



March 31 2021

Dear industry associates and friends,

It has been a full year of historic care and grave concern, as our personal space has been violated with the SARS- COV-2 virus and pandemic. The ASA Executive Committee continues to work “behind the scenes” to ensure the stability of the Association. We are committed to bringing you more information in the future with updates such as these. As Vice President of the ASA, I wanted to share with you the State of the ASA. I also want to thank Jon Straughn, ASA President for hanging in there and keeping an open mind and positive attitude as the ASA also rides the waves of all the changes due to COVID.

I hope you are well and safe in this COVID environment. The vaccines have been rolling out now, and I personally have had Pfizer dose #2 yesterday. I will say that the first dose was liberating in a psychological way, and had me feeling that a normal lifestyle will be on the horizon. Dose number two has kicked in with a sore arm today, and a minor lightheaded feeling after 18 hours. As of this writing, Carrie Bohrer informed us that she recently had the virus. She has some symptoms lingering, yet is better and better each day. We wish her a continued speedy recovery.

The ASA executive committee, in the past, met in person annually in late February or March at the proposed convention hotel for a walk through. The last time we were face to face was February 27 and 28, 2020 at a beautiful boutique hotel in Washington DC selected by ASA President Jon Straughn. We decided to postpone the announcement and planning of the 2020 convention at that meeting, as the virus was just starting to circulate in the USA. In March of 2020, the hotel shut down for overnight guests under force majeure. The convention and executive committee met again in later April 2020 via Zoom. The committee voted to roll over the convention plans and full board for another year, with no changes to committee positions. There have been quarterly communications among the committee members since.

The ASA executive committee met via Zoom in November 2020 to check in and be updated on the financial status of the Association.

On a positive note, a subcommittee was indeed formed last year to plan for a scholarship benefit from the ASA, as previously disclosed to membership at the 2019 convention in Baltimore, MD. The association received a windfall from the now defunct Field Seed Institute which stipulates that the funds be used for scholarships. This subcommittee is working on plans to offer an estimated \$2000 annual college scholarship for the future. Several Zoom meetings and conference calls took place and we are pleased to say the framework for student applications and protocols have been set! This scholarship is available to high school

Carrie Bohrer  
8204 Goodhurst Drive Gaithersburg, MD 20882 Phone: 301-785-9613 Fax: 240-597-1264  
[www.atlanticseed.org](http://www.atlanticseed.org) [carrieb@newsomseed.com](mailto:carrieb@newsomseed.com)

seniors who reside in the Northeastern and Ohio areas. The application process opens December 15<sup>th</sup>. Deadline is February 15<sup>th</sup>. The application is completely on-line. Applicants are to include three references.

Take a look at the scholarship application on our website: [www.atlanticseed.org](http://www.atlanticseed.org) and go to the Scholarship Page. Although we did not have any applicants this year, it is our hope to continue to get the word out about the scholarship. We would encourage you to spread the word about this opportunity for those interested in pursuing education in the seed related industry. One suggestion was to send to Mid-Atlantic region Extension Agencies and/or Future Farmers of America organizations. If you have a contact that can help spread the word about this opportunity, please let Carrie know and she would be happy to send the scholarship letter and information to the organization.

The ASA executive board met once again in February, 2021 via Zoom. The executive committee consensus was to skip the annual convention previously set for October, 2021. The proposed convention hotel had not reopened for a year in Washington DC, and it was acquired by a larger hotel chain. The city of Washington DC has been stricter about lockdown than many other cities in the USA. Washington, DC remains in Phase 2 and although more restrictions *may be* lifted by the end of June 2021, the time frame for then finding a hotel and planning a convention is very tight. With no guarantee that restrictions will ease, it would be difficult to plan a convention on such short notice.

A colleague and former president of the ASA called today while writing this letter. Their opinion was that the last stimulus payment that many have just received may have exasperated the labor shortage in the ASA footprint. Warehouse help has been a challenge with extended unemployment. Some job applicants have been unemployable. It looks like some applicants may have "gamed the system" as I quote my colleague. There is some vaccine hesitancy among the labor force. I heard from another friend locally in the consumer delivery business. He stated that this March 2021 stimulus payment has caused a "Christmas time" effect in home deliveries in the last week.

We have had a tremendous amount of change in our turfgrass seed industry in the last few months. The Jacklin Seed acquisition and subsequent prosecution of the former general manager definitely has had an impact on the seed industry. Scotts acquisition of an Oregon production and marketing company is another big moment. Mountain View Seeds acquiring bluegrass production and an Oregon production and marketing company is news as well. The immediate challenges from these changes are that professional quality turf grass supply is tight. Changes have created shortages of perennial ryegrass and creeping red fescue. We will look to ask some members to provide new crop reports as we move forward with communications to the ASA membership.

Last but not least, the ASA will work on a get together at the Western Seed Association convention. We will work with membership to have a cocktail hour(s) in a member suite, assuming the Western moves forward with their annual meeting. Date and details will be announced by August or September.

Sincerely yours, *Zenon Lis* ASA Vice President Burlingham Seeds LLC

Carrie Bohrer Executive Director Atlantic Seed Association  
8204 Goodhurst Drive Gaithersburg, MD 20882 Phone: 301-785-9613 Fax: 240-597-1264  
[www.atlanticseed.org](http://www.atlanticseed.org) [carrieb@newsomseed.com](mailto:carrieb@newsomseed.com)