



2018 Annual Member Meeting

Tuesday, December 4, 2018
Chicago, IL

For more information contact USTN Coordinator:
Practical Famers of Iowa

Coordinator Chris Wilbeck 515.229.6988
chris.ustn@practicalfarmers.org

Advisor Sarah Carlson 515.232.5661
sarah@practicalfarmers.org

Agenda

Overview

Data

Improvements

Challenges & Suggestions

Wrap-Up

2018 Overview

Purpose

The US Testing Network (USTN) is run as a not-for-profit, participant-based network started in 2009 and coordinated by Practical Farmers of IA.

USTN's purpose is to coordinate a rigorous testing program to evaluate public and private germplasm.

The primary focus of USTN is to evaluate germplasm under development for the organic and non-transgenic grain (corn) industry.

USTN's participants provide seed to be tested, locations for testing and/or financial support.

Before USTN

Organic & Non-GMO corn breeders & retailers:

- Had few economical testing options
- Ran isolated testing programs
- Were geographically limited
- Relied on small data sets
- Lacked an efficient network to communicate data

Making it hard to assess a hybrid's performance across a range of environmental conditions.

With USTN

- ECONOMICAL, ONE-STOP testing service across a WIDE RANGE of LOCATIONS
- INCREASED EXPOSURE for independent programs of varying sizes
- COLLABORATIVE NETWORK of breeders, seed companies and end-users focused on the non-GMO and organic marketplace.

GOAL: Improved QUALITY and QUANTITY of non-GMO & organic hybrids available to farmers



USTN Testing Coordination

Test Coordination - Practical Farmers of IA

Chris Wilbeck, PFI consultant - coordinator

Sarah Carlson, PFI advisor

Data Analysis - USDA-ARS

Jode Edwards, USDA-ARS (Ames IA)

Current Steering Committee

Charlie Brown, Brownseed Genetics

Dan Dorney, DKD Genetics

Jode Edwards, USDA-ARS

Mac Ehrhardt, Albert Lea Seed

Chris Eichhorn, Wyffels Hybrids

Alix Paez, Genetic Enterprises International

Participants

Public Breeders

Private/Independent Breeders

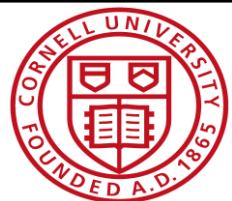
Seed Retailers

Seed Treatment Developers

Researchers



ALBERT LEA
SEED



Past Participants



DKD GENETICS



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

MICHAEL FIELDS
AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE



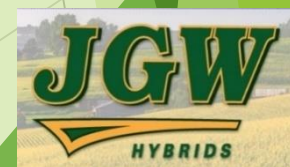
More than a number.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

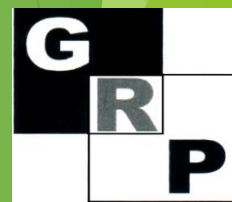


Frank Kutka

RFR



Montgomery Consulting



Participants

Can be both	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Seed Suppliers ↓	12	17	16	18	13	10	11
Location Managers ↑	15	20	20	19	17	15	15
TOTAL	19	28	28	30	24	21	22

2018 Locations: 53 test sites in 10 states



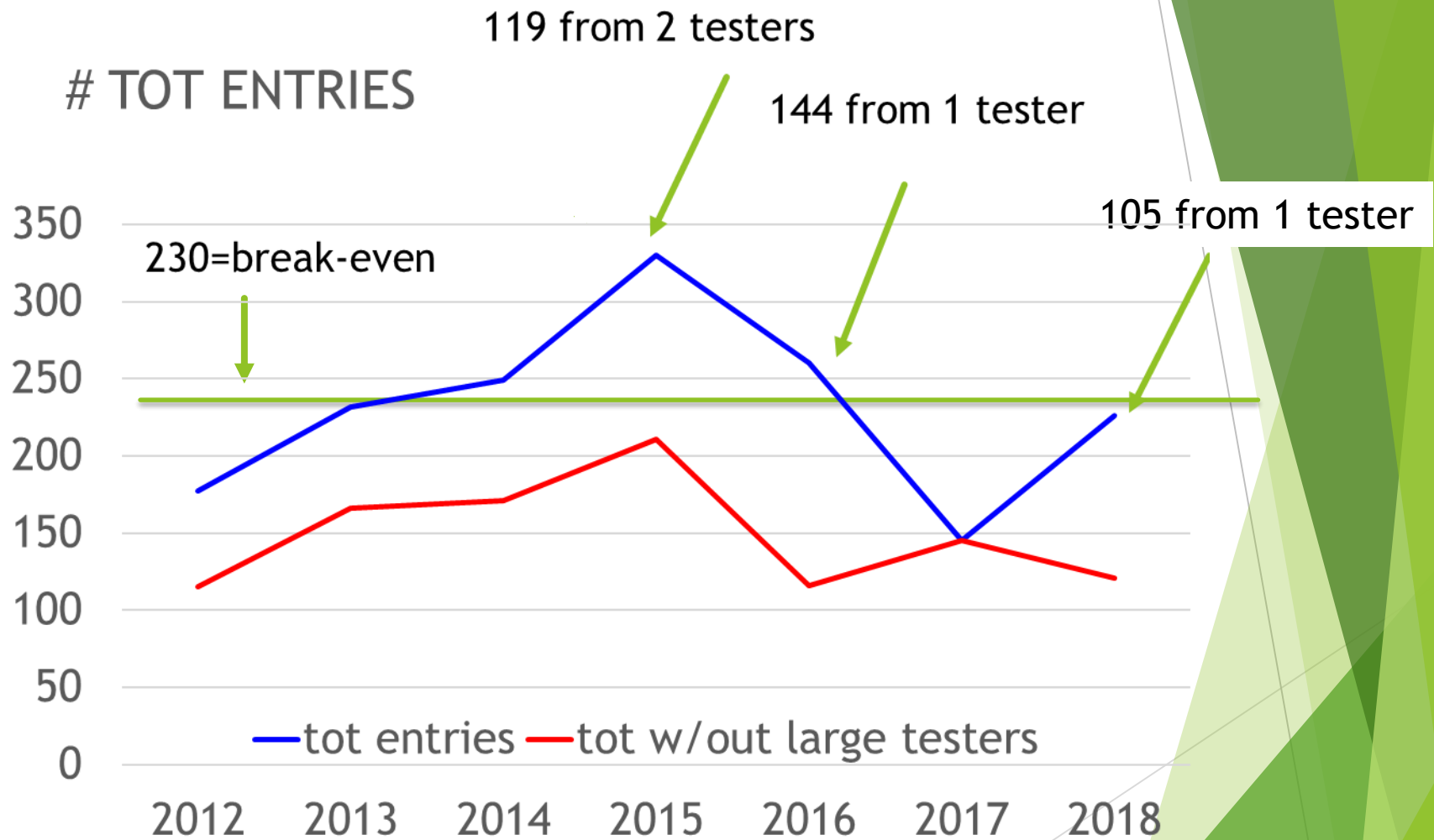
Note: some locations provide sites for organic & conventional tests

Entries

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Test Entries	164	215	235	304	245	127	207
Check Entries	13	17	14	26	15	18	19
TOTAL Entries	177	232	249	330	260	145	226

230 break-even

Should not rely on any one tester



TEST	TYPE	CRM	2015 # Entries	2016# Entries	2017# Entries	2018# Entries
EC0	CONV	75	36	-	-	-
EC1	CONV	90 or 95W	30	15	15	11
EC1	CONV	95E	-	-	10	21
EC2	CONV	100	20	-	-	-
EC3E	CONV	105	19	10	12	13
EC3W	CONV	105	21	-	-	19
EC4E	CONV	110	20	17	16	24
EC4W	CONV	110	15	-	-	15
EC4E	CONV	112	20	83	14	30
EC4W	CONV	112	15	75	-	-
EC4FW	CONV	112	35	-	-	-
EC5	CONV	115 or 115E	13	10	15	29
EC5	CONV	115FW-i	-	-	10	10
EC5	CONV	115FW	-	-	10	-
EO1	ORG	95	37	23	18	18
EO3	ORG	105	30	16	15	17
EO4	ORG	110	19	11	10	19
Total			330	260	145	226

MN

MN

IA

IA

IA

irrigated NE

irrigated KS

non-irrigated KS

12
Tests
in
2018

Where
in
2019?

Budget

Goal is to BREAK-EVEN

	ACTUAL 2017		ACTUAL 2018	
SS Income	\$33,904		\$56,664	
less no harvests	-\$715		-\$824	
less free to fill tests	-\$960		-\$10,080	
TOTAL INCOME		\$32,229		\$45,760
LM Payments	\$22,056		\$35,457	
LM donation	-\$578		-\$816	
LM credit (apply next year)	-\$99		-\$1,292	
LM credit (apply this year)	\$0		\$99	
Coordinator	\$8,925		\$9,938	
PFI Book-Keeping	\$2,000		\$2,000	
Annual Meeting	\$3,856		\$4,619	
OREI reim ASTA	\$0		-\$800	
TOTAL EXPENSE		\$36,160		\$49,205
NET		-\$3,931		-\$3,445

FREE to fill tests:

2017:

4=2conv+2org

2018:

37=5conv+32org

**\$3000 is for
meeting room**

2018 Data

presented by
Jode Edwards USDA-ARS

Improvements

2018 Improvements

3 Reports per Test

1. USTN: internal (ALWAYS PROVIDED)
all entries - not for public distribution
2. Public: public (NEW LAST YEAR)
entries tester agrees can be on report
use all-entry summary test statistics
3. Top 3 per Test: public (NEW THIS YEAR)
entries tester agrees can be on report
use all-entry summary test statistics

BENEFITS:

- same cost per entry
- customizable, formatted public data for websites
- raw data still distributed for internal use

Entries per Tester

TESTER	USTN	Top 3	Public
AL	5	5	5
Becks	5	5	5
Cornell	8	5	5
CRD	4		
DKD	6		
GEI	9	9	
GHO	5	5	5
Mand	23	23	
MAS	7	7	7
MC	105	105	
Mont	30	9	
SEN	6	6	
USDA	7	5	5
FILLED	6		
TOTAL	226	184	32

Most entries ok for
Top 3 Report =
81% of total entries

Not many agree
to have entries on
Public Report =
14% of total entries

Entries per Test

TEST	USTN	Top 3	Public	Top 3+ Public
EC1-95E	21	19		3
EC1-95W	11	11	9	9
EC3-105E	13	9	2	4
EC3-105EW	19	18	5	8
EC4-110E	24	18	1	2
EC4-110W	15	15		3
EC4-112E	30	25	1	4
EC5-115E	29	27		3
EC5-115FW-i	10	4		
EO1-95	18	17	5	5
EO3-105	17	14	4	4
EO4-110	19	7	5	7
TOTAL	226	184	32	52

Top 3 entries
added to
Public Report =
23%
of total entries

2018 Improvements

Added 3rd Rep to E04-110 Organic Test

Encouraged more nitrogen applications in organic (see Organic Location Comments)

Improved data analysis

Challenges & Solutions

Challenges & Solutions

Challenge:

Number of organic entries dropping from current members
Difficult to fill tests

- “known” organic breeders/retailers already contacted
- gave free organic entries to fill tests

Solution:

Need more organic testers

- other OREI groups? European seed breeders/retailers?

Are there other uses for USTN organic testing network?

- Add test option: 1 location per test
ex: E01-95 Penn Yan, E03-105 Wooster, E04-110 Ames
3 reps per entry: 500 kernels vs 1200-2000 kernels needed previously
- Other?

Challenges & Solutions

Challenge:

Difficult to get “checks”

- swapped free organic entries for checks (Becks/GHO)
- LM provided some checks (CRD, Cornell)
- SS submitted own checks (DKD, MC)

Solution:

MBS provides conventional checks

- SS buys seed from MBS & signs agreement
- pedigree & hybrid on USTN report/hybrid on Public reports
- USTN gives SS 1 free entry per check

Get organic checks from (need option?)

- need to show pedigree & hybrid on USTN report, hybrid on public reports

Challenges & Solutions

Challenge:

Organic certification letters not always with seed

- SS reminded in instructions, but still forgets
- LM asks for it prior to an inspection (short notice)

Solution:

Send 2nd reminder to SS

Remind LM to check seed shipment for letter

Challenges & Solutions

Challenge:

Farmers unaware of USTN and results

- current PFI website focus for breeders/retailers
- Public data only available since 2017 (limited)

Solution:

Push-out the info to farmers

Encourage farmers to go to SS websites to buy seed

- highlight Top 3 Reports
- PFI social media tweets
- Tester social media tweets

Challenges & Solutions

Challenge:

Rising cost of meeting at Hyatt

- meeting room costs \$3000
 - room + min food/beverage \$2000
 - affiliate charge to get a meeting room \$500
 - badge charge \$100
 - AV cost \$400

Solution:

Consider a nearby restaurant w/meeting room

- in 2012, met at Bella Bacinos for \$800 (food included)

Challenges & Solutions

Challenge:

Invoicing too complex with minimal benefits

- deducting payments made or received when location not harvested
- other testing services don't do this?

Solution:

Streamline invoicing

- pay LM full payment, even if location not harvested
- SS pays full payment, even if location not harvested
- still deduct payments, if location not planted

Challenges & Solutions

Challenge:

Would like to send data reports earlier

- some locations received early
- many locations harvested later
- analysis not done until all locations are in for test
- report production is time consuming

Solution:

Email raw data weekly starting mid-Nov

Minimize report formatting with pre-production

Challenges & Solutions

Others?



Wrap-Up

JOIN!

To become a member and
participate in 2019 USTN Testing

Contact:

Chris Wilbeck (USTN) 515.229.6988
chris.ustn@practicalfarmers.org