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Brownseed Genetics to enter retail seed business with CB Seed brand

Bay City, Wis., (January 24, 2011) – Five years ago Charles Brown, president of Brownseed Genetics, decided to sell the retail arm of his family business to focus on genetic research. Today, that research has paid off with numerous new high-yielding hybrids proven in third-party trials, and the company will launch CB Seed to offer these hybrids to farmers in the northcentral United States.

“CB Seed represents decades of work,” said Brown, referring to his family’s 100-year history in the seed business. “We saw a tremendous opportunity for high-yielding, high-value hybrids and varieties, so we made the decision to once again sell through retail channels.”

CB Seed will be sold primarily through distributors in Wisconsin, Minnesota, the Dakotas and northern Iowa, since its seed products have been selected for traits that perform best in northern growing conditions. In addition, most hybrids offered by CB Seed will be conventional or single-trait – meaning that they only have select traits for herbicide and insect resistance based on what farmers in the northern climates need. Many CB Seed products have no bioengineered traits.

Costs for fertilizer, fuel and other inputs have become an increasing concern for farmers in recent years. Seed prices have also risen dramatically for products with numerous bioengineered traits to levels more than twice that of conventional hybrids.

“Most seed products today contain numerous bioengineered traits, so farmers pay for features they just don’t often need,” Brown said. “Third-party trials have shown that farmers don’t have to sacrifice yield when they plant seed with fewer traits, but there aren’t many options available for them. CB Seed gives farmers a choice.”

With one of the only remaining breeding programs for conventional hybrids in the northern Cornbelt, Brown said his company has continued to advance seed germplasm by selecting for genetic improvements in performance and resulting yield for plants that do best in this climate. This includes hybrids with shorter time to maturity.

In addition, CB Seed has developed proprietary products that command a premium price in the market. Some of these products include hybrids that produce high oil or high protein grain. CB Seed also will offer certified organic products and non-GMO (genetically modified organism) labeled seed that will be offered under the Purity Plus™ brand.

2010 Plot Results

CB Seed conducts research year-round, with plots in South America, North Africa and Ukraine, but its focus is on producing seed that delivers results in the northcentral U.S., emphasized Brown. “We have spent six years focusing on research, developing germplasm that is only available from CB Seed.”

This dedicated research program paid off in 2010 third-party research trials conducted by the U.S. testing network. Its conventional and short-maturity hybrids did especially well. “In northern growing zones, we often took several of the top five slots for yield,” said Brown. Plot yields were as high as 263 bushels/acre for commercially available conventional hybrids from CB Seed, while an experimental hybrid yielded 269 bushels/acre.

In Wisconsin state yield trials, products from CB Seed yielded as much or more than those with stacked traits for grain and silage. One example was a 90-day hybrid from CB Seed that was the number one yielding brand in a northern zone grain trial where all other brands in the trial had at least three genetic traits.

More information on trial results can be found at CBseed.com.

Based in Bay City, Wisconsin, CB Seed offers farmers in the northern U.S. a full line of seed products for corn, soybean and forage production. It is a research-based company, developing high-value conventional and single-trait hybrids for the unique growing conditions in northern climates. It has distributors in the Dakotas, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

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