***Below is a draft letter that individual companies may consider using as the basis for their own responses to customer inquiries about the quality and specifications of seed the companies produce and their individual practices. This draft letter is intended as a model and is not intended as, and should not be construed as, legal advice or a substitute for a seed company's own legal counsel.  In preparing this model letter, ASTA has not assessed the practices of any individual member company.  Providing the model does not define or create legal rights or obligations, and ASTA specifically disclaims any such rights or obligations.  ASTA does not make any warranties or representations, either express or implied, with respect to any company’s products or practices; nor does ASTA assume any liability of any kind whatsoever resulting from the use of this model.***

Thank you for your request for information on our standards related to seed quality and “Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)”. XX (company name) strives to develop and produce seed products following the industry’s recommended best practices guidelines for managing product quality and purity. These guidelines utilize a comprehensive, systems-based approach designed to minimize the occurrence of seed-borne plant diseases and seed quality related issues.

As of today, no formal system of GAP for seed production has been developed by industry or issued by any local, state or federal regulatory body. However, as industry continues to analyze best practices individual companies, including ours, have developed and maintain integrated quality management systems to meet the specifications of the marketplace*.* These systems combine process controls based on continuous improvement principles and are subject to internal and external audits. Our quality management systems include seed tracking capabilities from origin to customer. We have also established phytosanitary, sanitation, and hygiene guidelines to help ensure quality seed production in protected culture or open field environments. We remain customer focused to deliver the highest quality seed for all vegetable species.

Furthermore, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA, [www.amseed.org](http://www.amseed.org)) has created a Guide to Seed Quality Management Practices which provides a roadmap for industry recommended best practices to maintain seed integrity from the initial research and development phase through commercial sale. In addition to our own internal measures and standards, our commercial seed must conform to regulations stipulated by domestic (“Federal Seed Act” and state laws) and international laws.

Finally, we agree with the ASTA Statement on Field and Greenhouse Planted Seeds and Human Pathogens (<http://www.amseed.org/issues/phytosanitary/key-issues/#phkey1>) conclusions that extensive existing data has shown that human pathogens are **not** transmitted from seed planted for field or greenhouse production of fresh produce, to this harvested produce. (ASTA , through its Food Safety Pathogen Working Group, actively monitors new research results as they become available.) Thus there is no significant value, or food safety benefit, in testing seed lots for the presence of human pathogens. Therefore, such testing is not currently part of our quality management program.