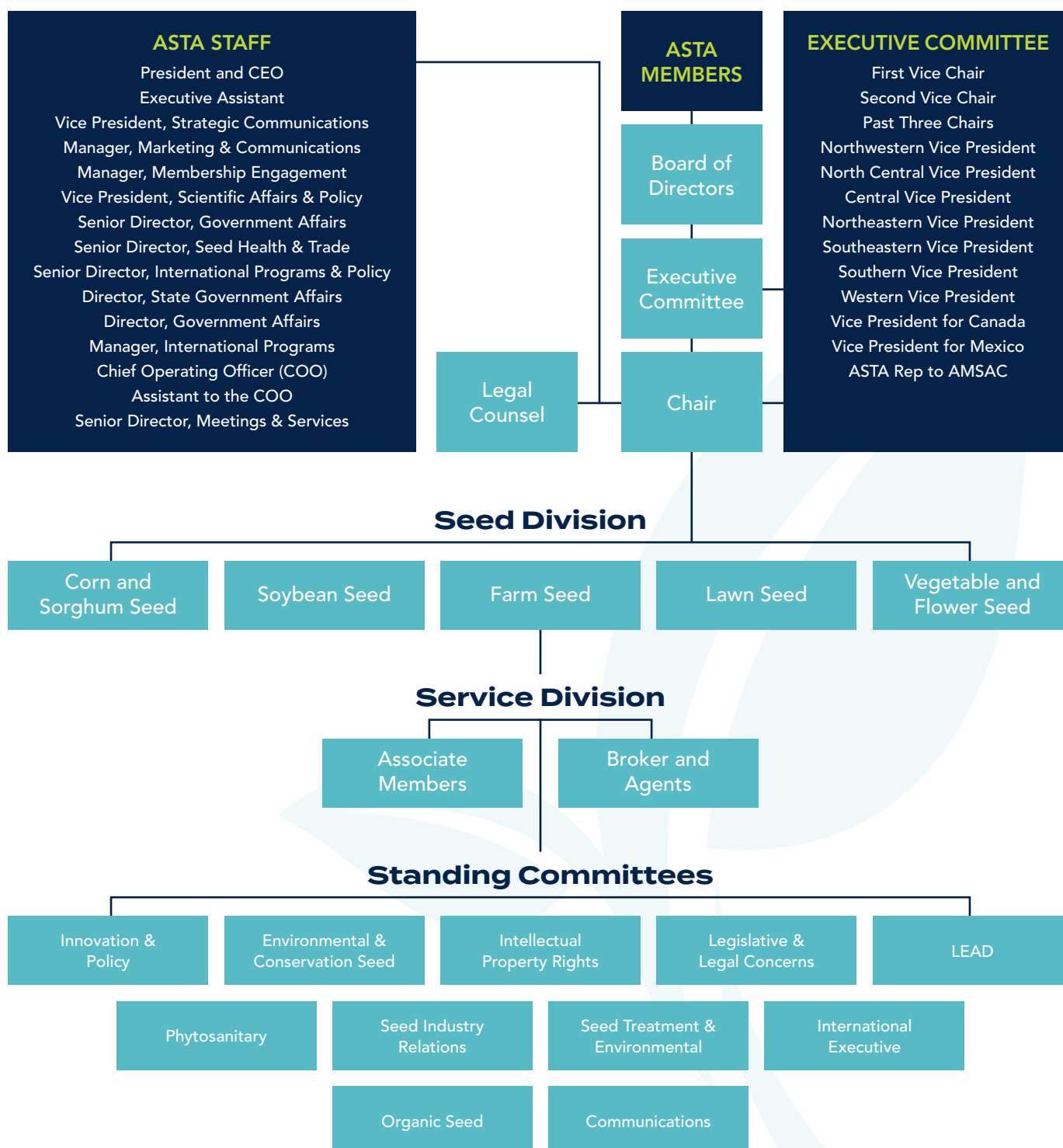
Kaitlin Crawford
Manager, Marketing and Communications

Jordan Gregory
Manager, Member Engagement

Meetings & Services

Jennifer Crouse
Senior Director, Meetings & Services

Organizational Chart



Notes

The image shows a white background with horizontal blue lines, typical of a notebook. A large, stylized, light green leaf graphic is positioned on the left side, extending from the bottom towards the top. The leaf has a central vein and several smaller veins branching off. The overall design is clean and minimalist.

Notes

Lined area for notes, featuring horizontal ruling lines and a large, faint leaf graphic on the right side.



american
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association

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