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ASTA Welcomes Development of APHIS Biotechnology Quality Management System

Alexandria, Va. – The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) welcomed the announcement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) that it is developing a voluntary, audit-based compliance assistance program known as the Biotechnology Quality Management System (BQMS).

“Innovative tools such as biotechnology are key to the continued ability of the U.S. seed industry to provide farmers and consumers with higher yielding, better quality and value-added products, and APHIS has been part of the robust U.S. regulatory system that oversees their safe development and use,” said ASTA President and CEO Andrew W. (Andy) LaVigne. “The Biotechnology Quality Management System should provide another means to complement the existing industry practices that continue to maintain the high standards of product integrity in the seed industry.”

The ASTA Executive expressed the interest of the seed industry in continuing to work closely with APHIS in developing robust systems so that producers and consumers can continue to benefit from the agricultural products produced through biotechnology.

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Founded in 1883, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA), located in Alexandria, Virginia., is one of the oldest trade organizations in the United States. Its membership consists of about 900 companies involved in seed production and distribution, plant breeding, and related industries in North America. As an authority on plant germplasm, ASTA advocates science and policy issues of industry importance. Its mission is to enhance the development and free movement of quality seed worldwide.