

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>
Global
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, Arizona, Indiana, Missouri, Illinois, Oregon, Iowa
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

The IPPC is a multilateral treaty for international cooperation in plant protection administered under FAO's Plant Protection Service. It protects cultivated and wild plants by preventing the introduction and spread of pests and provides an international framework for plant protection that includes developing International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). With ASTA's encouragement the IPPC started developing a seed ISPM in July 2013. In record time, less than one year later, a draft standard was brought forth. A final standard will hopefully be approved in 2015.

How did FAS help achieve success? ASTA uses FAS funds every year to send the Senior Director of Seed Trade and Health to the annual IPPC meeting in Rome. At this meeting members of 177 contracting parties meet to discuss actions the IPPC should undertake. Here, ASTA learns about IPPC activities and has sidebar meetings with the NPPOs that are members of the IPPC. By being present, ASTA is able to influence policy in a way that benefits the US seed industry.

Specifically, how did U.S. agriculture benefit? The new ISPM focuses on harmonizing the movement of seed throughout the world. This will reduce the costs and risk associated with moving seed, thus enabling more research and greater seed sales for US companies. Re-exporting seed is a common practice in the seed industry. However, lack of harmonized labeling requirements causes seed shipments to be held up or rejected. This ISPM aims to solve seed specific issues including standardizing phytosanitary certificate language and unifying regulations for imports of small lots of research seed.

The goal is an overall improvement in seed re-exports, particularly for seed moved between the EU, the US, and South America. Seed re-export is a major business practice as seed is routinely moved among many countries in both pre-commercial and commercial stages. The US alone exports over \$1 billion worth of seed annually, but also imports (re-exports) a similar amount. Cost savings are difficult to estimate, but are likely in the many millions due to fewer shipment rejections/destructions, fewer demurrage charges for held shipments, and fewer lost markets.

Highlight the USDA or FAS program that was used: ASTA used less than \$5,000 of FMD funding to send ASTA staff to the IPPC annual meeting. Moving forward ASTA will work with APHIS and the NPPOs of other countries to approve the ISPM and have it approved in its current state.

Market Access: Having more transparent, predictable, and science-based regulations that are supported by the US opens new markets up to US exporters. It also increases the ease and speed in which US companies can bring new products to market by reducing the regulations on research seed. One market that it could have a major impact is Brazil. Brazil is reviewing two new normatives (regulatory rules) that are not aligned with the new ISPM and will restrict the movement of US seeds to Brazil. ASTA and other organizations are lobbying Brazil to hold off on implementing these new normatives until after the ISPM is approved, at which point the new regulations will need to be in line with the ISPM, ensuring that the new policies favorably impact US seed companies.

Budget impact and return on investment: US vegetable seed imports to Brazil peaked in 2011, before Normative 36 was introduced. Since then US exports have declined by \$2 million to \$12.4 million. Part of this decline is uncertainty regarding the import requirements and the potential costs associated with meeting these requirements. ASTA has worked to keep the market open to US exporters. If Normative 36 is enacted in line with the new ISPM, the US seed companies can regain some of the lost ground.

Timeframe: One year. The IPPC decided to develop this ISPM in April 2013 and the draft seed standard came out in July 2015.