



2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT

ADVOCATE



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Message to the ASTA Membership

Dear Valued Member,

In our 142nd year, there were many times when we, as a seed sector and a broader agricultural community, could have lost sight in the challenges that we faced. Environmental challenges like Hurricane Helene that ravaged parts of the Mid-Atlantic; economic downturn for the agricultural economy; and geopolitical uncertainty. But with your support, we came together as a community to navigate and rise above it all. Thank you for continuing to engage through these challenging times.

As a member driven organization, we are constantly finding ways to seek your input to improve your ASTA experience. Through our signature meetings that connect you with your peers and business partners, in our committees and working groups that offer you the venue to collaborate with like-minded individuals in your field, and in our member services that support your organization's operational goals. This year, our Chairman Dan Foor sought ways to support you to **ADVOCATE** for yourself, your organization, our seed industry, and the agricultural sector. This advocacy is essential in what ASTA does in Washington, D.C., in state capitals, and in international forums, but it is just as critical for you in the local communities our seed companies operate in across the country.

We implore you to be an **ADVOCATE** for the seed industry in every part of your day. Sure, that advocacy is important when you are representing your company in a business deal. But have you thought about how impactful that advocacy can be when talking to people in your social network and greater community, and how it will change their outlook on the seed industry, the food they eat, the clothes they wear, and the fuel they use to power their homes and vehicles? As the first step in the value chain, we have the honor of supporting America's farmers and ranchers, and we couldn't be prouder of that role. But we also recognize the significance it comes with—without seed, farmers would not be able to plant crops for the next harvest, ranchers would not be able to feed their livestock, and many other critical essentials would be scarce.

So the next time you're at the grocery store looking to stock up for the week, consider the role YOU play as an **ADVOCATE** for the seed industry. Help empower a neighbor, or a new friend, with the choices they are making to feed their family. Because it all starts with the seed.

On behalf of the American Seed Trade Association leadership and staff, we would like to thank you for your involvement as a member of our esteemed association. We are excited to tell the story about the work we accomplished in this last year, and the opportunities that lie ahead for our industry in the years to come. We look forward to continue advocating on behalf of our member companies, our industry, and our American agricultural community. Thank you for being a part of our story.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Foor".

Dan Foor
Remington Seeds
ASTA Chair FY 2024–25



A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "A. W. LaVigne".

Andrew W. LaVigne
ASTA
President & CEO

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Strategic Goals & Key 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.



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 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 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.

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Chair

Dan Foor
Remington Seeds



First Vice Chair

Dave Treinen
Syngenta

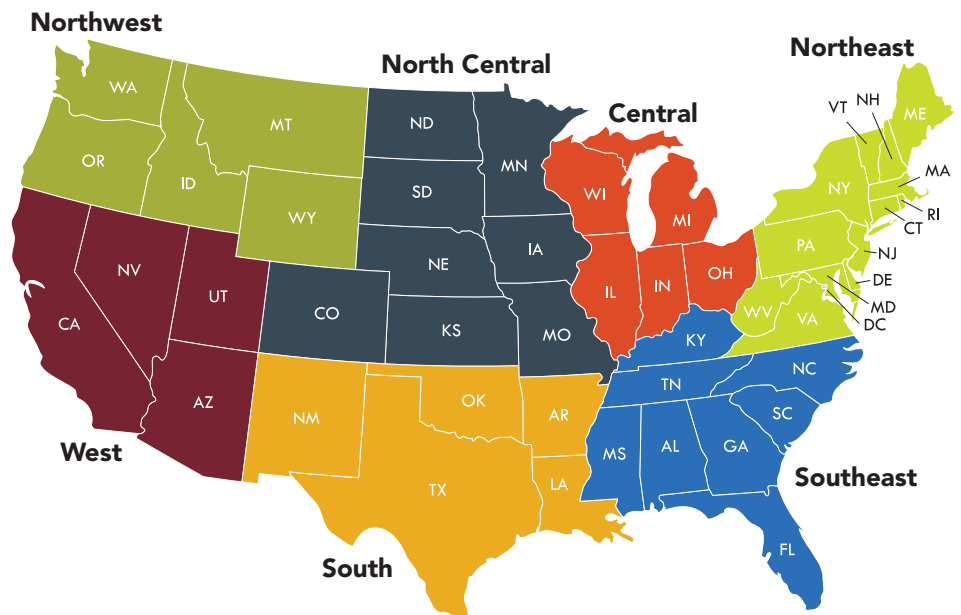


Second Vice Chair

Bryan Gerard
JoMar Seeds

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

- Northwest** Crystal Fricker, *Pure Seed*
- North Central** Jessie Strinmoen, *Shooting Star Native Seeds*
- Central** Scott Beck, *Beck's Superior Hybrids*
- Northeast** John Bozeman, *Seedway LLC*
- Southeast** John Seymour, *Roundstone Seeds*
- South** Luke Turner, *Turner Seed Company*
- West** John Marchese, *HeinzSeed*
- Representative to AMSAC** . . Juan Labastida, *Enza Zaden North America*



DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

- Matthew Brandt, *Bayer Crop Science*
- Kendall Palmer, *Corteva Agriscience*
- Rick Winn, *HM Clause*

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRS

- Dave Armstrong, *Sakata Seed America*
- Jim Schweigert, *Gro Alliance*

DIVISION CHAIRS

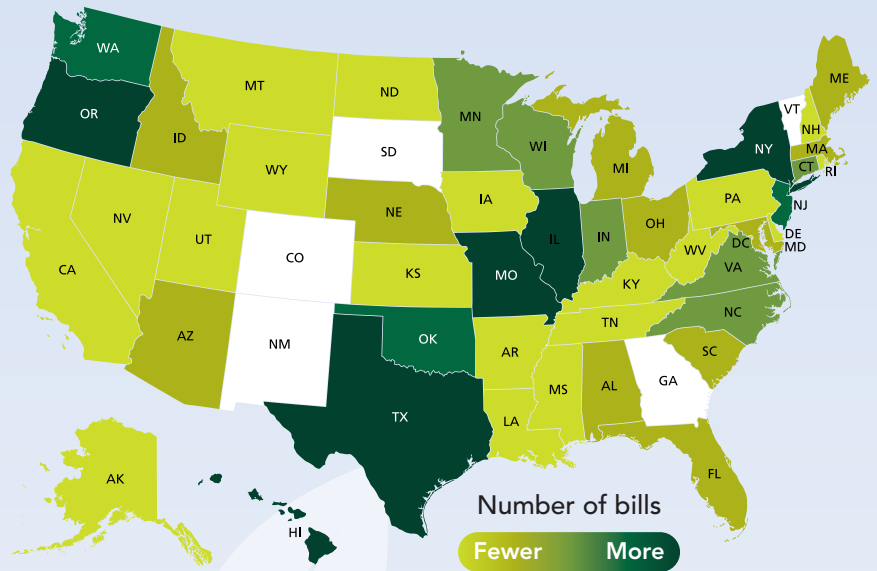
- Todd Mayhew, *Forage, Turf & Conservation Seed Division, Valent USA*
- Steve Sterchi, *Field Crop Seed Division, Syngenta*
- Justin Davis, *Vegetable & Flower Division, Sakata Seed America*
- Lawrence Cunningham, *Associates/Exhibitors Division, KEEN Project Solutions*

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State & Local Issues

During the 2025 state legislative session, ASTA tracked **more than 130 bills** across **50 states** on a range of topics including treated seed, plant breeding, Right to Farm, appropriations, and GMO/gene editing. The chart below showcases the breakdown of those topics in their bill frequency.

As the state sessions wind down, ASTA is taking a critical look at the topic trends and conversations had to better understand future potential trends for the next year.



KEY POLICY TRENDS & ASTA ENGAGEMENTS

Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

ASTA tracked 20 related bills across multiple states addressing restrictions on foreign entities purchasing farmland. Bills ranged from blanket bans on all foreign ownership to targeted bans based on U.S. adversarial designations. ASTA successfully advocated for research exemptions crucial to the future of the seed industry's research and development pipeline.

Treated Seed & Neonicotinoid Legislation

Treated seed legislation, including proposed bans and regulations, remained a significant focus in several states:

- **California (AB 1042):** ASTA partnered with the California Seed Association (CSA) to secure an amendment avoiding a full ban. The final language requires the active ingredient in treated seeds to be disclosed on the seed label.
- **Connecticut (SB 9):** ASTA and CropLife America (CLA) worked to secure an exemption for treated seeds in a bill banning neonicotinoids, which passed one chamber before the session adjourned sine die on June 4, 2025.
- **Maine (LD 1323):** Amended to initiate a two-year study following coordinated opposition led by ASTA and partners.
- **Minnesota (SF 3083):** Did not advance out of committee following ASTA and CLA testimony during an informational hearing.

Agricultural Label Uniformity

ASTA joined the Modern Ag Alliance, collaborating with 75+ stakeholders to oppose state-level labeling proposals that contradict federal EPA standards. Bills were filed in Iowa, Idaho, and Missouri but did not pass. The Modern Ag Alliance continues educating legislators during the interim, with ASTA's support planned for 2025.

Right to Farm & Seed Saving

States considered legislation around non-commercial seed sharing and seed libraries. ASTA provided amendment language in two states to protect IP rights. In Ohio, ASTA-supported provisions were already included in the final bill that passed.

Monitoring the MAHA Movement

The Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement gained momentum late in the session, introducing over 50 bills targeting ultra-processed foods, food dyes, and seed oils. While none have directly addressed seed production, ASTA is closely monitoring for potential impacts on the seed industry.

Member Engagement

ASTA continues to provide timely updates through monthly State Legislative Update calls. These calls are open to members and partners to ensure industry alignment and preparedness for upcoming state sessions.

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Federal Policy

Engagement with New Congress & Administration

Following the 2024 election, ASTA staff has been engaging in robust outreach with new and returning Congressional offices, as well as with the incoming Administration under President Trump.

The 119th Congress brought in leadership changes on both sides of the Capitol. Republicans maintained a majority in the House of Representatives (219–212) and also gained a majority control of the Senate (49–47–4). In the House Agriculture Committee, Rep. Glenn “G.T.” Thompson (R-PA-15) continues to serve as Chairman, and Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN-2) was selected as the Ranking Member. On the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Senator John Boozman (R-AR) was appointed as Chairman, while Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) now serves as the Ranking Member. ASTA has worked to establish and grow relationships with new leadership and Members of both Committees.

As President Trump returned to office, he moved quickly to nominate members of his Cabinet, as well as a number of political officials that serve throughout federal agencies. ASTA staff have been engaged in the confirmation process, supporting Congressional offices with hearing questions and resources to ensure appointees understand seed industry priorities. ASTA continues tracking executive orders and policy actions with implications for trade, research, and regulatory science.

The ASTA team held an aggressive outreach schedule with Trump Administration officials as they were established at key agencies, namely at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and United States Trade Representative (USTR) with the goal of establishing positive relationships and exploring opportunities for partnership between the Administration and the seed industry. ASTA continues to hold meetings with officials throughout

USDA, including in the Office of the Secretary, Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources and Conservation Services, Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, Marketing and Regulatory Programs, and the Research, Education, and Economic mission areas.

Legislative Efforts

In the fall of 2024, the 2018 Farm Bill was extended for a second time. ASTA staff continues to actively engage with Members of Congress to support critical Farm Bill programs that the seed industry relies on. This includes conservation, trade, and research programs. ASTA also continues to advocate for regulatory provisions that would clarify the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) regulatory scope and remove excessive burdens for plant breeders.

Certain Farm Bill programs were supported as part of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), which was signed into law in June 2025. This legislative package was enacted as part of the Budget Reconciliation process, which limits the legislation to provisions that directly impact federal spending, revenue, and the debt limit. The OBBBA extends key tax provisions first enacted in the previous Trump Administration. Additionally, it funds Farm Bill Title 1 Commodity Programs, invests in certain conservation programs, provides funding to USDA export promotion programs, extends the 45Z credit for clean fuel production through 2029 for fuel produced with North American feedstocks, and provides funds for certain research programs including the Specialty Crop Research Initiative and the Research Facilities Act.

While the OBBBA provided for many key agricultural programs, there are many Farm Bill programs and statutes that remain to be addressed. ASTA staff continues to advocate in support of addressing these needs, including the Conservation Reserve Program, authorizations for critical research programs, and a number of other outstanding Farm Bill issues that were not included in the OBBBA package.

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Make America Healthy Again

As a result of the February 13, 2025 Executive Order (EO 14212) from the White House, the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission was established. The Commission is led by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, and includes key Administration officials, including Brooke Rollins, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Its work focuses on investigating and addressing the root causes of America's escalating health crisis, with a focus on childhood chronic diseases.

ASTA staff has met with key Administration officials leading the MAHA effort at the White House, USDA, Health and Human Services (HHS), and other relevant agencies, to advocate on the important role that the seed industry plays in supporting human health. Additionally, ASTA is engaging with Members of Congress that are leading MAHA related legislation to convey seed industry priorities.

Engagement with Regulatory Agencies on Plant Breeding Innovation

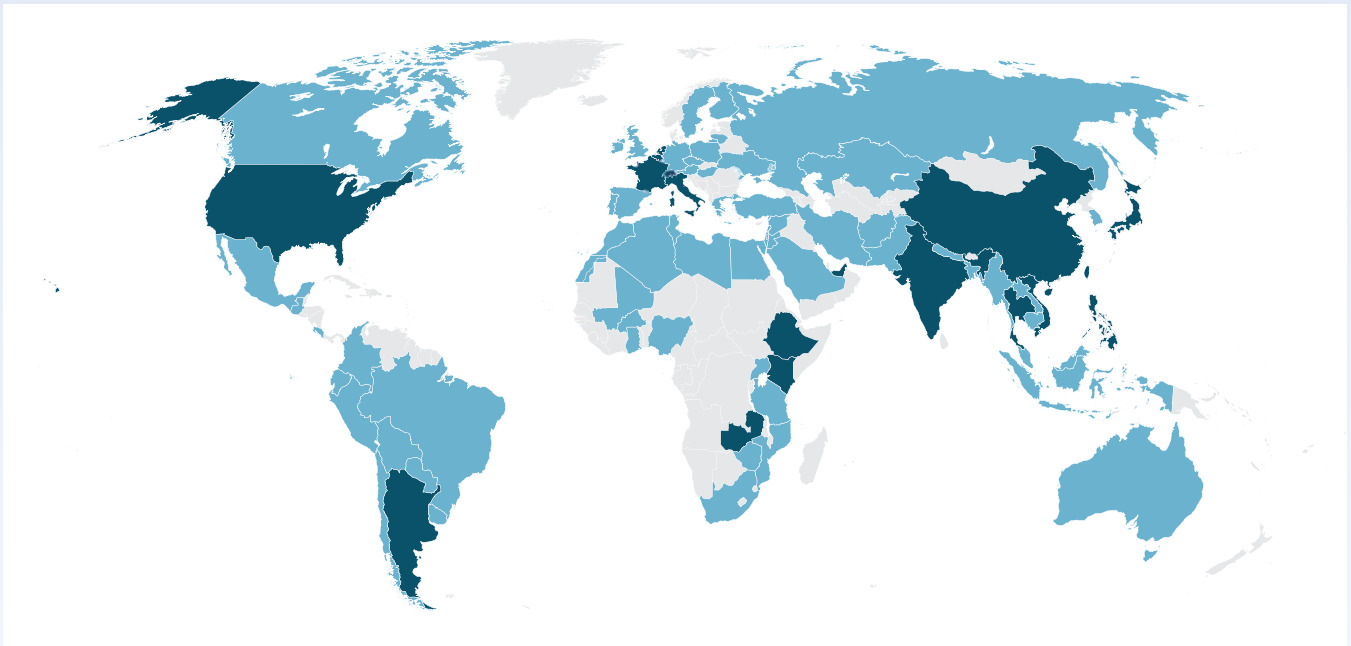
ASTA routinely meets with key regulatory officials to advocate for risk-based, predictable oversight of plants derived through plant breeding innovation (PBI), such as genome editing. Drawing on over 30 years of regulatory experience in the seed sector, ASTA continues to identify opportunities for regulatory streamlining and improvements. However, litigation by anti-biotech groups remains a challenge to regulatory reform. In December 2024, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California issued a decision on a lawsuit filed by a coalition of NGOs and vacated the USDA's SECURE Rule, originally implemented in 2020 to modernize the regulation of biotech crops. In response, USDA APHIS reinstated the legacy 7 CFR Part 340 regulations. ASTA staff met with APHIS to support a smooth transition and ensure clarity for its members. While the return to the legacy 340 rule has led to more cumbersome procedures for plants that are regulated, these processes offer greater flexibility than the previous SECURE rule in addressing the regulatory statuses of PBI derived plants, such as crops improved with genome editing. ASTA remains committed to working collaboratively with regulators to ensure that U.S. policy keeps pace with innovation, supports global competitiveness, and provides clear pathways for emerging technologies in plant breeding.

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International Programs and Policy

In 2024, ASTA continued its leadership in international seed trade policy, leveraging its global network to address trade barriers, promote science-based regulation, and ensure long-term market access for the U.S. seed industry. By leveraging its Market Access Program (MAP), Foreign Market Development (FMD), and Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP) federal funding from the USDA to drive key advocacy efforts, ASTA's active participation in international forums ensured the interests of U.S. seed companies remained central to shaping global trade rules, phytosanitary standards, and innovation policies.

Anticipating the end of ASTA's pandemic-based extension to ATP, ASTA not only successfully closed the ATP program, but also applied for and was awarded a new USDA federal grant through the Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP). These programs, past and present, strengthen ASTA's ability to influence international policy and foster alignment on key issues impacting the global seed industry. In ASTA's 2024 program year alone, ASTA worked with the International Seed Federation (ISF) and regional seed association partners to sponsor and participate in in-person meetings across 17 countries (dark blue), reaching representatives from nearly 100 countries (light blue) to promote best practices on global seed trade.



ASTA's MAP and FMD funding play a critical role in shaping international market access opportunities for the U.S. seed sector

ASTA's representation within ISF expanded significantly during the 2024 nomination cycle, reflecting years of relationship-building and strategic engagement. ASTA secured two seats on the ISF Board and gained full representation across all requested working bodies, including ten Coordination Groups, three Advisory Groups, and two Expert Groups. This resulted in 31 representatives from ASTA (27 member companies and 4 staff) serving across ISF's internal structures, in addition to 12 U.S.-based individuals who were independently selected to serve on behalf of their companies. These appointments ensure the U.S. seed sector has a strong voice in global discussions on key issues, including plant breeding innovation (PBI), intellectual property, phytosanitary policy, seed health, illegal seed practices, and sustainability.

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This strategic presence allowed ASTA to drive tangible outcomes across multiple regions in 2024:

Expanding Seed Trade Through the Mekong-U.S. Partnership

ASTA deepened its engagement in Southeast Asia through the Mekong-U.S. Partnership (MUSP), co-hosting a series of regional workshops with USDA and the Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA). These workshops brought together government officials and private-sector leaders to promote best practices on seed laws, intellectual property protection, phytosanitary systems, and biotechnology regulation. This long-term capacity-building initiative supported policy reforms in countries like Vietnam and Thailand, contributing to a 120 percent increase in U.S. seed exports to the region since 2019.

Promoting Plant Breeding Innovation Policy Alignment Globally

Through close coordination with ISF, regional and national seed associations, ASTA has advanced the adoption of consistent and future-proofed regulatory approaches to plant breeding innovation (PBI) through a series of high-level international engagements. In October 2024, ASTA partnered with *Foreign Policy* magazine's Food+ Forum during the UN General Assembly to highlight the seed industry's

role in developing climate-resilient crops. That same month, ASTA supported the second industry-government PBI roundtable at the Seed Association of the Americas Congress, focusing on regulatory alignment and coordinated trade engagement. In early 2025, ASTA led a week-long mission to Brussels, meeting with EU policymakers, parliamentarians, and Council representatives to influence the pending new genomic technologies (NGT) legislative file, highlighted by a U.S. mission to the EU seminar showcasing SME innovation from member companies. This was followed in March 2025 by engagement with the newly seated European Parliament to emphasize ASTA policy perspectives, and ASTA supporting the first Africa industry-government PBI roundtable at the Africa Seed Congress in Kigali, Rwanda, fostering dialogue on genome editing and regional regulatory compatibility.

Through all these efforts, ASTA continues to serve as a trusted voice for the U.S. seed industry on the global stage. Whether reopening key markets, building regulatory alignment, or fostering science-based trade frameworks, ASTA's international programs ensure that U.S. seed companies remain competitive, resilient, and well-positioned in a dynamic global marketplace.

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Phytosanitary Trade Barriers

This past year, the international movement of seed faced growing obstacles due to increasingly restrictive phytosanitary measures implemented by National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs). These evolving requirements created new challenges for companies in securing phytosanitary certificates and caused major disruptions to seed export and re-export activities.

In response, ASTA has remained focused on strengthening science-based engagement with NPPOs and regulatory agencies—both in the U.S. and internationally. We continue to work closely with regional plant protection organizations and global entities such as the FAO's International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) in collaboration with National and Regional Seed Associations. These efforts aim not only to address urgent trade barriers but also to drive sustainable, long-term policy solutions that support reliable and predictable seed movement.

Safeguarding U.S.-Chile Corn Seed Trade Through Coordinated Advocacy

In 2023 alone, the U.S. exported approximately \$1.6 million in field corn seed and \$1.1 million in sweet corn seed to Chile, while importing around \$50 million in field corn seed and \$3.8 million in sweet corn seed—underscoring the scale and importance of this bilateral seed trade. That same year, Chile's Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) proposed amendments to corn seed import requirements, adding 16 new pests to the entry criteria. If implemented as initially drafted, the regulation could have significantly disrupted seed production and trade. In close coordination with APHIS and national and regional seed associations, ASTA led advocacy efforts to raise concerns about the scientific basis for the proposed pest list, emphasizing that several of the pests had not been documented to infect corn naturally or to be seed-transmitted. ASTA also urged SAG to distinguish between grain and seed in its risk assessments.

As a result of this coordinated advocacy, SAG adopted several science-based and risk-proportionate revisions to its proposed regulation, including:

- **Postponing implementation** from May 2024 to December 2026;
- **Removing 8 of the 16 pests** originally listed, based on scientific risk assessments;
- **Grandfathering existing seed stocks**, stipulating that only corn seed harvested after the regulation's effective date will be subject to the new requirements;
- **Exempting corn seed produced in Chile**, processed in the U.S., and re-exported to Chile from the new import requirements.
- **Reduce importation requirements** for seeds intended for Research and Development (R&D);
- **Eliminate the specific requirements for 7 weed species** and replace them with a general requirement that seeds be "free from quarantine weeds."

These outcomes not only safeguard critical trade flows with Chile—one of the U.S. seed industry's key export markets—but also highlight how proactive, science-driven industry engagement can shape phytosanitary policy outcomes globally.

ASTA Partners with Oklahoma State University to Advance Detection of Regulated Corn Pathogens

ASTA partnered with Oklahoma State University (OSU) on a USDA-funded initiative to support a graduate student in seed pathology research, with a focus on strengthening agricultural biosecurity and microbial forensics. The overarching goal of the program is to develop future leaders in agricultural biosecurity. As part of this initiative, a graduate student at OSU is developing novel diagnostic tools using MiFi®—a bioinformatics platform for metagenomic pathogen detection. The project specifically targets three regulated corn pathogens of concern under Chile's new phytosanitary requirements for seed imports: *Pantoea stewartia* subsp. *Stewartia*,

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Clavibacter nebraskensis, and *Stenocarpella maydis*. The objective is to deliver a faster, genomics-based screening tool for seed health testing—enhancing export readiness and regulatory compliance for the U.S. seed industry. Preliminary findings from this research were presented at the 2025 American Phytopathological Society (APS) Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii.

ASTA Reopens Tomato and Pepper Seed Exports to the European Union

In 2023, a sudden regulatory shift in the European Union brought U.S. tomato seed exports to a standstill. New traceability requirements related to *Tomato brown rugose fruit virus* (ToBRFV) prevented USDA-APHIS from issuing re-export phytosanitary certificates, despite exporters' prior compliance. As a result, U.S. shipments to the EU dropped from \$21.5 million in 2021 to just \$1 million by 2023—placing U.S. seed companies at a serious disadvantage. ASTA responded promptly and strategically to address the emerging trade barrier. Working in close partnership with USDA-APHIS, industry counterparts in and seed associations in Europe, ASTA launched a multi-

pronged advocacy campaign targeting both U.S. and EU regulatory bodies. Thanks to ASTA's sustained efforts and coalition-building, in 2024 five EU Member States—Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Greece—adopted more flexible interpretations of the regulation, allowing U.S. shipments to resume. Then, in 2025, the European Commission adopted new rules that included multiple ASTA-recommended changes: 1) reclassifying ToBRFV from a quarantine pest to a regulated non-quarantine pest (RNQP); 2) eliminating the production site traceability requirement; and 3) allowing mother plant testing in place of seed testing for lots derived from 30 or fewer mother plants. As a result, U.S. seed companies regained full access to the EU tomato seed market, with 2024 U.S. seed exports of tomato seed rebounding to \$12.4 million. This success not only restored millions in export potential, but also helped shape more practical, science-based phytosanitary standards-based regulations. By working across borders and through sustained engagement, ASTA continues to protect the interests of U.S. seed exporters while promoting safe and fair international trade.



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Advocating for the Seed Industry Through Strategic Responses to WTO Notifications

Phytosanitary notifications submitted through the World Trade Organization (WTO) have increased in recent years, prompting ASTA to enhance its efforts to monitor and respond to measures that may negatively impact U.S.-origin seed. Many of these proposed regulations lack scientific justification or target pathogens with no proven evidence of seed transmission. ASTA also monitors measures implemented outside of the WTO notification process or without the minimum public comment period required by international standards. To better support our members, ASTA launched a dedicated WTO Notifications tab within the Pest Database for Seeds (PeDS), which is updated monthly and includes a summary spreadsheet of new or revised regulations.

Chile—Corn Seed: Submitted multiple formal responses to Chile's proposed import requirements, urging science-based differentiation between grain and seed risks and objecting to the regulation of organisms lacking seed transmission evidence.

Peru—Pepper Seeds: Opposed the regulation of multiple pathogens based on the absence of valid pest records and seed transmission evidence. Raised concerns about treatments that may reduce seed germination and requested greater flexibility in diagnostic methods.

European Union—Legume Seeds (Soybean, Common Bean, Cowpea, *Vigna* spp., Fava Bean): Advocated for more flexible diagnostic options for *Curtobacterium flaccumfaciens* pv. *Flaccumfaciens*, clarification on lot sampling, removal of burdensome production site traceability, and a transition period through January 2026 to accommodate limited U.S. testing capacity.

Australia—Tomato and Capsicum Seeds: Raised technical concerns about restrictive testing protocols and lab authorization procedures lacking scientific justification. Requested recognition of equivalent diagnostic methods and a phased implementation timeline to reduce trade disruptions.

United States—Corn Seed Pest Risk Assessment: Engaged APHIS to ensure seed-specific risks were considered separately from grain. Recommended excluding several organisms from regulation due to outdated or irrelevant data and emphasized that certain weeds should not be regulated based on their lack of connection to seed production.

Peru—Tomato Seed: Opposed proposed requirements based on lack of seed transmission evidence for several pests. Raised concerns about the effects of proposed treatments on seed viability and requested acceptance of alternative testing methods, NSHS recognition, and an 18-month transition period for industry adjustment.

Brazil—Verbena Seed: Requested removal of two pathogens from proposed requirements due to the absence of seed transmission evidence, protecting market access for U.S. ornamental seed exports.

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Communications

As part of ASTA's efforts to communicate our industry's work in providing farmers access to professionally produced, high quality seed, the ASTA Communications Team continued to find new and creative messaging points to achieve this goal, while supporting ongoing partnerships with commodity organizations.



ASTA's annual public service announcement (PSA) highlighted the importance of the safe handling, transporting, and disposal of treated seed during fall harvest. This message, deployed on farm radio through the National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB), targeted farmers, applicators, retailers, and other stakeholders who interact with treated seed. In the spring, a similar PSA campaign was launched during the spring planting season. ASTA has partnered with NAFB on these campaigns for over a decade, as farm radio continues to be a top news source for those living in rural America, with over 42 percent of farmers choosing it as their first choice for trustworthy ag news and information.



The association also continued its involvement with the Growing Matters coalition and its annual BeSure! Campaign. This stewardship initiative, also launched during planting season, supports farmers in protecting bees and other wildlife, while leveraging the use of agricultural technology to maximize their yields and protect their crops from weeds, invasive pests, and diseases. As part of our participation in BeSure!, ASTA's Andy LaVigne serves as a campaign spokesperson, offering the seed industry perspective on the need to protect pollinators during planting season.



2025 also brought opportunity to once again partner with the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association for their annual social media influencer farm tour. The tour included seven creators in the dietary, nutrition, and lifestyle space, aiming to educate consumers as they make choices in the produce aisle. ASTA is a proud standing sponsor of this event, recognizing the impact that social media has on users in today's crowded media environment. ASTA member Enza Zaden was a featured stop on the tour, hosting the group at their research station in Southwest Florida. The creators learned about Enza Zaden's global footprint in seed production and plant breeding and were invited to take part in hand pollinating peppers.



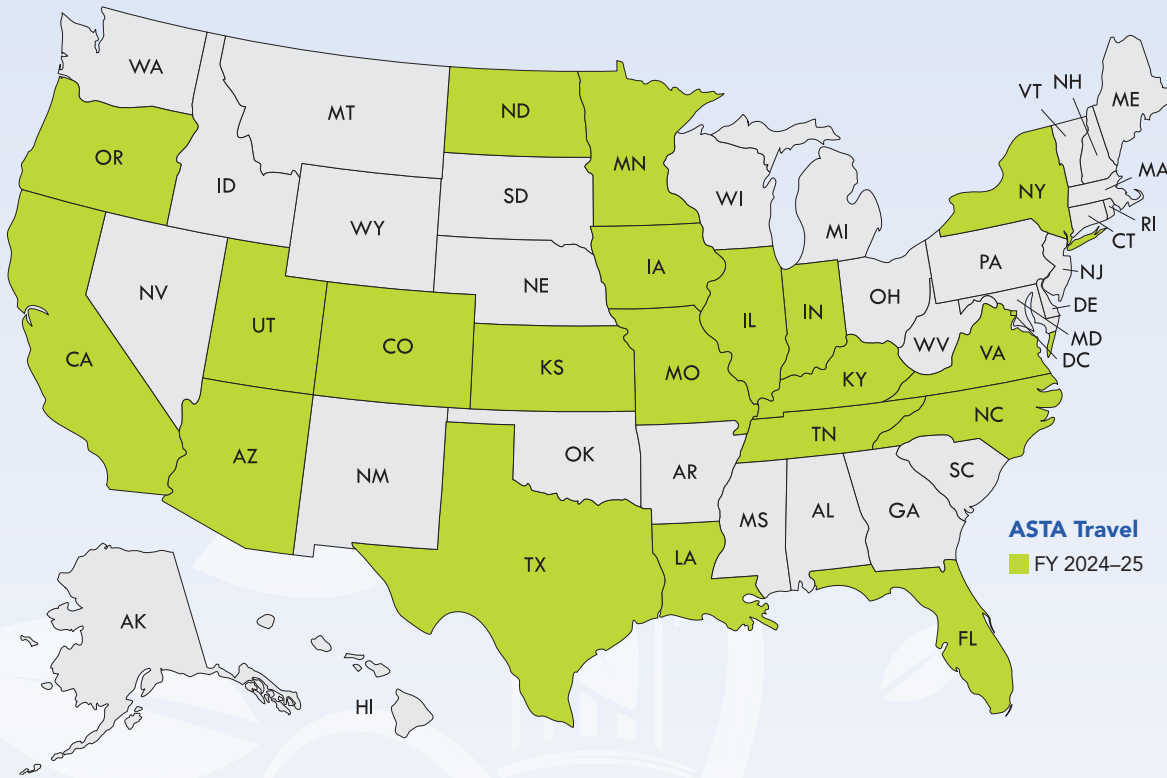
ASTA's presence across the globe was a key part of the association's messaging strategy. ASTA's Dr. Fan-Li Chou took the stage during the United Nation General Assembly meetings in New York City in a panel hosted by *Foreign Policy*. The panel was part of *Foreign Policy's Food+ Forum*, where she discussed the advances of genome editing in the seed sector and its contributions to global food security and agricultural trade. Dr. Chou presented onstage alongside ASTA members Dr. Tom

Adams, Co-Founder and CEO, Pairwise and Dr. Peter Beetham, Co-Founder, President, and COO, Cibus. The event, held in person and online, included attendees from over 80 countries and resulted in nearly 15,000 views, 64,000 social media impressions, and 26,000 digital ad impressions over the two weeks following the event.

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Membership Engagement

ASTA members are the foundation of the association, and their needs remain the highest priority. Over the past year, ASTA staff has worked tirelessly to connect with members through conferences, committee meetings, industry events, and speaking engagements. These conversations are more than just check-ins; they are essential to understanding the challenges and opportunities facing the seed industry. The insights shared by members help guide our policy discussions, shape our advocacy, and strengthen our ability to promote the industry.



This year, ASTA welcomed Danielle Cummins as Director of Member Engagement, a role dedicated to ensuring that the association delivers meaningful value to every member. Guided by the ASTA Board of Directors, the Leadership Team has made it clear: the future of ASTA will continue to deliver value through unparalleled networking opportunities, professional development, advocacy, and access to industry leaders. The actions we take today, alongside our members, will help ensure a vibrant and resilient seed industry for years to come.

Student Membership

ASTA is pleased to cultivate the future of the seed industry through its student membership, currently serving more than 110 members ranging from undergraduate students to PhD candidates. Partner universities are helping to promote the membership program to students in relevant programs. ASTA's Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD) Committee worked to develop different ways to engage the association's student members, including a new student committee run by students, for students. 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.

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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:

- **Breeding Systems**
- **Seed Health and Pathology**
- **Seed Quality**
- **Digital Agriculture**
- **Seed Production and Technology**
- **Seed Applied Technology**



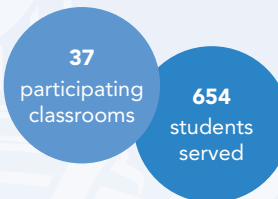
FIRST THE SEED FOUNDATION

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:



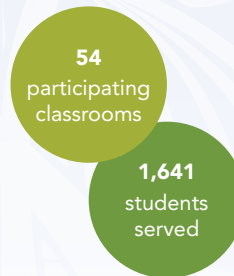
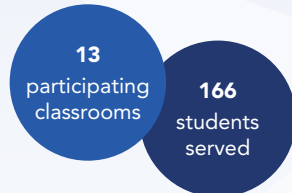
Tomatosphere™

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.



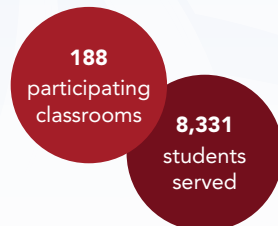
Grow A Seed

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.



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.



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.

Innovate

This program allows students to learn about the history and future of plant breeding. Interactive modules will look at the latest innovations, including CRISPR gene editing, and answer questions including: what is it, is it safe, and how will it impact the future of our planet, health, and food?

School Garden Grant

This program is intended to help support, create, and use school gardens as a learning tool to excite children about the miracle of seed.

ADVOCATE

ASTA Honors Seed Industry Leaders

ASTA honored past and present seed industry groundbreakers during the 2025 ASTA Leadership Summit in June in Washington, D.C. The slate of honors included: Distinguished Service Award; Honorary Lifetime Member Award; and Heritage Awards. For more information on these awards, including past recipients, visit betterseed.org/seed-industry-honors.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Dr. Steve Malone is currently the U.S. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Seed Schemes Program Manager and the USDA-AMS-S&T-Seed Regulatory & Testing Division (SRTD). In his role as OECD Seed Schemes Program Manager, Steve is responsible for assisting seed certifying agencies and companies in the U.S. in complying with the OECD Seed Schemes rules and regulations when shipping seed internationally to OECD Seed Schemes member countries.



Dr. Steve Malone
USDA-AMS-S&T-SRTD

HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBER AWARD

Dr. Raymond Dobert is currently the owner of Harambe Ag Consulting, LLC, working with his clients to find regulatory policy solutions. Prior to "retirement" in the fall of 2024, Ray worked at Monsanto and Bayer CropScience for over 26 years in a variety of biotech regulatory policy and affairs roles.



Dr. Ray Dobert
Bayer/Monsanto

HERITAGE AWARDS

The Heritage Award was created 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. This year, ASTA recognized Nathan Boardman, Gary Arthur, and Wayne Skidmore as the Heritage Award recipients. For more information about the award and this year's recipients, visit betterseed.org/astas-seed-industry-heritage-award.



Nathan Boardman



Gary Arthur



Wayne Skidmore

ADVOCATE

Conventions & Meetings

The 2024–25 year saw new, elevated elements for ASTA meetings. From creative use of meeting spaces to updated design features, each of the annual events saw increased engagement from attendees.

2024 Forage, Turf, & Conservation Seed Conference

ASTA's Forage, Turf, & Conservation Seed Conference was held once again in conjunction with the Western Seed Association Conference in Kansas City, Missouri in October 2024. The event included a full day of programming featuring speakers from the private and public sectors, offering the latest updates on cover crops, conservation programs, federal policy, and more.



2024 Field Crop Seed Convention

ASTA's Field Crop Seed Convention returned to Orlando, Florida. The streamlined convention schedule featured Dan Basse's 2024 agricultural economy forecast with standing room only, perspective on how farmers and consumers can prepare and react to the unpredictability of weather systems, case studies on how customer demands will push the seed industry into new frontiers, and a fireside chat with U.S. Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs Annie Petsonk discussing sustainable aviation fuel, industry trends, and more.



64th Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference

In 2025, ASTA's 64th Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference was held in Orlando, Florida. The event provided a bustling business networking environment and saw enthusiastic engagement from participants in General Sessions on topics in seed production, navigating trends in the produce and ornamentals markets, and a keynote by International Fresh Produce Association CEO Cathy Burns on the future of agriculture.



2025 Leadership Summit

This year's Leadership Summit was held in Washington, D.C. and concluded with its signature Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill. To prepare participants for meetings on Capitol Hill, ASTA developed several advocacy-focused sessions, including a panel on tariffs and trade, insight from EPA and USDA officials, advice on making the most of advocacy engagement, and more. For Advocacy Day, 148 seed industry leaders from across the industry were grouped into 17 teams to participate in 87 bipartisan, bicameral meetings on Capitol Hill. These meetings focused on advocating for robust ag research funding, regulatory certainty to support innovation, and maintaining U.S. global leadership in trade. The Summit included popular networking events from the Welcome Reception, the Awards Luncheon where ASTA's annual awards were presented, and concluded with a Closing Reception.



ADVOCATE

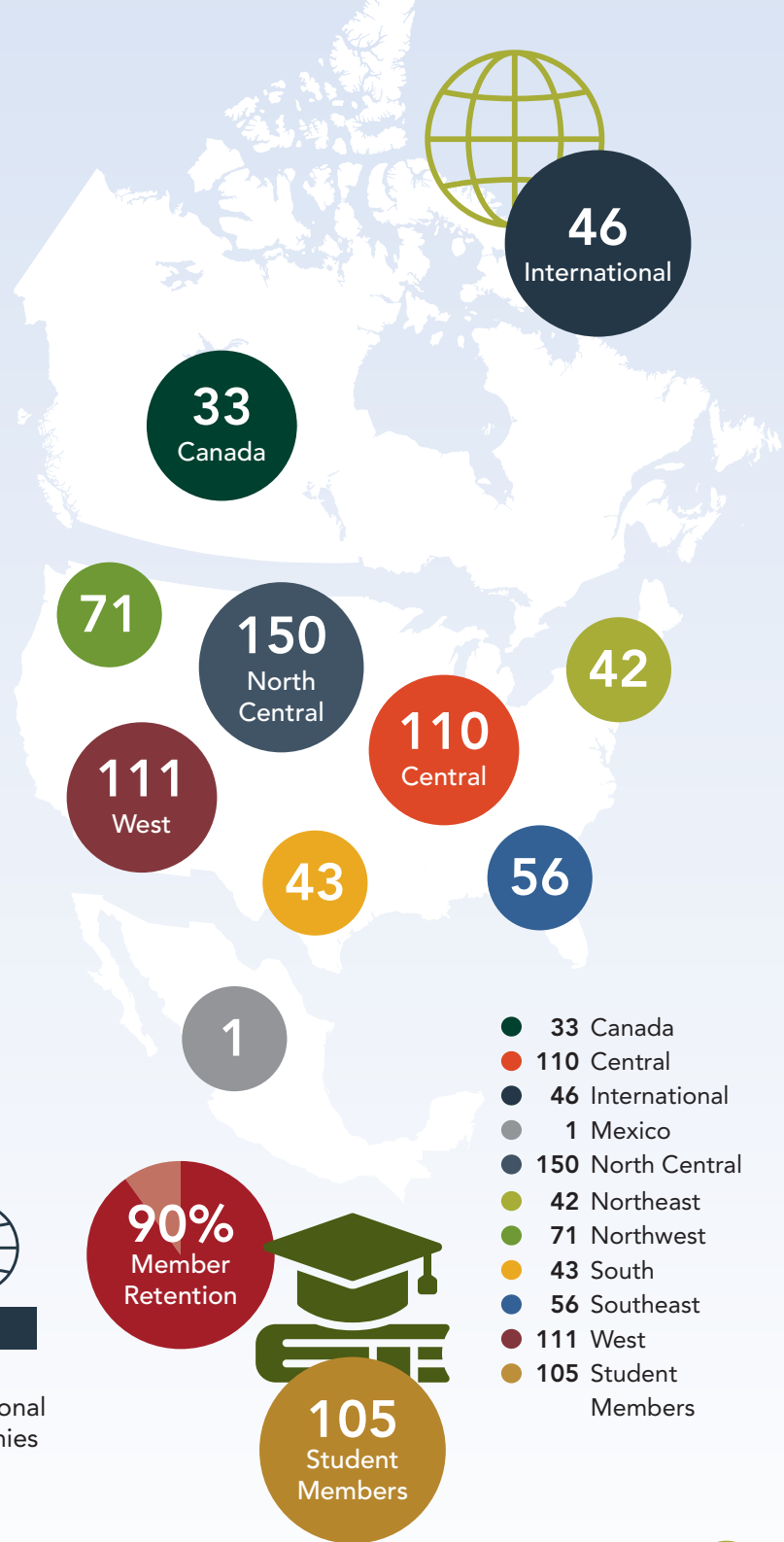
Membership Breakdown

MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE

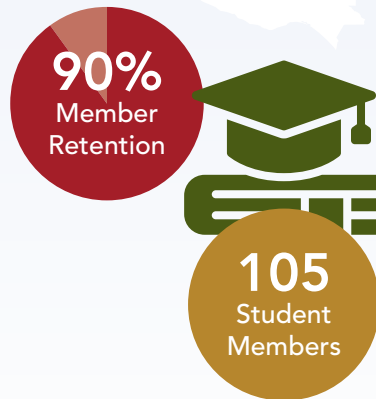
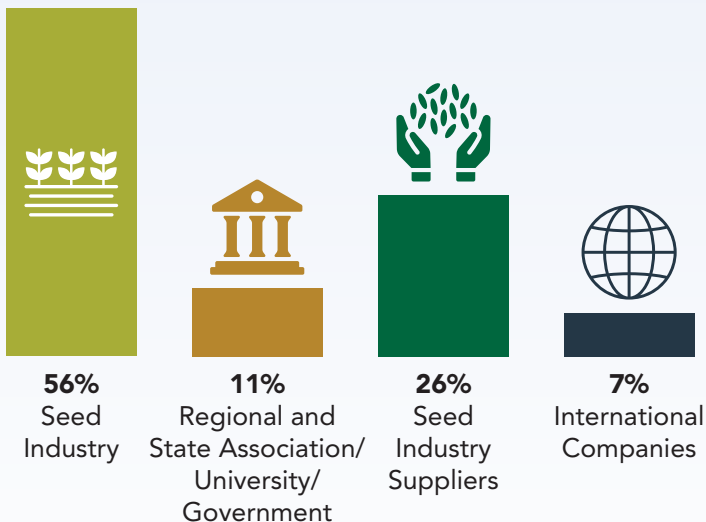


- 372 Active Members
- 49 Affiliate Members
- 169 Associate Members
- 33 Corresponding International Members
- 40 Reciprocal Members
- 663 Total Members**

MEMBERSHIP BY REGION



MEMBERSHIP BY CATEGORY



- 33 Canada
- 110 Central
- 46 International
- 1 Mexico
- 150 North Central
- 42 Northeast
- 71 Northwest
- 43 South
- 56 Southeast
- 111 West
- 105 Student Members

Financial Position

ASTA's 2023–24 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, CBIZ, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, GAAP. The 2023–24 audit confirmed the financial health of the association, which ended its fiscal year with \$4,710,533 in net assets. In addition, it calculated in-kind contributions from member companies at \$13,204,892. This includes promotion, travel, research, and professional services that the audit firm included in the FY 2023–24 audit.

Investment and Reserve Policy

The Advisory Council 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	\$12,706,750
Membership dues	\$4,035,775
Registration fees	\$1,025,279
Government grants and contracts.....	\$731,065
Exhibit fees	\$399,330
Contributions and sponsorships	\$355,600
Administrative service fees.....	\$10,000
Other income	\$56,272
Total Operating Revenue	\$19,320,071

Operating Expenses

Program Services

International initiatives.....	\$13,866,479
Meetings	\$1,321,346
Policy	\$1,496,966
Legislation	\$841,220
Membership	\$197,059
Other	\$231,627
Total Program Services	\$17,954,697

Supporting Service

General and administrative.....	\$2,093,274
Total Operating Expenses.....	\$20,047,971
Change in Net Assets	\$(727,900)

Non-operating Activities

Investment income, net	\$619,403
Change in net assets.....	\$(108,497)
Net assets, beginning of year.....	\$4,710,533
Net assets, end of year.....	\$4,602,036

ADVOCATE



american
seed trade
association

ASTA Staff

Executive Office

Andrew W. LaVigne
President and CEO

Libby Hogen-Heath
Executive Assistant

Domestic and International Policy

Fan-Li Chou, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President, Scientific Affairs & Policy

Janae Brady
Vice President, Government Affairs

Martha Malapi, Ph.D
Director, Seed Health and Trade

Sam Crowell, Ph.D.
Senior Director, International Programs and Policy

Jordan Gregory
Director, State Government Affairs

Finance & Administration

Ann Jorss
Chief Operating Officer

Danielle Cummins
Director, Member Engagement

Ann Ward
Assistant to the COO

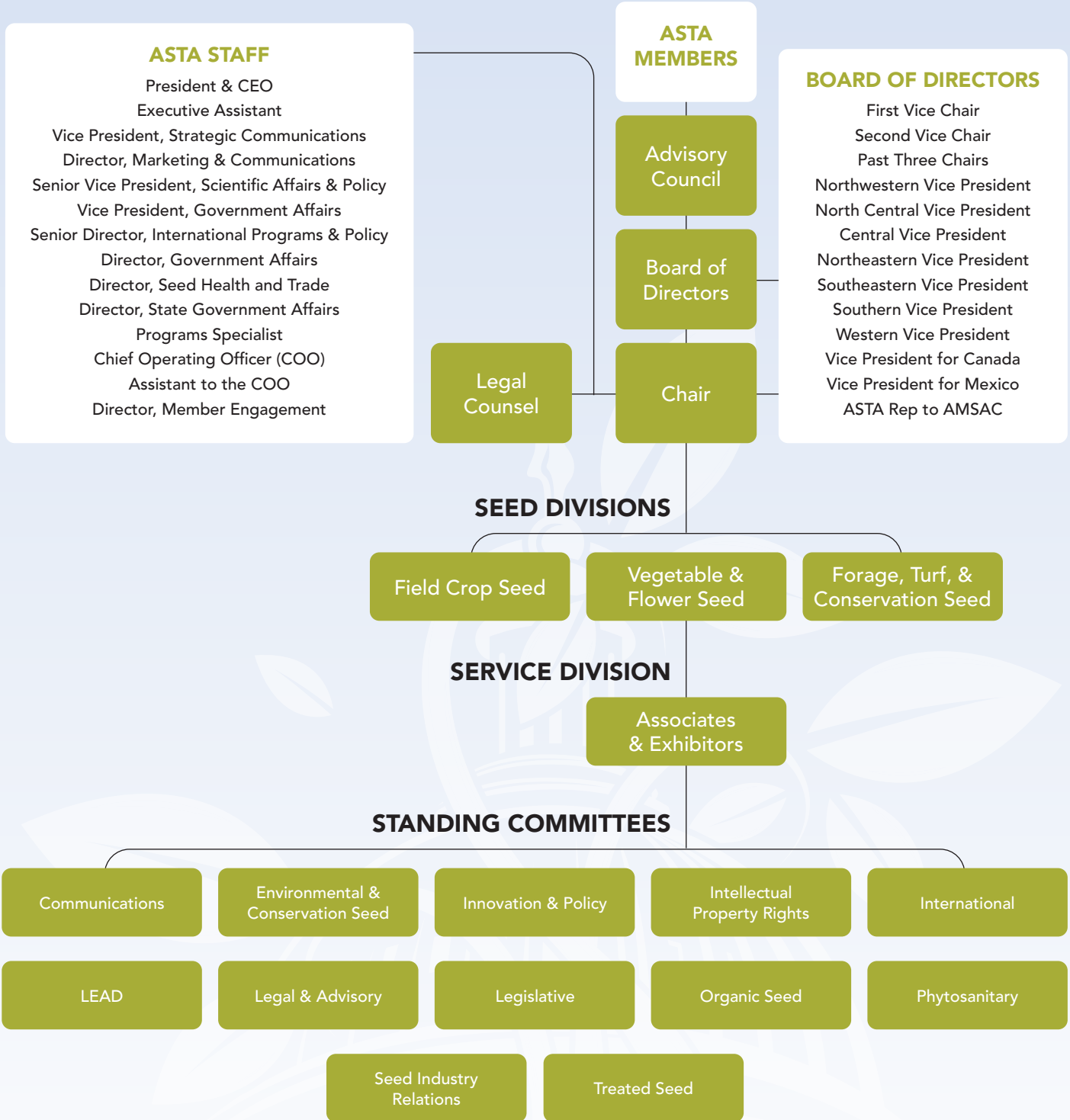
Communications

Katrina Bishop
Senior Director, Strategic Communications

Kaitlin Crawford
Director, Marketing and Communications

ADVOCATE

Organizational Chart



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