



April 10, 2026

To: The Honorable Representative David Durfee
Chair of the Committee on Agriculture, Food,
Resiliency, and Forestry

Re: Vermont S. 323

The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) is writing this letter to submit comment for the public hearing called for April 10, 2026, in support of S. 323, which would update the state’s seed law to be in line with the recommended uniform state seed law. However, ASTA has a few recommendations for further clarification to the proposed law.

Founded in 1883, ASTA represents over 650 companies involved in seed production and distribution, plant breeding, and related industries in North America. ASTA members research, develop, produce and distribute all varieties of seeds – including grasses, forages, flowers, vegetables, row crops, and cereals. Quality seed products from ASTA members support farmers of conventional, genetically engineered, and organic crops to produce food and farm commodities in the U.S. and around the world.

ASTA works closely with the Association of American Seed Control Official (AASCO), which houses the recommended uniform state seed law language. ASTA has been a part of conversations with AASCO’s membership to craft and update those recommended rules. With that in mind, the following recommendation have been made.

Strike “responsible for labeling the seed” from Section 11, Line 8, Page 17

Striking these words from the proposed legislation would reduce potential confusion when the distributor and the labeler are different entities. It would also allow the legislation to fall in line with the current recommended state seed law language.

Include the standard definition for “Noncommercial Sharing”

The standard definition for “Noncommercial Sharing” means that no monetary consideration or compensation may be transferred in return for receiving seeds. Additionally, anyone distributing seeds under the rules of this definition may not expect, or create the expectation, that seeds must be returned in exchange for receiving seeds. If distribution of seeds is found to be in anticipation or connected to money paid for work or services rendered by the same person distributing seeds, such distribution shall not be considered non-commercial within these rules.

By including the standard definition, Vermont can balance the right to grow food with the necessary protections to intellectual property rights. Robust intellectual property systems provide strong support for efforts to improve and increase genetic diversity, which are critical for meeting increasing challenges to domestic and global food security.

In conclusion, adopting the recommended uniform state seed law would help with intrastate commerce and increase the feasibility of getting high quality seeds into Vermont. With the recommendations above included S. 323 would be more in line with the standards that have been approved by the broader seed industry. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Gregory".

Jordan Gregory
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American Seed Trade Association
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