



# CANADIAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DU COMMERCE DES SEMENCES

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April 27, 2011

Ms. Laura Rance  
Editor, Manitoba Cooperator  
1666 Dublin Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0H1  
Email: [laura@fbcpublishing.com](mailto:laura@fbcpublishing.com)

Dear Ms. Rance:

It was with shock and disappointment that I read quotes from Paul Gregory of Interlake Forage Seeds in the article "*KAP Opposes Roundup Ready Alfalfa's Release in Canada*", which can be found on Page 8 of the April 21 edition of the Manitoba Cooperator.

I am not going to comment on the main content of the article, nor on Mr. Gregory's opinions on genetically modified alfalfa. While policy established by the CSTA Board of Directors is strongly in support of innovation, science and science based regulations and trade, the Association takes no positions on specific crops or technologies.

However, as the 2010-11 President of the Canadian Seed Trade Association, I believe that I owe it to CSTA's member companies to respond to Mr. Gregory's comments on CSTA's membership and decision making processes.

Mr. Gregory stated that he has resigned from the CSTA because life science companies have too much power. He is quoted as saying: "*When I go to the (CSTA) meetings now they are controlled by Monsanto, plain and simple. That's reality. I feel as an independent seeds-man I have no power and no voice because of the life-science companies.*"

While this may be Mr. Gregory's opinion, it is **not** reality. The reality is that CSTA has 130 company members. 101 are active (voting) members. While 5 of our voting members are "life-science" companies, 96 active member companies are not. In fact more than 50 of CSTA's active member companies could be classed as "independent seedsmen" or smaller companies traditionally operating in the forage and turf seed sector. Every single active member is eligible for one vote on CSTA policy and strategy development. The "One member- One vote" direction is entrenched in CSTA's by-laws; its operational guidelines; and its core operating values. Every member has one vote regardless of size, location, crop kind, membership fee paid, or ownership of the company.

In addition to the ability to cast one vote, all active members are eligible to serve in leadership positions on CSTA's policy committees and all active members are eligible to seek election to the Board of Directors. CSTA's membership recently amended its bylaws to allow the size of the Board of Directors to be adjusted should that be necessary to ensure that the membership is balanced by region, crop kind, and membership class. In addition, CSTA's Operational Guidelines require that the Association always strive for consensus in its decision making.

CSTA is very proud of its system of "extreme democracy". We are fortunate to live in a country where we are free to express our opinions. Just as in our country, not everyone inside the CSTA has the same opinion. However, all members of the CSTA have equal access to the democratic process. Most of our members take that right very seriously, participating fully in meetings and making their needs and opinions clearly known. It isn't the easiest road to policy advocacy, but it ensures that we are always acting in the common interests of our members, and are always representing a consensus of the opinion expressed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wayne Unger".

Wayne Unger  
President

c.c. CSTA Board of Directors  
Allen Dawson, Reporter, Manitoba Cooperator