Success Story Template

Calendar Year *(year activity is completed; if not completed, enter latest active year)*
2014
Cooperator
American Seed Trade Association
Non-cooperator organization *(if you are not a cooperator, but you use FAS programs like EMP, TASC, or GSM)*
Organization type: private or public *(public means government)*
Private
FAS program(s) used/funding sources *(e.g. MAP, MAP/GBI, EMP, etc)*
FMD
Commodity *(if applicable, include if product is fresh, dried, concentrate, etc, like Fresh Sweet Cherries)*
Planting Seeds
Country/region *(to which you are exporting)*
Global
HQ State *(state where headquarters of cooperator or non-cooperator organization is located)*
Virginia
Producing/exporting state(s) *(attempt to determine exporting state; can enter "multi" if number of states is greater than 5)*
Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Ohio
Export dollars/projected sales **(provide the dollar value/projected sales in the current program year and comparable data from previous program year)**
29% added costs ~$20m additional profits
Congressional district(s) *(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.)*
Mutli
Story type *(focus of story: trade show, small company, cooperator, FAS/post, program)*
Program
For branded, company name, if applicable

The International Seed Federation's Breeder's Committee wrote and passed a position paper titled, "Implementation of National Policies for Seed Low Level Presence (LLP)". The paper's impetus is the growing adoption and use of genetically engineered (GE) varieties and the lack of uniformity in global regulatory frameworks and processes. Countries are increasingly facing situations where seed lots can include LLP of GE varieties approved for cultivation in the country of export but not approved in the country of import. As global seed trade continues to increase, including for purposes of seed production, testing and breeding, seed movement is vulnerable to restrictions related to LLP. This paper is designed

to help national plant protection offices develop and implement an appropriate LLP policy. The committee created a combination of policy options that will help countries create proactive, predictable, transparent and science-based LLP policies. LLP policies that meet these criteria are critical for U.S. exporters given the high adoption rates of GE corn, soy, cotton and alfalfa seeds grown in the U.S. and exported to other countries. The drafting process was spearheaded by an ASTA staff member. The position paper was passed by the full ISF membership at the general session at the 2014 World Seed Congress in Beijing.

How did FAS help achieve success? ISF membership is comprised of national seed associations. ASTA represents the U.S. seed industry. FMD funding covered travel costs associated with attending ISF meetings. FAS personnel in Washington, D.C. provided background information for this paper.

Specifically, how did U.S. agriculture benefit? U.S. seed companies will benefit as additional countries develop and implement proactive, predictable, transparent and science-based LLP polices. LLP policies will enable exporters to test their lots before shipping them to ensure they meet the LLP regulations and will not be rejected at the port of entry. Held and rejected shipments are extremely costly for seed companies. To achieve a zero tolerance policy creates a cost increase of 35.3% over current standards. That cost increase drops to 6.4% over the base when the tolerance is set at 1%. In addition, the risk of supply chain disruption caused by LLP incidents will be less likely. If zero tolerance policies are enforced then halted shipments will prevent farmers that produce GE crops for the food, feed, and fiber markets from getting their seeds in time for planting.

Highlight the USDA or FAS program that was used: ASTA used $15,117.00 of FMD funds to cover transportation and hotel costs at ISF meetings. Industry organizations and ASTA provided a 100% match to the FMD funds. This activity was evaluated internally by ASTA's International Executive Committee.

Market Access: Without LLP policies in place U.S. exporters face increased risk when exporting seed. The current regulatory framework is asynchronous. Almost all GE events are developed in the U.S. Since GE event approval takes several months to several years, they are not uniformly approved by importing countries, requiring exporters to be keenly aware of requirements for each country they sell to. Some countries without LLP policies have a zero percent threshold for unapproved events found in shipments. An absolute zero threshold closes the market to U.S. exporters because practically it is impossible to ensure that a shipment contains absolutely zero off-types. The most fundamental criteria for the implementation of national seed LLP policies is the recognition that it is not practical nor technically and biologically achievable to require zero presence of GE seed that have been approved for cultivation in one country but not approved in the country of import. It has long been recognized within the seed industry and across the agricultural value chain that, despite rigorous quality management systems that minimize LLP, achieving an absolute zero in managed biological systems, such as seed production, is not possible. An LLP policy will reopen these markets and treat unapproved GE events the same as weed seeds and other off-types that are allowed in low levels.

Budget impact and return on investment: Without LLP policies in place producers must meet a zero tolerance standard for unapproved GE events. This standard causes costs to rise by 35%. If a LLP policy is implemented that cost increases is only 6% over the base cost to produce seed. It also adds certainty which companies need. Operating in a business environment where the rules are either vague or enforced based on political winds is risky.

Timeframe: This paper was proposed at the 2013 World Seed Congress and completed and approved one year later.