

Success Story Template

Calendar Year <i>(year activity is completed; if not completed, enter latest active year)</i>
2014
Cooperator
American Seed Trade Association
Non-cooperator organization <i>(if you are not a cooperator, but you use FAS programs like EMP, TASC, or GSM)</i>
Organization type: private or public <i>(public means government)</i>
Private
FAS program(s) used/funding sources <i>(e.g. MAP, MAP/GBI, EMP, etc)</i>
FMD
Commodity <i>(if applicable, include if product is fresh, dried, concentrate, etc, like Fresh Sweet Cherries)</i>
Planting Seeds
Country/region <i>(to which you are exporting)</i>
China
HQ State <i>(state where headquarters of cooperator or non-cooperator organization is located)</i>
Virginia
Producing/exporting state(s) <i>(attempt to determine exporting state; can enter "multi" if number of states is greater than 5)</i>
California, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois
Export dollars/projected sales (provide the dollar value/projected sales in the current program year and comparable data from previous program year)
Congressional district(s) <i>(Example: CA-04;TX-11. Attempt to determine congressional districts of producing/exporting areas; enter n/a if unknown; can enter "multi" if number of districts is greater than 5.)</i>
Multi
Story type <i>(focus of story: trade show, small company, cooperator, FAS/post, program)</i>
Program
For branded, company name, if applicable

In 2012, ASTA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese National Seed Association (CNSA). Since then, all of ASTA's activities in the region have been planned and carried out under the MOU in conjunction with CNSA. The activities have focused on topics of mutual interest (intellectual property rights, quality seed, science based phytosanitary measures, seed movement and innovation in the seed industry). The Chinese government is currently reviewing their national seed law. During ASTA's April 2014 visit to China, CNSA and the US Embassy attaches arranged a meeting for ASTA with the Chinese Bureau of Seed Management. This department is responsible for reviewing and revising the

current seed law. During a three hour conversation with MOA we openly discussed the current seed law, the changes MOA was considering, how the US seed regulations compared to the Chinese seed law, and the impact of the seed law on American companies operating in China.

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

Specifically, how did U.S. agriculture benefit? There are three major modifications proposed in the current seed law revisions. First, there is a push for less regulation and more integrated companies. Moving forward there will be one license for breeding and trading instead of two separate licenses. Also, research and development institutions will no longer be able to function as commercial seed companies. Second there will be a new chapter dedicated to plant variety protection. This chapter is based on UPOV 1991, and it includes information on essentially derived varieties and non-major crops do not need to be registered. Finally, the proposed revisions take a stronger stance on counterfeiting. The definition of counterfeiting has been broadened to include seed packaging. This portion of the law is based on the U.S.' Federal Seed Act.

Highlight the USDA or FAS program that was used: ASTA used \$35,202.00 of FMD funds. Industry organizations and ASTA provided more than a 50% match to the FMD funds. This activity was evaluated internally by ASTA's China working group and ASTA's International Executive Committee.

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

Budget impact and return on investment: Having ASTA's input solicited by the Chinese government officials that are revising the Chinese seed law is invaluable opportunity for the U.S. seed industry. The Chinese are basing their new seed law on advice and input from ASTA and the U.S. seed industry.

Timeframe: For the past six years ASTA has had meetings in China twice a year. In 2012, ASTA and CNSA signed an MOU together. Since then the cooperation and candidness between the two governments and seed associations has increased dramatically. In the past we have translated U.S. seed laws and regulations that are now the basis of these proposed changes.