

# AASCO OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL

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*(Revised May 2011)*

## INTRODUCTION

As with most organizations, the success of the Association of the America Seed Control Officials (AASCO) depends upon the Officers and Board of Directors. To assist them, AASCO approved the development of an OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL, as a quick reference to identify the responsibilities and duties of each office without a search of the Bylaws.

The guidelines that follow are not intended to change or alter in any way the duties or responsibilities of the Officers or the Board of Directors as stipulated in the Bylaws. It is believed that by reviewing these guidelines, an Officer, member of the Board of Directors, or a Chair of a Committee can establish the parameter of the responsibility. Since AASCO has been incorporated as a non profit organization and many Standing and Special Committees have been restructured, this guide should prove very beneficial to those with increased responsibilities.

It should be noted that in the AASCO Bylaws one of the Special Committees is the OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL. The benefit of this manual can be realized only by following those duties and responsibilities which require the manual to be updated after each annual meeting.

Appreciation is expressed to all AASCO Officers, Committee Chairs and members who contributed to this Manual.

## AASCO OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The officers are:

President

First Vice-President

Second Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer

The Board of Directors are:

Above named Officers of the Association

Incumbent President of the four Regional Associations

One elected member from each of the Regional Associations

One designated member from Canada

The Immediate Past President

## PRESIDENT

- I. Office of the President
  - A. The President is Chief Officer of the Association.
  - B. The President is a member and Chair of the Board of Directors
  - C. The President is ex-officio member of all Committees.
  - D. The President's term of office shall be for two consecutive years following his election and shall begin at the conclusion of the annual meeting in the year he was elected.
  
- II Special Duties and Functions of the President
  - A. Preside at all business meetings of the Association.
  - B. Serve as Chair of the Board of Directors.
  - C. Appoint all Committee Chairs and Committee members.
  - D. Appoint substitute persons to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors until the next regular meeting.
  - E. With the approval of the Board of Directors, act on matters pertaining to the Association during the time the Association is not in session.
  - F. Represent the Association when invited or where it is evident or beneficial that the Association should be represented.
  - G. Prepare an agenda for the Board of Directors.
  - H. Maintain contact with the Secretary and Treasurer so as to be apprised of AASCO business matters and financial conditions.
  - I. Respond to or pass along to the appropriate person, requests for information concerning the Association or annual meetings.
  - J. Cast the deciding vote in case of a tie.
  - K. Inform candidates of results of elections.

## FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

- I. Office of the First Vice President
  - A. The First Vice President is an officer of the Association.
  - B. The First Vice President is a member of the Board of Directors.
  - C. The First Vice President assumes the office of the President upon completion of the term as First Vice President.
  - D. The First Vice President shall become acting President should a vacancy occur in the office of the President.
  - E. The First vice President's term of office shall be for two consecutive years, the same as the President's.
- II. Special Duties and Functions of the First Vice President
  - A. Confer with the AASCO President and other members of the Board of Directors in the event a vacancy occurs in the office of the President.
  - B. Serve as Chair of the Program Committee.
  - C. Appoint Committee Chairs on the first day he (she) is installed as the President.

## SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

- I. Office of the Second Vice President
  - A. The Second Vice President is an officer of the Association.
  - B. The Second Vice President is a member of the Board of Directors.
  - C. The Second Vice President assumes the office of the First Vice President upon the completion of his (her) term as Second Vice President or when there is a vacancy of the First Vice President.
  - D. The second Vice President's term of office shall be for two consecutive years, the same as the First Vice President and the President.
- II. Special Duties and Functions of the Second Vice President
  - A. Act as an aide to the President and First Vice President.
  - B. Perform special duties as designated by Board of Directors.
  - C. Serve as Chair of the Finance Committee and prepare the Association's budget.

## SECRETARY

- I. Office of the Secretary
  - A. Elected office of the Association for a two-year term and may succeed himself (herself).
  - B. Member of the Board of Directors.

### Additional Duties and Functions

- A. Prepare minutes of annual business meeting and of Board of Directors' meetings.
- B. Collect Committee reports presented at annual meeting.
- C. Disseminate Resolutions according to the direction of the Association.
- D. Maintain a current mailing list insofar as possible.

## TREASURER

### I. Office of the Treasurer

- A. Elected office of the Association for a two year term and may succeed himself (herself).
- B. Member of the Board of Directors.
- C. Receive all monies for dues, publications, etc.
- D. Deposit receipts to the credit of the Association in a recognized bank or financial institution with usual banking facilities.
- E. Pay all customary expenses and other accounts as approved by the Association.
- F. Shall be bonded in an amount determined by the Board of Directors.

### II Additional Duties and Functions

- A. Issue statements for dues.
- B. Notify Membership Committee of the status of all states.
- C. Shall order the President's plaque for the outgoing President, six months prior to the date of meeting.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### I. Composition:

Board of Directors shall consist of the current officers; the immediate past president, five designated members (one elected from each of four regions, and one from the Dominion of Canada); and four incumbent Presidents of the Regional Associations.

### II. Terms:

The terms of office shall run from the termination of each meeting until the termination of the second regular meeting or until successors have been appointed and/or elected.

### III Special Duties and Functions:

- A. Shall decide elections in case of a tie vote.
- B. Manage and direct the affairs of the Association according to decision arrived at by the Association.
- C. Shall determine the time and place for the regular or special meetings; however, the host states will have primary input to all details.
- D. Act on all matters pertinent to the Association during the time the Association is not in session.

## ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

- A Composition: The President shall appoint the Chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  1. Alert the Association to administrative procedures of a state or federal agency which may result in more efficient and effective enforcement procedures, Conduct a proper evaluation of such procedures and report to the membership during the annual meeting.
  2. Conduct an annual review of the Administrative Practices Handbook for needed changes or corrections, and report suggested changes to the board.
  3. Solicit from the membership new subject matter for the Handbook that would make it more valuable, and outline the value of the new subject matter to the board for its consideration and approval before any revision of the Handbook is undertaken.
  4. Provide educational presentations at the annual meetings that enhance new or existing enforcement strategies for improved compliance.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The President will appoint the Second Vice-President as Chair and name other members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Prepare the annual budget and present same to the membership for adoption during the annual meeting.
  - 2. Readily assume any responsibilities pertaining to expenses or income referred by the president.
  - 3. Track the Association's expenses and income and prepare a summary when requested by the president.
  - 4. Maintain contact with the treasurer and assist when requested.

## RUSSL REVIEW COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The Chair and all members will be appointed by the President.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Review and update the Recommended Uniform State Seed Law as needed.
  - 2. Solicit input from association members, affiliated organizations, and other interested persons.
  - 3. Give fair consideration to each proposal submitted, and to contact persons submitting proposals for clarification, if necessary.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities of the Chair
  - 1. Contact each affiliated organization well in advance of the 60 day deadline for submitting proposals to amend RUSSL.
  - 2. Present proposed amendments to RUSSL as agreed to by the committee.
  - 3. Submit to the membership and affiliated organizations a list of proposals to be considered during the annual meeting of the association at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting.
  - 4. Conduct a “RUSSL Advisory Forum” to provide an opportunity for input and discussion of proposals submitted to the membership by all affiliated organizations and interested persons.
  - 5. Make presentations for and conduct the “Forum”.

## CHARTER AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The President shall appoint the Chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Review the proceedings after each annual meeting, paying particular attention to the minutes of the business meeting, to determine the need to propose additions or amendments to the Charter and Bylaws. Note: Anytime during the year, additions or amendments may be identified by any member of the Association after an in-depth review of the Charter and Bylaws. Suggestions should be forwarded to the Chair of the Charter and Bylaws Committee.
  - 2. Discuss all proposed additions or amendments with the Board of Directors before distribution is made to the general membership.  
  
Note: This is not mandated by the Bylaws, but is recommended.
  - 3. Submit all proposed additions and amendments in writing to the general membership the first day of any regular meeting to be acted upon no sooner than the second day.

### \*\*\*PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The committee shall be chaired by the First Vice President, and the membership shall consist of the local host official, along with the Presidents of the four Regional Associations.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
1. Prepare general plans for the program of the regular meeting of the Association, and no later than 60 days prior to the opening of said meeting, submit the plans to the President for approval by the Board.
  2. Prepare/send letters of invitation to the regular meeting to allied organizations(AOSCA, AOSA, SCST, ASTA ) and honorary members to attend annual meetings.
  3. Plan to hold the Annual Meeting Preferably in the month of July, exclusive of the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>. Meetings in June and August can also be considered. The meeting should provide 4-5 days for meeting activities.
  4. Organize the meeting so that it consists of general session events providing educational presentations on new issues involving seed in order to increase the knowledge and capacity of seed control officials.
  5. Provide two(2) to eight(8) hours for each "Regional Association" meeting, along with appropriate meeting accommodations to facilitate each association and its needs.
  6. Advise the local host official that he (she) shall be responsible for securing adequate meeting facilities at the host site. This may include hotel accommodations, meeting rooms, local tours and transportation needs, audio/video equipment, and all other amenities required to meet the needs of the members.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities of the Local Host Official:
1. Establish appropriate registration costs to cover the general costs incurred for the meeting.
  2. Attract additional funds, if needed, from outside organizations to assists in sponsorship of the meeting.

3. Adequately set registration costs to cover “complimentary registrations” provided to all “invited” program participants from outside the organization [ and affiliated organizations to include AOSCA, AOSA, SCST, & ASTA.

## INFORMATION AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The President will appoint the Chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. At the Direction of the Board of Directors, canvas the members and update the AASCO Membership Directory including name, address, telephone number, facsimile number, and e-mail address.
  - 2. Be alert to and take advantage of opportunities to inform the public of the benefits of seed control and the use of high quality seed.
  - 3. Biannually, solicit newsletter articles from the AASCO president, regional representatives and any other available sources allowing an adequate response period prior to the newsletter deadline.
  - 4. Assemble, edit and issue the AASCO Newsletter biannually.
  - 5. Notify seed related associations and publications of the annual meeting date and location during April.
  - 6. Prepare and publish the AASCO official publication as described by Article IX.6.(d) of the association by-laws.

## LABELING AND LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The president will chair the committee. Other members will be one representative from each of the following: USDA Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch, Agriculture Canada, AOSA, SCST, AOSCA AND ASTA.
  
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Review proposed amendments to member state seed laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to seed for conformity with RUSSL.
  
  - 2. Suggest revisions and provide comment, where appropriate, concerning modifications needed to accomplish uniformity with RUSSL and existing state laws. Noxious weed seed requirements are excluded.

## ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The President shall appoint the Chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:

Conduct the election of all officers as specified in the Bylaws during odd-numbered years. Conduct a special election to fill vacancies in the panel of officers should a vacancy in the panel be longer than one calendar year.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities of the Chair:
  - 1. Determine the availability of candidates for office.
  - 2. Receive from the general membership nomination of candidates for the offices of second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and any other vacant office.
  - 3. Contact the 3 nominees, or if less than 3, all candidates for each office receiving the largest number of votes before placing their name on the ballot.
  - 4. Prepare a ballot for the election of Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and any other officer vacancy.
  - 5. Contact the Treasurer to determine if all states have paid their dues and are eligible to receive a ballot, and distribute the ballots to members in good standing.
  - 6. Receive and tabulate the election ballots received 14 days before the first day of the annual meeting. Provide results of the election to the President with sufficient time so he (she) can inform the successful candidates at least 5 days prior to the meeting.
  - 7. Prepare and present the report of the Elections Committee to the Association during the business session of the Annual Meeting.
  - 8. Conduct a special election for vacancies in the panel of officers should the vacancy be longer than one calendar year using the following process:
    - a. Prepare and send nomination forms to the membership. Nominations shall be returned to the chair within 10 days of receipt.
    - b. Nominees will be contacted within 10 days of close of nominations to determine if nominee will accept the nomination.
    - c. Prepare and send a ballot for the vacant position to the membership within 10 days of confirming acceptance of the nominees.

d. Ballots shall be returned within 10 days of receipt and shall be tabulated. The president will be notified of the name of the successful candidate shortly after the vote tabulation.

e. The President shall notify the successful candidate, the Board of Directors and the membership of the election result.

## RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The President shall appoint the Chair and all members to include one from each of the four regions.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Poll each region member for resolutions or subject matter for resolutions at least once prior to AASCO meeting.
  - 2. Circulate resolutions among committee members prior to meeting.
  - 3. Poll Association members for resolutions during opening session of meeting.
  - 4. Request that all resolutions be submitted to committee at least one day prior to the day of action.
  - 5. Accept resolutions from AASCO members only.
  - 6. Screen resolutions as to relevance to Association objectives.
  - 7. Draft resolutions in proper format for presentation to membership prior to taking action.
  - 8. Present policy and courtesy resolutions to membership for consideration at regular business session.
  - 9. Provide Secretary with a copy of committee report at the meeting or shortly thereafter for use in compiling the proceedings.
  - 10. Provide Secretary with a draft of each Policy Position Resolution directed at NASDA in the form prescribed by the Executive Committee of NASDA and limited to (10) per year (form attached).
  - 11. Accompany proposed NASDA Policy Position Resolution(s) with a one page statement summarizing the purpose of, and justification for, the proposed Policy Position (see Action Policy Position Form and Policy Position summary Sheet).
  - 12. Submit each Policy Position Resolution(s) directed at NASDA Washington office at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening date of each annual NASDA meeting.
  - 13. Maintain a book of policy resolutions adopted in the past, so as to allow easy review.

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The President shall appoint the Chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Contact the Treasurer and make arrangements to secure all pertinent records of the Association for audit review, during the annual meeting.
  - 2. Audit the following records, including, but not limited to bank statements and canceled checks, interest accounts, saving certificates, invoices, and other similar records.
  - 3. Render a comprehensive report of the findings of the Audit Committee to the membership during the business meeting.
- C. Auditing Procedures
  - 1. Audit Procedure Form (see appendix A)
  - 2. Document Retention Policy (see appendix B)

## AWARDS AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The president will appoint the chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Encourage attendance at all meetings and report to the association those member states in good standing that are entitled to vote.
  - 2. Prepare, and circulate to member states forms for nominating honorary members
  - 3. Request forms for nominating honorary members from member states.
  - 4. Submit nominees for honorary membership to the Board.
  - 5. Prepare and present the necrology report to membership.
  - 6. Develop and keep current the selection process for the recipient of the following awards:
    - a. Honorary Membership
    - b. Annual Outstanding Seed Control Official or Enforcement Program
    - c. President's Plaque
    - d. Recognition of committee activities
    - e. All additional awards recognizing service to the association.

## LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The president shall appoint a past president as chair of the committee. Other members appointed by the president will include one member from each of the Regional Associations.
  
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Review and update annually the long range strategic plan that will be proactive in addressing the anticipated future changes in the seed industry.
  - 2. Make recommendations to seed control officials as to needed activity changes in order to keep current with the trends of the seed industry.
  - 3. Suggest needed research to fill recognized void in present-day knowledge of the sampling and testing of products.
  - 4. Provide orientation for all new members of the association, as needed. This should be done at the beginning of the annual meeting.

## OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL

- A. Composition: The president will appoint the chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Review annually, and update as needed, to keep the Operating Procedures Manual current.
  - 2. Publish and distribute the manual to the membership.
  - 3. After each annual meeting, revise those sections of the manual affected by any amendments to the by-laws adopted by the association.

## MEETING PLACE COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The president will appoint the chair and all members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Canvass the membership to obtain a commitment from those states willing to host the annual meeting.
  - 2. Develop a plan to alternate the annual meeting among the four regions and Canada insofar as practical and invitations permit.
  - 3. Submit to the board at the beginning of the annual meeting, the committee's recommendations for states to host the meeting for a specific year.
  - 4. Notify the state seed control officials and Canada in writing, of the board's final determination to offer them the opportunity to host the annual meeting.

## SEED INSPECTORS QUALIFICATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

- A. Composition: The President shall appoint the Chair and all committee members.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:
  - 1. Collect information with respect to the qualifications required of State Seed Inspectors, and promote the adequate training of seed inspectors.
  - 2. Establish recommendations for qualifications of inspectors through definition of inspector authority and responsibilities.
  - 3. Provide training materials and information relating to proper equipment and supplies for sampling, sampling procedures (both AOSA and ISTA), inspection procedures, public relations, sample documentation and inspector safety.
  - 4. Annually review the “Handbook for Seed Inspectors” for needed corrections and updates, and be responsible for printing updates and maintaining current supplies of the handbook.
  - 5. Suggest to the Board of Directors any new subject matter that would enhance the value of the *Handbook for Seed Inspectors* to Seed Control Officials and their staffs.

## DEFINITIONS COMMITTEE

A. Composition: The President will appoint the Chair and all members.

B. Duties and Responsibilities

1. Develop definitions of terms used throughout the industry and affiliated seed organizations for labeling, distribution and trade news.
2. Submit committees definitions agreed upon by the committee to the AASCO Board of Directors for its review, recommendations and approval.
3. Circulate those definitions that meet all criteria to the membership for its approval and for official AASCO consideration.
4. New definitions that are accepted by the membership are “tentative” official definitions for a minimum of one (1) year. If no objections are filed regarding each tentative definition during that period, such a definition may be accepted as “official” by vote of the membership at the next annual .meeting.

Note: A simple majority vote is necessary to approve “official definitions”.

5. Hold “tentative” definitions to which modifications and/or changes have been made during the first year following tentative approval for an additional year of “tentative” status before proposing they be elevated to “official” status by vote of the membership.
6. Submit to AASCO RUSSEL Review Committee all AASCO approved “official” definitions for addition to RUSSEL.

## New Seed Technologies

A. Composition: The President will appoint the chairman and all members.

B. Duties and responsibilities

1. Develop definitions of terms used in labeling and distribution of enhanced seed products.
2. Establish guidelines for state regulatory agencies involvement in patent rights enforcement.
3. Work with industry to develop uniform testing protocols for variety trait verification
4. Address issues of concern from public and private sectors regarding regulatory involvement in product acceptability, performance, and distribution of varieties developed through genetic engineering.

## Website

A Composition The President will appoint the chairman and all members.

B Duties and responsibilities.

1. Secure the services of a webmaster to establish and maintain a website for the association.
2. Provide for a public page for posting of announcements and information relating to AASCO organization, activities, RUSSL, Sampling handbook ordering info, and other information of a public nature.
3. Provide for a secure page available only to the membership to be used as a forum for posting of documents and discussion of issues among the membership.
4. Review website content and update as is necessary.

## HOSTING THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Seed Control Official from the State hosting the annual meeting will be a member of the Program Committee, and will be the individual most responsible for the local arrangements. The Chairman of the Program Committee will keep in contact with the host State Control Official and be of assistance and represent the Association when needed.

Soon after the Association accepts the invitation of a host state, that state's Seed Control Officials should decide the appropriate location for the Association's annual meeting and proceed to locate suitable accommodations. The basic needs include:

1. Accommodations for 60-80 people, usually 40-55 rooms.
2. Meeting rooms as follows:
  - a. 1 room for AASCO to accommodate 80 people.
  - b. 4 smaller rooms for Regional meetings to accommodate 20 people per room.
  - c. Adequate facilities for banquet if one is planned.
3. Airport served by major airlines in close proximity to meeting place, and having available ground transportation to meeting place.
4. While not mandatory, rental car agency should be close to airport.
5. If educational tour is planned, something of agronomic interest close by.

It is important that the host state obtain a commitment in writing from the hotel/meeting site as agreed upon. Often, hotel and motel employees handling your arrangements change employers, and unless you have a confirmation in writing, disastrous results may result. Every six months or so you will need to check to make sure the meeting is on the hotel's or motel's docket. The preferred month of the Annual Meeting is July, exclusive of the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>, but June and August may be considered.

Once the date and meeting location is firm, it would be helpful to contact the local travel bureau, or chamber of commerce to see what brochures and travel assistance might be available. Many have an information video or PowerPoint presentation available that can be borrowed and shown to the membership at the appropriate time. These will help create interest in the area, and hopefully increase attendance.

To encourage attendance, room rates should be negotiated at a flat rate for single or double occupancy. The rate should also be confirmed in writing. Some hotels or motels offer a free room for every so many occupied. An extra room is always useful as a hospitality room or for storage..

Certain basic equipment is needed for all meetings rooms. Preferably each room will have tables as well as chairs. Appropriate audio-visual equipment, based on the needs of each committee, regional association, or presenter should be provided. The President of each Regional Association should be contacted to determine if there are any special needs and what the desired seating arrangement should be.

**Meals** – While most hotels and motels provide a coffee shop as well as a dining room, most people like to eat at a variety of places. A list of the names and addresses of suitable restaurants, particularly those within walking distance, is always welcome.

**Coffee Breaks** – Mid-morning and mid-afternoon breaks provide a welcome opportunity to refresh oneself. While not mandatory, they are more or less expected. Coffee and soda are in order. Other refreshments, such as juice and sweet rolls, are nice but should be left to the discretion of the local host.

**Social Hour** – Is not a necessity and strictly an option of the local host. If one is planned, it is better to avoid confusion by including the cost in the registration fees.

**Banquet** – While an organized meal always provides a nice opportunity to recognize people, make presentations, etc...., it is not essential. However, if one is to be scheduled, and a head table will be used, those sitting at the head table should be notified well in advance. When planning the seating arrangements, don't forget to include the entertainment, guest speaker, etc. at the head table.

**Registration** – Pre-registration will be of substantial help in determining the number of attendees, and provides additional time to make other preparations, such as creating name tags. All materials to be passed out at the registration table, such as name tags, maps, lists, receipts, tickets, etc. should be placed, in advance, in a single packet for each registrant to avoid confusion during the registration process, and to insure that everyone receives the same information.

**Spouse and Children Program** – For most meetings a limited number of spouses and children will be attending. While the host state is not obligated to plan a detailed entertainment program for them, such a program and a person to direct planned activities normally adds to the enjoyment of those attending the Annual Meeting. Such a program does not have to elaborate and a walking tour to a point of interest or to a local shopping center is most

appropriate. When practical, a planned program for non-participating family members is encouraged.

**Registration fee** – It will be necessary for the host state to determine the cost of hosting the Annual Meeting. The Association will help in estimating the number of attendees and each attendee should pay a proportional cost in their registration fee. Keep in mind that normally there are some unexpected costs, which should be covered by the registration fee. Therefore, overestimating expenses by a moderate amount is expected. Include in the estimate all complimentary registrations, banquet tickets, etc. which the Program Committee feels are appropriate. Complimentary registration to allied association (AOSA, AOSCA, ASTA, & SCST) representatives will be paid by the AASCO treasury.

The Seed Control Official of the host state should notify each member agency via the Secretary, or directly, of the anticipated registration fee and provide the necessary registration materials at least 90 days prior to the date of the meeting.

APPENDIX A.

Audit Procedure Form
AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chairperson:
Association of American Seed Control Officials

DATE OF AUDIT: Location

IDENTIFY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

Non-profit organizations must have a conflict of interest policy with Board Members annually disclosing their potential conflicts of interest.

Requested the Treasurer to disclose any potential conflicts of interest? Yes No

- None identified or
List potential conflicts of interest:

VERIFY USE OF CRITICAL ACCOUNTING PRACTICES:

1) Segregation of duties\* Yes No

\*All nonprofits should ensure that no members of staff, including the chief executive, serve on the audit committee. Medium to large organizations should consider forming an audit committee that is separate from the finance committee.

2) Funds were only used for intended purposes: Yes No

3) Monitored and reviewed bank statements for accuracy of all transactions: Yes No

4) Verified that no personal loans\*\* were made: Yes No

\*\*The practice of providing loans is specifically prohibited under Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

VERIFY ADHERENCE TO DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY:

1) Association Documents:
Articles of Incorporation Yes No
Located or held by?

By-Laws .....Yes No  
Located at or held by? \_\_\_\_\_

IRS Form 1023 – Application for Exemption .....Yes No  
Located at or held by? \_\_\_\_\_

**2) Tax records:**

- a.) Filed the Association's Form 990 or 990 EZ – annual information return. .... Yes No  
This should be kept for a minimum of seven years
- b.) The Association's original IRS Form 1023 – application for exempt status..... Yes No  
This must be retained permanently.

**VERIFY ADHERENCE TO DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY: (continued)**

**3) Board and Committee Materials:**

- a.) Meeting Minutes..... Yes No  
Minutes should be retained in perpetuity
- b.) Other Board and Committee materials..... Yes No  
Committee Reports should be maintained at least 3 years

**4) Board and Committee Materials:**

Corrective actions issued:

Audit Committee Participants:

## APPENDIX B.

### Document Retention Policy

#### ARTICLE I PURPOSE

The purposes of this document retention policy are for the Association of American Seed Control Officials to enhance compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and to promote the proper treatment of records by the Association.

#### ARTICLE II POLICY

**Section 1. General Guidelines.** Records should not be kept if they are no longer needed for the operation of the business or required by law. Unnecessary records should be eliminated from the files. The cost of maintaining records is an expense which can grow unreasonably if good housekeeping is not performed. A mass of records also makes it more difficult to find pertinent records.

From time to time, the Association may establish retention or destruction policies or schedules for specific categories of records in order to ensure legal compliance, and also to accomplish other objectives, such as preserving intellectual property and cost management. Several categories of documents that warrant special consideration are identified below. Minimum retention periods are established. The retention period for documents not included in the categories shown below should be determined primarily by general guidelines affecting document retention, as well as consideration for their relevancy in potential litigation or other pertinent factors.

**Section 2. Exception for Litigation Relevant Documents.** The Association expects all officers, board members and committee members to comply fully with any published records retention or destruction policies and schedules. All officers, board members and committee members should note the following general exception to any stated destruction schedule: If you believe, or the Association informs you, that Association records are relevant to litigation, or potential litigation (i.e., a dispute that could result in litigation), then you must preserve those records until it is determined that the records are no longer needed. That exception supersedes any previously or subsequently established destruction schedule for those records.

**Section 3. Minimum Retention Periods for Specific Categories.**

(a) Association Documents. Association records include the Association's articles of incorporation, by-laws and IRS Form 1023, Application for Exemption. Association records should be retained permanently. IRS regulations require that the Form 1023 be available for public inspection upon request.

(b) Tax Records. Tax records include, but may not be limited to, documents concerning payroll, expenses, proof of contributions made by donors, accounting

procedures, and other documents concerning the Association's revenues. **Tax records should be retained for at least seven years** from the date of filing the applicable return. There are two documents that a tax-exempt organization must retain and make available for public inspection:

- The Association's original IRS Form 1023 – application for exempt status. This must be retained permanently.
- The organization's Form 990 or 990 EZ – annual information return. This should be kept for a minimum of seven years.

Note: A nonprofit is required to make Forms 1023 and 990 available for public inspection at its offices and must provide copies to the public upon request unless the forms are widely available on the Internet.

(c) Board and Board Committee Materials. Meeting minutes should be retained in perpetuity in the Association's minute book. A clean copy of all other Board and Board Committee materials should be kept for **no less than three years** by the Association.

(e) Press Releases/Public Filings. The Association should retain permanent copies of all press releases and publicly filed documents under the theory that the Association should have its own copy to test the accuracy of any document a member of the public can theoretically produce against the Association.

(f) Legal Files. Legal counsel should be consulted to determine the retention period of particular documents, but **legal documents should generally be maintained for a period of ten years**.

(g) Marketing and Sales Documents. The Association should keep final copies of marketing and sales documents for the same period of time it keeps other corporate files, generally three years. An exception to the three-year policy may be sales invoices, contracts, leases, licenses, and other legal documentation. These documents should be kept for **at least three years beyond the life of the agreement**.

(h) Development/Intellectual Property and Trade Secrets. Development documents are often subject to intellectual property protection in their final form (e.g., patents and copyrights). The documents detailing the development process are often also of value to the Association and are protected as a trade secret where the Association:

(i) derives independent economic value from the secrecy of the information; and  
(ii) has taken affirmative steps to keep the information confidential. The Association should keep all documents designated as containing trade secret information for at least the life of the trade secret.

(i) Contracts. Final, execution copies of all contracts entered into by the Association should be retained. The Association should retain copies of the **final contracts for**

**at least three years** beyond the life of the agreement, and longer in the case of publicly filed contracts.

(j) Correspondence. Unless correspondence falls under another category listed elsewhere in this policy, correspondence should generally be saved for **two years**.

(k) Banking and Accounting. Accounts payable ledgers and schedules should be kept for **seven years**. Bank reconciliations, bank statements, deposit slips and checks (unless for important payments and purchases) should be **kept for three years**. Any inventories of products, materials, and supplies and any invoices should be **kept for seven years**.

(l) Insurance. Expired insurance policies, insurance records, accident reports, claims, etc. should be **kept permanently**.

(m) Audit Records. External audit reports should be kept permanently. Internal audit reports should be kept for **three years**.

**Section 4. Electronic Mail.** E-mail that needs to be saved should be either:

(i) printed in hard copy and kept in the appropriate file; or

(ii) downloaded to a computer file and kept electronically or on disk as a separate file.

The retention period depends upon the subject matter of the e-mail, as covered elsewhere in this policy.