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ASTA Elects New Leadership to Guide the Future of the Seed Industry

Portland, Oregon—June 22, 2016—More than 470 seed industry professionals from across the nation gathered in Portland, Oregon, June 18-22 for a joint Annual Convention of the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) and the Oregon Seed Association. ASTA's Annual Convention brings together the association's diverse membership to tackle the collective issues confronting the seed industry today. During the meeting, ASTA elected its 2016-2017 officer team which will continue to drive the association's five year Strategic Plan, focusing strongly on advocacy, efficiency of operations, and internal and external communications.

The 2016-17 ASTA Officer Team is:

- Chair: Mark Herrmann, AgReliant Genetics
- First Vice Chair: Tracy Tally, Justin Seeds
- Second Vice Chair: Jerry Flint, DuPont Pioneer

"The seed industry today faces both unprecedented challenges and opportunities," said incoming Chair Mark Herrmann. "Whether it's the threat of regulatory uncertainty, international issues impacting the movement of seed, or simply a lack of understanding from the public about the importance of the work we do—it's never been more important that we proactively drive a strong and unified industry to address the issues we will face in the future."

During his acceptance speech, Herrmann vowed to continue ASTA's strong commitment to be the voice of the American seed industry, to have an open and ongoing dialogue between members and leadership, and to have efficient internal operations to ensure the association is prepared to address whatever issues or threats emerge in the future. He stressed that one of the most pressing issues facing the industry is the general lack of understanding--by the public, legislators, and regulators—about how the seed industry operates and why innovation in plant breeding is vital, not only to the seed industry, but to virtually every aspect of life.

"The continuous advancement in knowledge about how plants function provides information that enables breeders and seed companies opportunities to meet the challenges facing agriculture, and society, today and in the future," said Herrmann. "Whether a company is on the cutting edge of breeding techniques or they can see them on the horizon, what happens in the coming years will impact us all. There will continue to be challenges and opportunities ahead of us, and I am confident that ASTA is well positioned to lead the seed industry into the future."

The new ASTA leadership team will begin official duties on July 1.

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Founded in 1883, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) represents over 700 companies involved in seed production, plant breeding and related industries in North America. ASTA is the voice of action in all matters concerning the development, marketing and movement of seed, associated products and services throughout the world. The association's broad membership offers varieties from alfalfa to zucchini and all production types including conventional, organic and biotech. ASTA promotes the development of better seed to produce better crops for a better quality of life.