production and reap the advantages of capacity use of equipment and the discounts of quantity buying. The passing of personal service from local seedstores may be regretted, but the trend that brought the supermarket is touching sales of seeds.

The industry learns more each year about handling, storage, and testing of seeds. Thus it discharges its responsibility for carrying quality products all the way to the consumer. Touchy items, such as asters, onions, and parsnips, are packaged in special foils, plastics, or controlled-humidity cans. That quality will be stressed increasingly in the sale of seeds seems assured, as homeowners and agricultural managers become more aware of values.

Many seedhouses have developed their own full line of products and provide the necessary popular information to see that these are used correctly. No longer are chemical names and fertilizer formulas obscure to the seedsman, as he strives to sell not just seeds but a crop.

The industry constantly seeks adapted varieties for climatic conditions. Research departments retain bloodlines of regional significance that grandfather never dreamed existed. They maintain liaison with local experts, so that the best possible advice for the area in which the seeds are marketed can accompany the seed. Improved instructions on sowing and crop needs may result in as much progress as has the creation of the improved varieties themselves.

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The Four Types of Seed Trade Associations

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Their trade associations keep the producers, conditioners, and distributors of seeds informed of developments that bear on their business.

Each of the four types of associations (State, regional, national, and specific interest) serves its own purpose and deals with its own problems.

The State associations keep abreast of State laws that affect seedsmen in the State. There were 34 active State seed associations in 1961—in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho-eastern Oregon, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Some of them employ executive secretaries to aid in their work of issuing bulletins, distributing reports of the experiment stations, and conducting meetings.

Most State groups hold annual meetings, at which regulatory and management problems are discussed, current advances in research and breeding are reported by scientists, and many educational and national problems are considered.

Many State associations sponsor educational and informational short courses and clinics.

The Illinois Seed Dealers’ Association has cooperated with the University
of Illinois in sponsoring an annual series of meetings throughout the State to acquaint dealers and farmers with new developments in the use of fertilizers, insecticides, and improved agricultural practices.

In other States, such as Mississippi, the associations and the State colleges have developed short courses in seed technology and in operating procedures for seed plants. Short courses have been conducted in Oregon, Iowa, Indiana, and other States in teaching seed analytical work to employees in the seed industry.

Scholarship and grant programs are other activities whereby the seedsmen tell their story and in turn stimulate interest in agriculture. A single organization represents grain and seed interests in some States.

State associations are particularly important in giving voice to the smaller businesses that do not generally sell seeds in interstate commerce.

The seed and soil clinics and short courses the associations sponsor give distributors of seeds a chance to become more familiar with the work of agricultural experiment stations so they can give better service to farmers.

As a result of the clinics, distributors of agricultural chemicals and fertilizers have become more familiar with the research work in the colleges, and they, in turn, demonstrate the benefits of improved practices in their communities. The seed and soil clinics have become a roundtable to explore problems and to help all concerned groups to work more closely together.

A number of States have organized State councils, whose members represent the groups interested in breeding, producing, and distributing seeds and include officials from the offices of seed law enforcement, agricultural experiment stations, farm organizations, crop improvement associations, seed analysts, and others. The purpose of a State council is to discuss regulatory and legislative questions before the introduction of legislation or the promulgation of new regulations.

Regional associations deal with agricultural characteristics and trade of geographical areas. There are five: Pacific Seedsmen's Association, Southern Seedsmen's Association, Western Seedsmen's Association, Atlantic Seedsmen's Association, and Northern Seedsmen's Association.

The Pacific Seedsmen's Association draws its membership primarily from seedsmen located in States west of the Rocky Mountains. It is active in educational and promotional programs, conducts business surveys, and develops statistical information for its members. A continuous program of developing uniform State laws pertaining to the seed industry is another one of its main objectives.

The Southern Seedsmen's Association, composed of seedsmen in the 13 Southern States, has been instrumental in constructive national legislation concerned with the agricultural conservation program. The association furnishes informational aid and support to dealers through promotional programs, group insurance, advertising aid, and recommended business operations. It also supports an annual seedsmen's short course at the Mississippi State College and holds a trade exhibit in conjunction with the annual meeting.

The members of the Western Seedsmen's Association live and work in the Mississippi River Basin. It is a forum of midwestern buyers and sellers of seeds. At meetings each November in Kansas City, Mo., members hear crop reports and determine conditions of supply and demand, which help them prepare to meet requirements for the following planting season.

The Atlantic Seedsmen's Association was organized because of the development of situations that affect more than one State. One such has to do with seeds of turfgrasses, of which the States in the region use a great deal. The launching of an interstate highway program made it important that the seed industries become better informed on maintenance of roadsides.
The Northern Seedsmen's Association actively encourages the use of seeds of northern-grown, winter-hardy legumes. The climate of the area served by the association was one of the regional conditions that brought the association into being. The Northern Central States are a source of a large volume of seeds harvested annually from plantings that have withstood this cold climate for many years.

The American Seed Trade Association, a national organization, represents the seed industry of the United States. It was organized in 1883 by 35 garden-seed firms that got together to cope with unjust damage claims, excessive tariff on seeds, and high postage rates. A farm-seed group was added to the association in 1930. Hybrid seed corn interests were included in the organization in 1942.

The ASTA has a board of directors, four commodity divisions, six service divisions, and numerous committees. The interests of the association are shown in the names of the commodity divisions—Farm Seed Division, Garden Seed Division, Hybrid Corn Division, and the Lawn and Turfgrass Division. The service divisions are Mail Order, Wholesale Packet Seed, Retail Store, Brokers, Associates, and Asta, the younger seedsmen's division.

Each division has its own staff of officers and committees. Unlike the association's standing committees, which are appointed by the president of ASTA, the division committees are appointed by the chairman of the division. Each division has an executive committee and various other committees, depending on the scope of their activities.

In the Farm Seed Division are the Farm Seed Research Conference Committee, Seed Improvement Committee, and Verified Origin Committee. The Farm Seed Research Conference Committee organizes an annual conference, in which men of the Department of Agriculture and State colleges participate. The conference brings to the attention of the seed trade the latest advances in research having to do with farm seeds. The Seed Improvement Committee works closely with the International Crop Improvement Association and State crop improvement associations to keep the industries informed about current developments. Keeping abreast of the rules necessary to represent the parties to a contract covering the sale or purchase of seeds is the responsibility of the Trade Rules Committee. The Verified Origin Committee cooperates with the Department of Agriculture in an auditing program, whereby the origin of certain farm seeds is checked by records that must be maintained by the receivers of such seeds.

The Garden Seed Division comprises the Garden Seed Sales Promotion Committee, Garden Seed Research Committee, Recommended Varieties Committee, and Flower Seed Germination Committee.

The policies are developed by the division committees and implemented through the division meetings and the executive officers of the ASTA. At regular meetings of the division, various committees report and the members can express their opinions about type of program they want to follow. The Garden Seed Division is more active in trade promotion than some other divisions. To promote the sales of garden seeds, the division expends approximately 40 thousand dollars annually. Another activity is a consistent program of weeding out obsolete varieties and acquainting the public with the importance and advantages of improved varieties.

The Hybrid Corn Division conducts an annual Hybrid Corn Industry Research Conference. A record of the proceedings is published and distributed widely to colleges and universities and students of agronomy without charge.
The Lawn and Turfgrass Division cooperates with highway officials in an exchange of information on the most adaptable grass to be used along roadsides under varying conditions.

The Service Divisions are concerned primarily with the movement of seeds through channels of commerce to the consumer.

National legislation and administration of Federal laws affecting the seed industry are matters of concern to members of the American Seed Trade Association. The association is geared to represent the seed industry's interests in seeking fair, impartial, beneficial legislation and administration of laws. The association also assists in the formulation and revision of State legislation when warranted.

Cooperation with public agencies and affiliated professional societies is a cornerstone of its policies. Cordial working relationships are assured by means of liaison committees of the association with the Department of Agriculture, International Crop Improvement Association, State agricultural experiment stations, agronomists, seed analysts, control officials, and others.

Information on behalf of the association's members is presented to keep members and the public aware of developments that affect the seed industry. A membership bulletin is published twice monthly. Following the annual convention in June, a volume of proceedings is published for the members. Proceedings of the annual Hybrid Corn Industry Research Conference and conferences on farm seeds also are published. These publications are used extensively throughout the industry and by public agencies and students.

Special pamphlets pertaining to trade rules, practices, and traffic are published periodically.

The association, through its Farm Seed Division, sponsors an annual collegiate crop-judging contest in Chicago. This contest is held in conjunction with the National Livestock Show and is attended by judging teams from many parts of the United States. In the contests, students test their ability in judging against that of students from other parts of the United States.

As a recognition of the part that communications provide in keeping the public informed of the latest developments in the industry, an annual Asta award is presented to the journalists who, in the opinion of several judges, do the best job in keeping the public informed.

The first Asta awards were presented in June 1955. Since that time 17 additional awards have been presented to outstanding farm and garden writers.

The association has distributed two motion pictures about farm seeds, "The Farm Seed Story" and "Seeds and Science."

The association in 1955 established the American Seed Research Foundation, an organization that seeks to encourage basic research on seeds. Its aim is to study seeds to find out more about how they perform.

Three projects approved by the foundation have to do with the development of rapid tests of viability of seeds, the deterioration of seeds in storage, and the evaluation and classification of selected types of degeneration revealed within germinative seed by the use of the tetrazolium test. Named as project leaders were Don F. Grabe of Iowa; William P. Caldwell and James C. Delouche, Mississippi; and R. P. Moore, North Carolina.

The association cooperates with the American Society for Horticultural Science in developing lists of names in use on new varieties of vegetables. Lists of names of obsolete varieties are published periodically.

The association has made grants-in-aid for research on seeds to universities and agricultural experiment stations. Among a few of the projects in which the association has cooperated with agricultural experiment stations are the development of a manual for the selection of competent seed analysts,
STUDIES ON CLOVER AND ALFALFA, AND IMPROVED LABORATORY TECHNIQUES.

The association has also worked with the Association of Official Seed Analysts and the Society of Commercial Seed Technologists in their various publications.

Arbitration, group medical insurance, insurance for specialized errors and omissions, and annual trade shows are among the other services provided members of the American Seed Trade Association.

The specific commodity promotional groups and associations also serve segments of the seed industry.

The All-America Selections, sponsored by members of the American Seed Trade Association’s Garden Seed Division, promotes the introduction of new vegetable and flower varieties through an award system consisting of nationwide trial grounds for new varieties. Eminent judges select the outstanding trial-ground entries. At their discretion and subject to final vote of the Board of Directors of the All-America Selections Council, exceptional new vegetable and flower varieties are awarded All-America distinction. To finance the program, winners of the awards return fixed percentages of the sales price of winning varieties.

The National Garden Bureau sponsors an information and public relations program developed by the association’s Garden Seed Division to encourage gardening. The Better Lawn & Turf Institute is an association to foster more effective grass seeding practices. The Certified Alfalfa Seed Council and the Merion Bluegrass Association are similarly constituted promotional programs. The Field Seed Institute is an association that studies economic trends in the seed business.

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