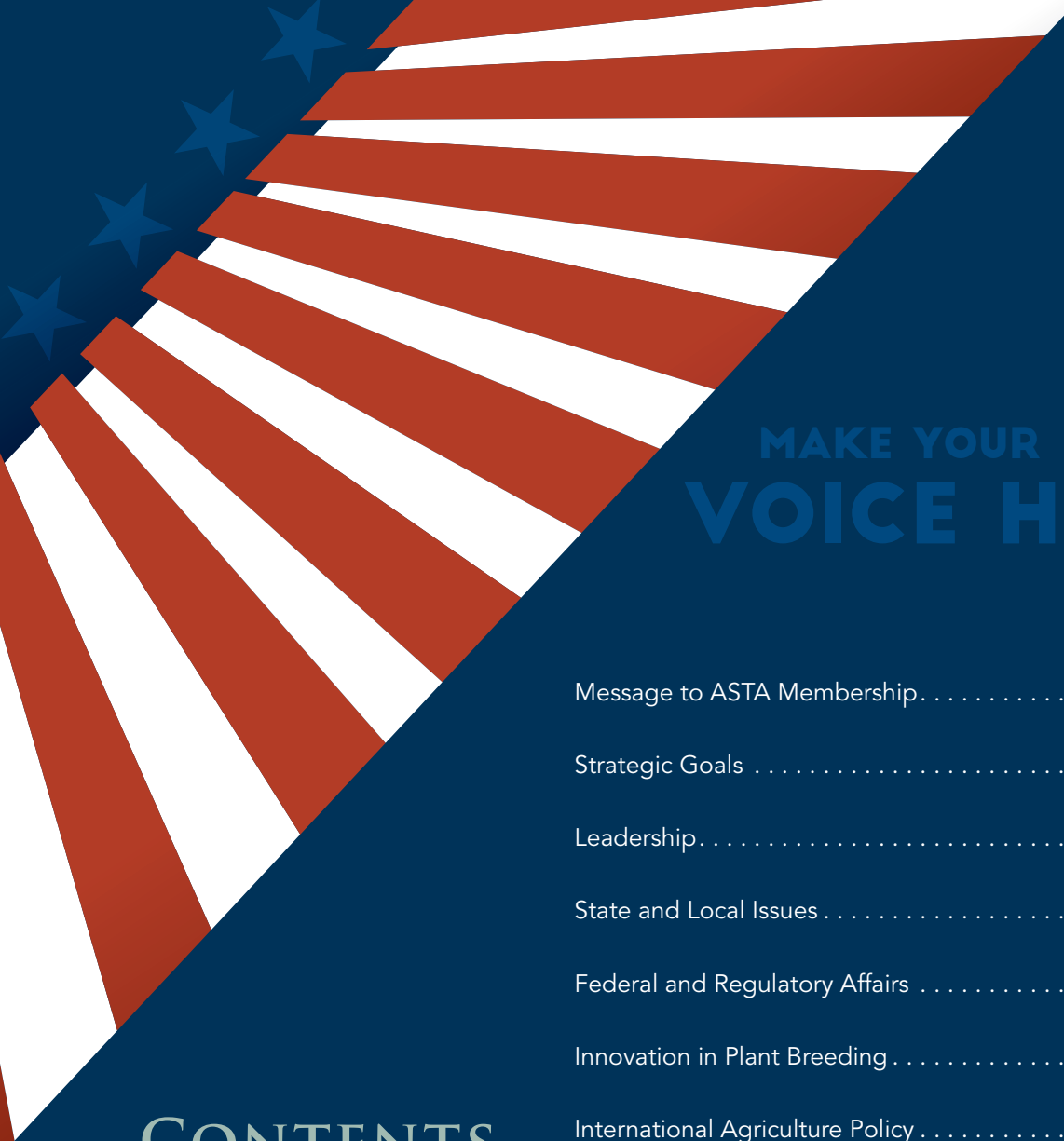


asta
first—the seed[®]

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD
AMERICAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

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MESSAGE TO ASTA MEMBERSHIP

Over the past year, the American Seed Trade Association focused many of its efforts on one word: advocate. When you look up the word in the dictionary you will find it can be used as either a noun or a verb. As a noun, **an advocate** is a person who publically supports or recommends a particular cause or policy; as a verb, **to advocate** is the actual action of publically recommending or supporting. As ASTA members, you have truly embraced this concept by becoming seed advocates and making your voices heard more loudly than ever before.

As we all know, the seed industry has a great story to tell. You are on the cutting edge of research and development that is making a real impact on people's lives, both here and abroad. As lawmakers make decisions that impact your ability to innovate and grow your businesses, they need to hear from you directly about what you do and how it impacts all of our lives. From the clothes we wear, to the food we eat, to the fuel that powers our cars, it all starts with a seed.

ASTA members have truly risen to the challenge, with record numbers attending our Storm the Hill events in the nation's capital. Participants discussed ASTA's positions on some of the most pressing issues facing the industry, while building invaluable relationships with key elected officials, staff and government representatives. Other highlights of the year include:

- Continuing to drive ASTA activities guided by the five-year Strategic Plan
- Making significant strides in protecting intellectual property rights
- Developing strong plant-breeding messages for domestic and international audiences
- Seeing a seed communications and advocacy initiative come to life
- Building on international relationships

While the year at ASTA has come to an end, it is just the beginning; we are excited about what lies ahead as our coordinated advocacy efforts continue to strengthen and expand. I challenge you to make a renewed commitment this year to making your voices heard. Keep building those relationships with your local, state and federal lawmakers. Get your colleagues involved. Get the young people in your company involved. It is all of us – regional and international, flowers, vegetables, grasses, forages and row crops – that provide the link to the past and the drive to the future. We are all stronger when we work together – That is the value of ASTA!

We thank you for your continued engagement and support of the association. It is an honor to represent you. Our best to you for a productive year ahead!



John Schoenecker

HM.CLAUSE
ASTA Chair 2014/15



Andrew W. LaVigne

President and CEO

STRATEGIC GOALS

ASTA VISION

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 MISSION

Be an 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 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.

KEY STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

Intellectual Property Rights

Advance the use and respect of intellectual property rights protection for the global seed industry.

State and Local Issues

Be recognized as an effective national resource to assist in resolving state and local seed trade issues.

Domestic Policy

Be a respected, leading voice on domestic policy issues impacting the seed industry.

International Programs

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

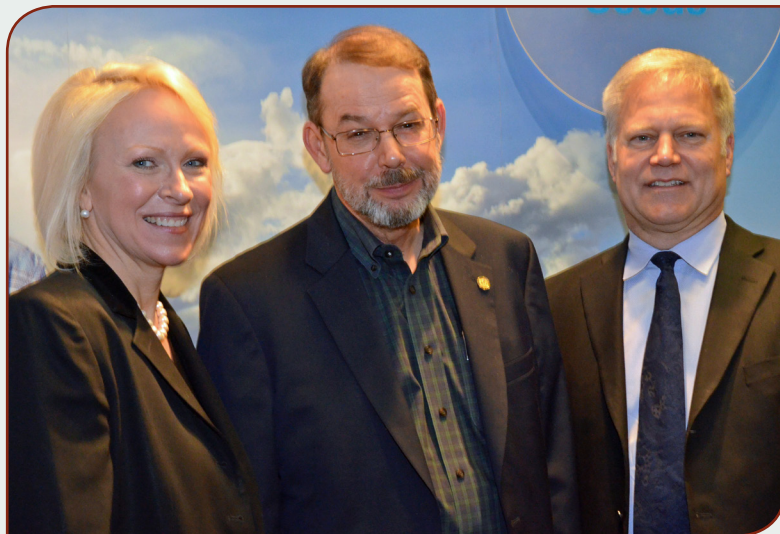
ASTA Communications

Establish ASTA as a key advocate for the U.S. seed industry and a high value resource for its members.

ASTA Membership and Internal Matters

Constantly improve the internal operations of ASTA to more efficiently serve membership with continued emphasis on the importance of effective human and financial management systems.

LEADERSHIP



From left to right: Risa DeMasi, First Vice Chair; John Schoenecker, Chair; Mark Herrmann, Second Vice Chair

CHAIR

John Schoenecker
HM.CLAUSE

FIRST VICE CHAIR

Risa DeMasi
Grassland Oregon

SECOND VICE CHAIR

Mark Herrmann
Monsanto Vegetable

Regional Vice Presidents

Perry Bohn, Southeastern Region Vice President,
BASF

Andy Ernst, Northeastern Region Vice President,
Ernst Conservation Seeds

Wayne Gale, Vice President from CSTA,
Stokes Seeds

David Pearl, Central Region Vice President,
The CISCO Companies

John Latham, North Central Region Vice President,
Latham Hi-Tech Seeds

Rob Mitchell, Northwestern Region Vice President,
Simplot

Jerry Monk, Interim Vice President to Mexico,
Warner Seeds

Alan Ostercamp, Southern Region Vice President,
RiceTec, Inc.

Jim Schweigert, Vice President to Canada,
Gro Alliance, LLC

Mervyn Selvidge, Western Region Vice President,
Z&S Seed Services, Inc.

Jose Luis Gastelum, Vice President from AMSAC,
Syngenta

Division Chairs

Charles Miller, Corn & Sorghum Division, Chromatin, Inc.

Stacy Woodruff, Vegetable and Flower Seed Division,
Bayer CropScience Vegetable Seeds

Jeff Koscelny, Farm Seed Division, Monsanto

Paul Kjolhaug, Brokers-Agents Division, MayerSeedLine, LLC

Mark Massoudi, Associate Member Division, Ag-Biotech, Inc.

Bill Merrigan, Lawn Seed Division, Blue Mountain Seeds, Inc.

Jim Shearl, Soybean Division, AgReliant Genetics

Directors at Large

Brad May, Bayer CropScience

David Morgan, Syngenta

Tom Wilttrout, Dow AgroSciences

Immediate Past Chairs

Craig Newman, AgReliant Genetics

Blake Curtis, Curtis & Curtis, Inc.

Mike Gumina, RiceTec, Inc.

STATE AND LOCAL ISSUES

In 2014/15, ASTA continued aggressive grassroots efforts and monitored several strategic priorities within state governments. The ASTA state affairs team tracked and monitored 127 bills, 24 of which passed with none having a negative impact on the seed industry.

ASTA member-representatives and staff also attended 25 state and regional meetings. ASTA is monitoring and taking action on a number of issues facing the seed industry at the state level, including:

Assurance of an Adequately Funded State Regulatory System

ASTA supports a viable and efficient regulatory system for the seed industry. ASTA works to ensure adequate funding to enable a sustainable state infrastructure to support these regulatory systems.

Consistency of State Laws and Regulations

A patchwork of varying laws between states would add unnecessarily to the cost of doing business in each state and, therefore, penalize farmers and consumers. ASTA promotes states' utilization of the Recommended Uniform State Seed Law, authored by the Association of American Seed Control Officials.

Seed Lab Uniformity

Consistency across state regulatory and commercial seed labs is a critical component for effective enforcement of state seed laws. ASTA continues to encourage the seed lab community to continue to improve testing methods, provide a strong analyst certification program, and promote lab participation in lab accreditation programs.

Seed Libraries

Federal, state and most international seed laws do not have provisions to allow for non-commercial seed-sharing, such as "seed libraries." A coordinated initiative is underway to change state seed laws to authorize community-based seed-sharing within the intentions of the laws without reducing the effect of state regulatory oversight.

GMO Labeling

The use of seeds enhanced through modern biotechnology continues to grow around the world as a result of their economic, environmental and human health benefits. State-specific GMO labeling regulations have the potential to reduce accessibility to all technologies, and limit opportunities for innovation. Due to the challenge of potentially having a patchwork of 50 different labeling laws, ASTA continues to work with grower organizations and other interested parties to find a solution at the federal level.

Pollinator Protection

State regulations to provide practical solutions for increased pollinator forage are an important factor for the seed industry. ASTA is involved with entities establishing these programs to assure appropriate recommendations of regionally adapted seed mixes take seed availability into account, and are coordinated with the seed industry and the federal government.

Noxious Weed and Invasive Species

State systems are in place to limit the potential for transmission of noxious weeds and invasive species. Left unchecked, many invasive species have the potential to transform entire ecosystems as they out-compete native species for available resources and reproduce abundantly. ASTA efforts are focused to ensure science-based decisions are the highest priority in listing considerations within state programs.

FEDERAL AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Storm the Hill



As part of ASTA's strategic goal of advocacy, the 2015 Annual Convention came back to our nation's capital. Building on the success of the 2012 convention, Storm the Hill 2015 took place prior to the meeting. Over the course of two days on Capitol Hill, seed advocates lobbied lawmakers and their staffs, educating them on issues of importance to the industry. Innovation in plant breeding, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, labeling of products that contain GMO ingredients and the National Seed Strategy were just a few important issues discussed on the Hill. A record 127 participants held 129 meetings in the House of Representatives and the Senate. ASTA also



held an educational briefing on innovations in plant breeding for legislative staff.

Prior to June, ASTA's Executive Committee spent a day in April meeting with both legislative and regulatory policymakers.

White House National Pollinator Strategy

In May, the White House unveiled the National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators after a year of meetings of a task force led by the EPA and USDA. The strategy highlighted three overarching goals: reduce honey bee colony losses to economically sustainable levels, increase monarch butterfly numbers to protect annual migration, and restore or enhance millions of acres of land for pollinators through combined public and private action. The strategy also points to ASTA and CropLife America's revised Guide to Seed Treatment Stewardship as a key example of private sector actions in support of pollinator health.

Two unprecedented collaborative efforts, the National Pollinator Garden Network (NPGN) and the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge, were announced in June in support of President Obama's campaign to promote and restore the health of our nation's pollinators. ASTA played a pivotal role in the creation of the NPGN as a founding member. The NPGN's Million Pollinator Garden Challenge urges Americans to create areas of any size that will replenish pollinator habitat across the country and register those gardens on the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge website.



FEDERAL AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS CONTINUED

Farm Bill Implementation

ASTA successfully worked with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) to ensure that hybrid seed producers were not negatively impacted when new Farm Bill safety net programs were implemented. The new Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage payment programs are calculated, in part, based on yield. FSA developed guidelines to provide hybrid seed producers with a mechanism to calculate their yields to approximate commercial crop production yields.

Cover Crops Survey

This year, ASTA, USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program and the Conservation Technology Information Center sponsored a nation-wide Cover Crop Survey. More than 1,200 farmers were surveyed on an array of cover crop-related questions, including a specific segment focused on seed related questions such as where farmers source cover crop seed and what species of cover crops they purchase.



The survey, which was partially funded by members of the ASTA Cover Crops Working Group, found that total cover crop acreage increased again this year with respondents planting an average of 300 acres. Farmers emphasized soil-health related benefits including increased soil organic matter, reduced soil erosion and weed control. Survey results were featured in articles on *AgWired*, *Farm Futures* and *Crop Protection News*.

INNOVATION IN PLANT BREEDING

During the Innovation and Policy Committee's (formerly the Biotechnology Committee) first meeting at ASTA's 131st Annual Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, participants voted to establish the Innovation in Plant Breeding Working Group. The working group will be focusing on U.S. government policy, communication and education tools and building alliances across the value chain. In 2014/15, the working group created the Promoting Innovation in Seed and Crop Development policy statement, approved by ASTA's Executive Committee during their September meeting. The policy statement outlines the importance of plant breeding in meeting agricultural challenges, fostering innovation in plant breeding and principles for government policies. The working group is also developing a set of frequently asked questions and proposals for appropriate government policy endpoints.

The International Seed Federation (ISF) also created a Plant Breeding Innovation Working Group in 2014/15 under the ISF Breeders Committee. Bernice Slutsky, ASTA's Senior Vice President of Domestic and International Policy, will service as the chair. The working group developed a strategy for the role ISF can play in promoting consistent policies across countries. The ISF working group will also focus on developing communication tools for ISF members and building international alliances.

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE POLICY

ASTA/CNSA Memorandum of Understanding

In 2012, ASTA and the China National Seed Association (CNSA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote cooperation relating to innovation in the seed industry. Since making the commitment, the two organizations have worked closely on 12 joint activities including a roundtable discussion on intellectual property rights at a national trade show in Changsha, China. ASTA representatives were the only non-Chinese trade show attendees permitted to attend - an opportunity directly stemming from the association's strong relationship with CNSA.

In addition, from July 21 – August 2, ASTA and the USDA hosted a Chinese Cochran Fellowship delegation comprised of high-level government officials to learn about intellectual property rights protection and technology transfer.



During their two weeks in the U.S., ASTA traveled with the delegation to meet with member companies in the row crop, rice and vegetable seed industries in six states. The information gained during their visit was used in the Chinese seed law revision process.

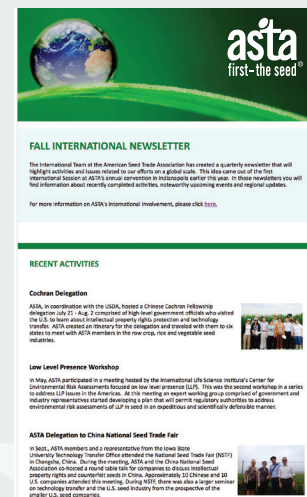
US/Mexico Joint Phytosanitary Workshop

In October, ASTA co-hosted a phytosanitary workshop for 40 participants with the Mexican Seed Association (AMSAC) in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Attendees included association representatives and government officials. The workshop was the fourth in a series to resolve issues associated with seed movement between Mexico and the U.S. Topics included seed re-export, new protocols for taking seed samples at Mexican ports of entry and the status of the international seed standard currently out for country consultation. Participants identified the need for a U.S.-Mexico government technical meeting to address the harmonization of seed testing methods.

New International Newsletter

This year the International Division strived to better communicate activities and resources to ASTA members, including through the newly formed International Newsletter. This quarterly publication highlights recent activities, introduces upcoming activities, and provides members with global events and market research that might impact their businesses. The content is available on the International portion of the ASTA members-only website.



International Seed Federation

ASTA continues to take an active role in the ISF with more than 20 members serving on nine committees, section boards and working groups. As ISF continues to lead global seed policy, strong representation from ASTA is essential to ensure policies reflect the U.S. industry's best interests.

GLOBAL SEED MOVEMENT

In 2014, ASTA intensified efforts at the global, national and regional levels to facilitate the movement of seed internationally.

Phytosanitary Efforts

ASTA continues to assist member companies in addressing individual problems that arise when shipping seed internationally, many involving pest-risk assessments. In 2014, ASTA commissioned a pest-risk database to streamline this process and make information more readily available to companies. ASTA also provided technical advice and support to companies working in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, South Korea, China, the EU, Australia, and several African and Middle Eastern countries. Efforts to solve country-level and specific shipment issues have been successful because of ASTA's strong relationships with the USDA, the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the FSA, the U.S. Trade Representative's Office, embassies and counterpart seed associations.

International Seed Standard

ASTA continued its partnership with ISF and the Seed Association of the Americas to ensure the international seed standard reflects the concerns and needs of the seed industry. Based on these collective efforts, the International Plant Protection Convention developed a revised draft standard that will be sent for another round of country consultation in 2016.

North American Plant Protection Organization's Seed Expert Working Group

ASTA was successful in encouraging the North American Plant Protection Office (NAPPO) to resurrect the seed-expert working group, focusing on harmonization of seed-testing methods throughout the NAPPO region. The working group will also incorporate the technical information collected into the NAPPO seed standard (RSPM 36) annexes.

Stronger Relations with APHIS

Throughout the past year, ASTA forged a stronger relationship with USDA's APHIS to seek new non-or-minimally regulatory approaches to address phytosanitary issues and concerns. This collaboration between industry and its regulatory body to develop a non-burdensome solution is a unique opportunity afforded to the seed industry. As a result, a partnership program titled the National Seed Health Accreditation Pilot Program was established to prevent introductions of the devastating, seed-transmitted pathogen Cucumber Green Mottle Mosaic Virus. This pilot program focuses on establishing compliance agreements that recognize current quality management practices, such as seed testing, which provide necessary levels of phytosanitary protection. This helps avoid unnecessary or duplicative phytosanitary requirements.

Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Grant

In 2014, ASTA was awarded a three-year, \$836,000 federal grant to quantify the inherent risk-reduction associated with company quality-management practices and to develop a model for companies to assess the phytosanitary risk of any seed/pest combination. ASTA is working with an internationally recognized USDA-ARS research scientist on this project. Once published, this research will likely change the process of future seed risk-assessments, and could also support the development of an international accreditation for seed companies that already meet high standards of phytosanitary risk management.

COMMUNICATIONS

As part of the Strategic Plan, ASTA created a Communications Committee in 2014/15 with the goals of helping ASTA become the voice of the industry by coordinating messaging, building trust and understanding of issues, and ensuring inclusion of voices from all ASTA members.

The committee focuses on apprising industry partners of emerging issues and media interests, sharing communications research and resources, and supporting industry initiatives. Members of the committee were instrumental in shaping the beginning phases of ASTA's public-facing communications initiative to promote the value of seed and seed improvements to everyday life. In December, ASTA announced the initiative and unveiled consumer research results commissioned by the seed industry with specific examples of the environmental, economic and health benefits of seed. One of the highlights was a two-minute video showcasing how seed creates better life.



The newly-formed committee held two Communications Summits: one in Kansas City, Missouri, and the other hosted by HM.CLAUSE in Davis, California. More than 20 member companies participated in both summits.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Seed Innovation and Protection Alliance

Responding to an increased need to promote the importance and understanding of seed innovation, members of the American seed industry came together in 2014/15 to form the Seed Innovation and Protection Alliance (SIPA). The goal of SIPA is to create a unified and consistent voice for education and best practices around intellectual property protection and its value to society.



Future efforts of the alliance include communicating the value of seed innovations, the need for on-going investments in seed research and improvement, and the importance of protecting new discoveries so plant breeders and companies can continue focusing on developing seed improvements that benefit all of society.

The alliance currently has more than 25 members spanning the entire seed industry.

INDUSTRY BUILDING AND RECOGNITION

First-the Seed Foundation

The First-the Seed Foundation 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. The foundation launched a core curriculum targeted at students in grades 6 - 8 through sponsorship from Peterson Genetics. The core curriculum was designed to get kids excited about the seed industry, and to provide insight into the world of seed science and relevant career opportunities. The curriculum has been downloaded more than 2,000 times.



The First-the Seed Foundation's Tomatosphere™ program educates and inspires young students, building their capacity and understanding of scientific inquiry and opening the door to extended space exploration. In 2014/15, nearly 3,200 classes signed up for the program, reaching more than 75,000 students - an increase from the previous year of 390 classes and 8,458 students. All states except Alaska, Wyoming, North Dakota, Nevada and Montana have at least one class registered in Tomatosphere™.

The National Council of Commercial Plant Breeders

ASTA continued to support the work of the National Council of Commercial Plant Breeders (NCCPB), which represents member companies in the business of plant improvement, and encourages collaboration with public research and educational institutions. Through its awards program, NCCPB recognizes outstanding scientific contributions in public and private plant breeding by both professional plant breeders and students. Students are given a monetary award and an opportunity to be mentored at ASTA's CSS & Seed Expo in December.

The 2014 winners were:

William Tracy, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Public Sector Breeder

Sarah Grogan, Colorado State University
- Graduate Student

Zackary King, University of Georgia
- Graduate Student

Carrie Butts, University of Illinois
- Graduate Student



INDUSTRY BUILDING AND RECOGNITION CONTINUED

The American Seed Research Foundation

ASTA is pleased to continue its partnership with the American Seed Research Foundation (ASRF). ASRF promotes basic research in seed biology that has the potential for application across different crop species, and facilitates the transfer of resulting technology to benefit the seed industry, farmers/growers and consumers on a global basis. The organization underwrites research projects and educates future researchers through the Operation Student Connection (OSC) program, which offers scholarships to encourage graduate students majoring in seed biology or seed science to attend ASTA's annual convention. In addition, one OSC student who shows exceptional passion for the seed industry is awarded the Roger Krueger Memorial Scholarship.

Students selected for the program were:

Andres Jose Reyes Gaige, Kansas State University
(Roger Krueger award winner)

Shiferaw Gizaw, Washington State University

David O'Donnell, University of California, Davis

Clair Lynn Keene, The Pennsylvania State University

Yan Yang, Texas A&M University

Anthony Hanson, University of Minnesota, St. Paul

Future Seed Executives



Throughout 2014/15, the Future Seed Executives (FuSE) committee focused its efforts on introducing careers in the seed industry to the next generation, developing programming for new seed industry professionals, and building a strong network of future seed executives.

FuSE held several events throughout the year including Educational Units and roundtable discussions. The first Educational Unit was held in September at Oliver Manufacturing in La Junta, Colorado. The workshop included educational sessions on seed processing/gravity separators, a session with Hollar Seeds, and discussions on irrigated farming and water laws in a dry state. During ASTA's CSS 2014 & Seed Expo, FuSE hosted a day-long Mini-Educational Unit at the Chicago Board of Trade and the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences. FuSE also held roundtable discussions focusing on the USDA Agricultural Research System's National Germplasm System and an in-person meeting with Simplot CEO Bill Whitacre.

In addition to ASTA's CSS 2014 & Seed Expo, FuSE members participated in a number of industry meetings and conferences including: ASTA's Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference, the Independent Professional Seed Association Annual Meeting and ASTA's 132nd Annual Convention.

The FuSE sponsored Campus Connections program selected six students to participate in ASTA's 132nd Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. The students were paired with mentors representing all areas of the seed industry, and participated in all the events of the conference throughout the week.

Participants Included:

Brian Rice, Purdue University

Clayton Hora, Iowa State University

Katharina Wigg, Iowa State University

Kellen Suntken, Iowa State University

Mikaela Breunig, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Taylor Jensen, South Dakota State University

During the convention, Samantha (Sisk) Bock of AgReliant Genetics was named the 2015 Future Giant of the Seed Industry award recipient.

INDUSTRY BUILDING AND RECOGNITION CONTINUED

Distinguished Service Awards

ASTA's Distinguished Service Award recognizes those whose efforts have made a significant contribution to the association and the seed industry. The 2015 Distinguished Service Awards were presented to Greg Lamka and Betsy Peterson during ASTA's 132nd Annual Convention in Washington, D.C.

Lamka's entire working career was spent in the seed industry, retiring in 2014 as the Global Senior Manager: Seed Applied Technologies for Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc. He led industry efforts to establish the National Seed Health System and held leadership roles with the Iowa Seed Association, ISF and ASTA. He has been recognized for his efforts through the DuPont Pioneer Engineering Excellence award.

Betsy Peterson worked in many aspects of the seed industry over the past 36 years, serving the last 13 as the Director of Technical Services for the California Seed Association. Her leadership and support for ASTA and the seed industry has been a tremendous asset to the agricultural community.

**Honorary Lifetime Member**

Jerry Monk, a 44-year veteran of the seed industry, received ASTA's 2015 Lifetime Honorary Member Award, which recognizes untiring service to the association and seed industry. Monk's roots in agriculture run deep – from a dryland cotton farm in the shadows of the Texas Panhandle Caprock to the CEO of Kelly Green Seeds, Warner Seeds, Warner International Seeds in Argentina and Warner SRL in Mexico.

He also served as President of the Texas Seed Trade Association, the Southern Seed Association and ASTA. His service continues today through his role as President of the Seed Association of the Americas.

CONVENTIONS AND MEETINGS

2014 Farm and Lawn Seed Conference

ASTA's 60th Annual Farm and Lawn Seed Conference, held in conjunction with the Western Seed Association Conference, brought more than 700 seed industry representatives to Kansas City, Missouri for networking and business meetings. The modified schedule facilitated committee and division meetings on Sunday afternoon and the popular ASTA town hall breakfast on Monday morning. Sessions included discussions on cover crops, pollinator projects, revisions to ASTA's Retailer's Guide to Lawn Seed, Plant Variety Protection for the grass seed industry, National Corn Growers Association's Soil Health Partnership Program, the Farm Bill and seed lab uniformity.



CSS 2014 & Seed Expo

The 2014 Corn, Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference & Seed Expo (CSS) set a new record of 3,002 attendees and 155 expo exhibitors. The conference featured an entirely new program format, with sessions focused on cross-sector topics, rather than crop-specific programming. Sessions were scheduled during dedicated periods throughout the week to limit conflicts with expo hours and times for affiliated events. New features included a Seed Expo "Relax and Recharge" Lounge and instantly-available conference proceedings. Another new record was set for student poster presentations, with a total of 17. A keynote presentation during the Opening General Session was given by former ASTA President and current Simplot CEO Bill Whitacre.

69TH CORN & SORGHUM SEED RESEARCH CONFERENCE
44TH SOYBEAN SEED RESEARCH CONFERENCE • SEED EXPO 2014

CSS 2014 & SEED EXPO

DECEMBER 8-12, 2014 | CHICAGO, IL



CONVENTIONS AND MEETINGS CONTINUED

54th Vegetable and Flower Seed Conference

ASTA's fastest growing and most international conference continued its upward trend with record attendance and a sold-out trading room. Over 840 attendees from more than 25 countries gathered in Tampa, Florida for collaboration and networking. The General Session included a keynote presentation by Professor David Clark of the University of Florida, illuminating the ways breeding can be used to develop products designed for consumers. A panel discussion regarding the issues driving market demand and consumer preference featured Michael Ryshouwer of Bejo Seeds, Mike Stuart of the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, and Marvin Miller of Ball Horticultural Company. FBI Special Agent Robert Spelbrink provided an alert on the dangers of corporate espionage potential seed industry intellectual property violations, and Peter Marks from Seed Programs International gave a presentation on its efforts to channel donations of quality seed to developing countries.



Photo courtesy of Seed World

More than 20 students from the University of Florida's "Challenge 2050" program attended the conference. The students shared their collaborative ideas for what the world will look like by 2050, including issues related to food, water and overall agriculture.

**132nd Annual Convention**

ASTA's annual convention is the U.S. seed industry's premier policy meeting, bringing together leaders and experts to discuss issues affecting the industry and to determine the association's priorities for the coming year. Every three years, the conference is hosted in Washington, D.C., providing an opportunity to engage with government and elected officials about the unique challenges facing ASTA members.

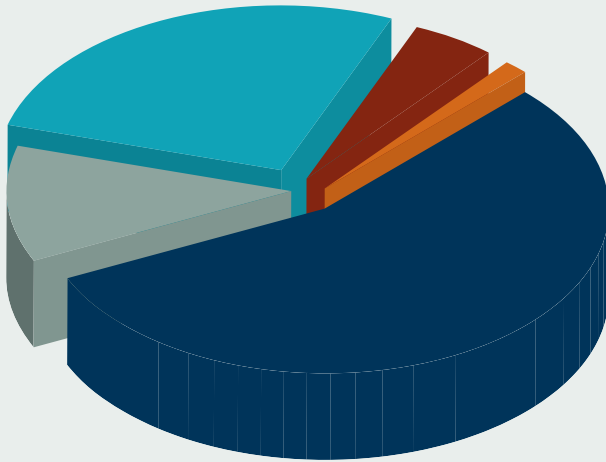
Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack delivered an impactful keynote presentation at the Opening General Session, illuminating the importance of the seed industry to American agriculture. Several ASTA committees and working groups hosted D.C.-based agriculture industry organizations and government representatives to discuss key issues of concern to the seed industry.



Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack addresses attendees during ASTA's 132nd Annual Convention.

MEMBERSHIP

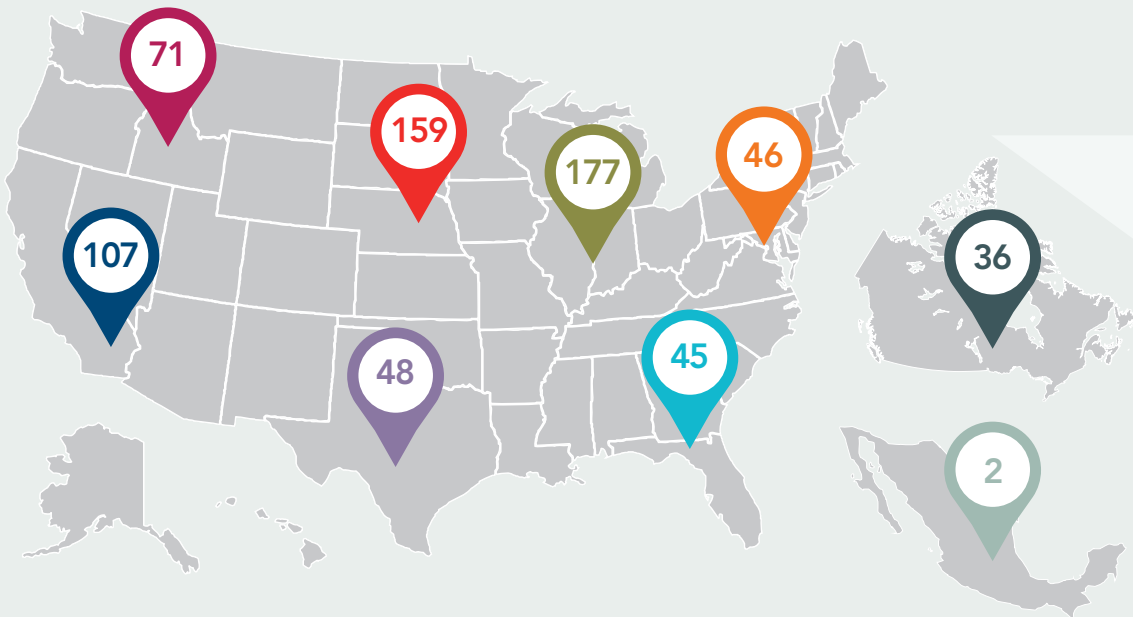
MEMBER TYPE



- Active 56% (412)
- Affiliate 11% (83)
- Associate 27% (199)
- International 5% (36)
- Broker-Agent 1% (9)

Total 739

COMPANIES BY REGION



- Canada 36
- Central 177
- International 46
- Mexico 2
- North Central 159
- Northeast 46
- Northwest 71
- South 48
- Southeast 45
- West 107

Member retention was 93% with an increase of 11 members.

FINANCIAL HEALTH

ASTA's budget is based on guidance from the Board of Directors, divisions, committees, strategic plan priorities and staff. ASTA strives to maintain transparency with membership about the association's budget and financial status. The Board of Directors approves and regularly reviews the association's financial status and strategy, which enables ASTA to maintain a strong targeted financial reserve. The annual ASTA audit was conducted by Santos, Postal & Company, in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The 2013/14 audit confirmed the financial health of the association. ASTA began its fiscal year with unrestricted net assets of \$4,776,914 and ended with \$5,386,572.

Investment Policy and Reserve Policy

The Board of Directors established guidelines for the investment and reserve accounts, striving to maintain a balance of one-and-a-half to two times the operating budget. Of that reserve, 10 percent is maintained in an operating reserve, and expenditures are subject to approval of the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors. The remaining balance is divided between 20-percent in a mid-term reserve and 70-percent in a long-term reserve. Expenditures from those reserves are vetted through the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Under this policy, when authorizing expenditures from the long-term reserves, the Board will approve a plan to replenish the amount expended.

ASTA Revenue Sources

Dues	\$3,097,307
Meetings	\$1,242,348
Exhibits	\$386,013
Assessment	\$8,961
Government Reimbursements	\$414,441
Miscellaneous	\$87,344
Administrative Service Fees	\$20,000
Net Investment Gains (Losses)	\$714,382

TOTAL REVENUE

\$5,970,796

ASTA Expenses

CSS	\$421,398
Farm/Lawn	\$7,436
Vegetable and Flower Seed	\$151,592
Export Market Development	\$9,461
Foreign Agricultural Services	\$414,441
Convention	\$347,771
Future Seed Executives (FuSE)	\$22,698
Other Programs	\$290,074
General and Administrative*	\$3,696,267

(*Includes, but not limited to: rent, utilities, insurance, salaries, taxes, office equipment and maintenance, dues and subscriptions, legal fees, etc.)

TOTAL EXPENSES

\$5,361,138

* In order to facilitate an earlier printing of the annual report, in future years ASTA will include the previous year's audit report.

ASTA STAFF

Executive Office
Andrew W. LaVigne
 President and CEO

Liz Anderson
 Executive Assistant

Domestic and International Policy
Bernice Slutsky
 Senior Vice President, Domestic and International Policy

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 Vice President, Government and Regulatory Affairs

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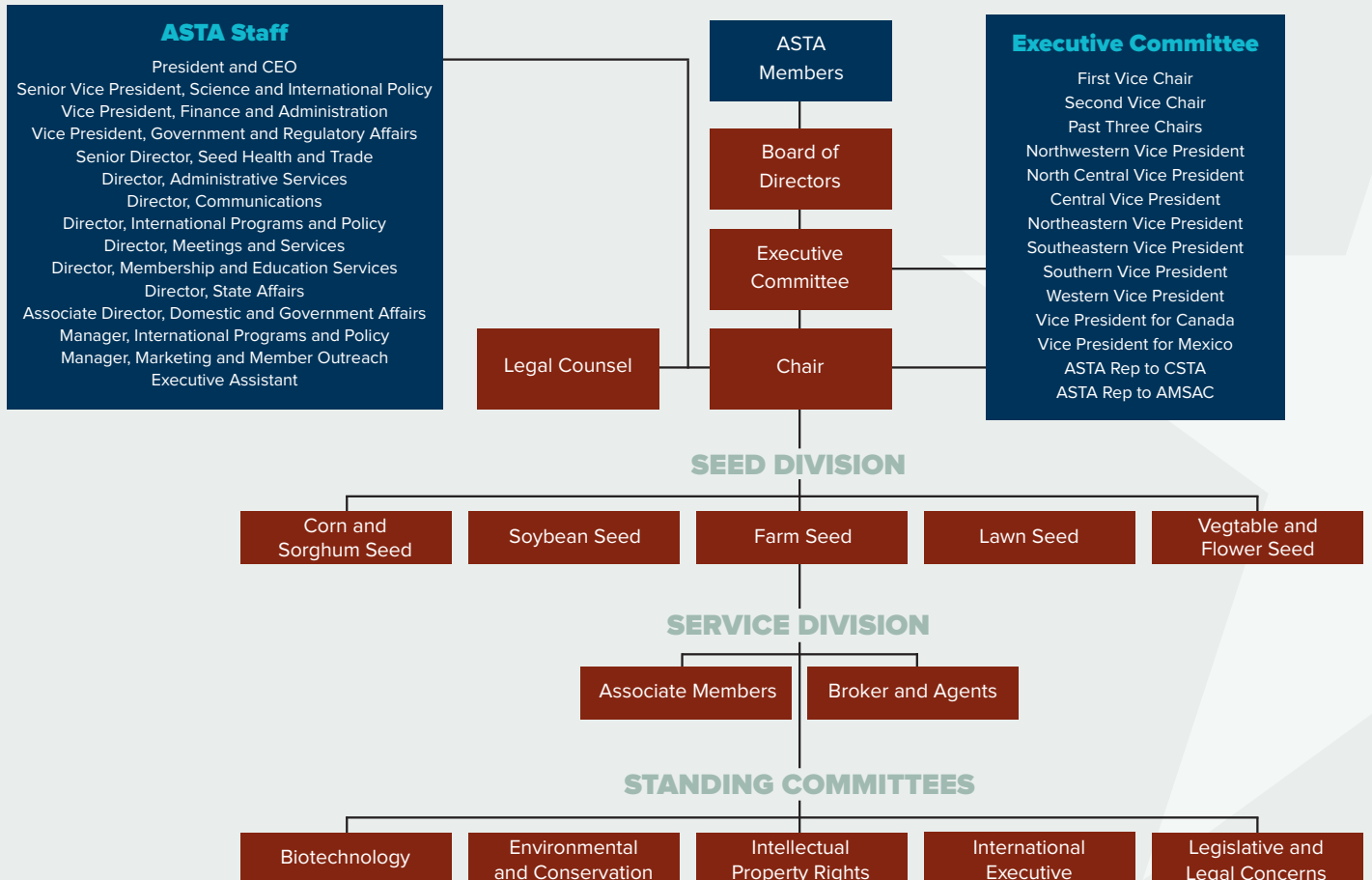
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