



# CANADIAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DU COMMERCE DES SEMENCES

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March 23, 2011

Dear CSTA Members:

As President of the Canadian Seed Trade Association it is my "bittersweet" duty to inform you that Dr. William (Bill) Leask will retire from the position of Executive Vice-President of the CSTA, effective May 31, 2011.

Armed with Bachelors and Masters Degrees and a PhD from Guelph University; and having gained experience as a Plant Breeder at the University and as Director of Crop Research; and later General Manager of the Corn and Soybeans Division for Maple Leaf Mills; Bill was appointed to the position of EVP with the CSTA in 1983. He has expertly guided our national association for more than 27 years. He received the CSTA Seed Achievement award in 1996.

With Bill at the helm, CSTA has become a respected voice for Canada's seed industry, both nationally and internationally. His contribution, based on his tremendous knowledge of plant breeding, seed technology and trade and of the seed industry itself, has led to the development of policies, structures and strategies that have benefitted all stakeholders in the seed sector, in Canada and abroad.

At home, Bill has been one of the tireless drivers of reform to Canada's system of variety registration. He has produced rationale documents for crop placement within that system that have been lauded throughout industry and regulatory circles.

Bill represented private sector plant breeders on the Minister's Advisory Committee on Plant Breeders' Rights and he successfully ensured that the interests of CSTA's members were represented in the report of the committee.

Bill guided the CSTA through the establishment of the Canadian Seed Institute and represented CSTA as a founding member on the CSI Board for 12 years. He is also a key member of the steering committee that is examining the structure and operation of the Seed Certification system in Canada, including participating in the design of an Authorized Exporter Program and a pilot project to expand the Authorized Field Inspection Program.

He has represented the interests of CSTA's members to many organizations, including the Canada Grains Council; the Canola Council of Canada; the Breeders Committee of the Canadian Seed Growers Association; Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Expert Committee on Plant Gene Resources; and the National Plant Protection Advisory Committee.

Bill is also respected and looked to as the voice for the Canadian seed industry internationally, and his successes at the international level have been very significant. He has represented the CSTA at the International Seed Federation for 26 years and has played important roles on the ISF Trade and Arbitration Rules Committee; the Sustainable Agriculture Committee; and the Breeders' Committee; in addition to a number of ad hoc advisory and study work groups.

He has represented the international seed sector at such important organizations as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the associated Biosafety Protocol; the North American Plant Protection Organization; and the Codex Alimentarius. Bill is also a founding Director of the Seed Association of the Americas.

Under Bill's leadership, the CSTA has hosted two very successful World Seed Congresses in Canada, both accommodating and impressing more than 1,100 delegates from more than 60 countries around the world.

Bill and his wife Pat are long time fixtures at CSTA and ISF Conventions. Their children Greg and Sarah grew up with the CSTA. They will certainly be missed in the future.

Bill's contribution to the seed industry and to the CSTA will be formally recognized at the Gala Banquet during our 88<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Niagara Falls, followed by a grand celebration of his career, with his friends and family in attendance, at the CSTA semi-annual meeting in Toronto this November.

I'm also pleased to announce that, operating as an independent consultant, Bill has signed a contract to provide advice and guidance to the CSTA on specific domestic and international issues over the next two years.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of CSTA, I want to express our eternal gratitude for Bill's dedication and contribution during his 27 year tenure as Executive Vice-President. The strength of our national association is due in large part to Bill's generous commitment and devotion to his position and to the CSTA. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

Sincerely,



Wayne Unger  
2010-11 CSTA President