



Science
Societies

Seed week 2021 exceeds expectations

By Susan V Frisk, ACSESS Public & Science Communications Director

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As reported in early March, CSSA members worked with staff to create a promotional week themed “Seed Week” (<https://doi.org/10.1002/csan.20421>). The goal of the week was to increase awareness of seeds, seed preservation, and seed research to the general public. The inaugural Seed Week promotion ran from 22–28 Mar. 2021.

Seed-Related Topics Popular with Public

The basis for choosing “seeds” as a topic came from statistics generated from the [Sustainable, Secure Food Blog](#).¹ Three blogs have consistently had high views since their publication:

- [What Are the factors that Determine Seed Germination?](#)² (14,802 cumulative views through 12 Apr. 2021)
- [Why Is it Important to Have Seed Banks and Seed Access?](#)³ (11,888 cumulative views through 12 Apr. 2021)
- [Polyploidy—Or How Do We Get Seedless Fruit?](#)⁴ (5,537 cumulative views through 12 Apr. 2021)

Armed with this information, CSSA’s C522 Communications Committee created a task force and was joined by representatives from a few divisions to help create a list of blog topics and members to interview. Staff and the task force created:

1. a [CSA News magazine article](#)
2. Two [Field, Lab, Earth](#)⁵ podcasts
3. Seven new blogs
4. a [Seed Week web page](#)⁶

The Seed Week blogs and an overall announcement were promoted via a news release and social media.

Success Demonstrated by Excellent Metrics

The set of seven new blogs received a total of **2,812** cumulative views in the three weeks after the week of promotion. The previously published blogs had more than **6,406** cumulative views in that same time period. In the blogging world, these are excellent numbers.

The news release campaign about Seed Week and the blogs had a promotional value of more than \$15,000,⁷ with additional value coming from social media. Along with the value of blog readership, Seed Week 2021 had a minimum promotional value of more than \$25,000!

Another bonus to running Seed Week was that the *Sustainable, Secure, Food Blog* broke a record with more than 13,000 views.

The podcasts were well received, as well:

- “*The History of Seed Banks with Dr. Helen Anne Curry*” had 299 downloads.
- “*Nikolai Vavilov with Dr. Joel Cohen*” had 318 downloads.

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Looking to Seed Week 2022

We plan to move Seed Week up to February 2022 (versus March). In addition, we will seek out sponsorships for the week, especially given the excellent value we can show for 2021’s initiative.

Seed Week Task Force

Thank you again to our Seed Week 2021 task force:

Christine Bradish, C522 committee chair

Marilyn Warburton, *Crop Science* editor (2020) and CSSA president-elect (2021)

Paul Scott, *Crop Science* editor (2021)

Nicole Anderson, Seed Physiology, Production, & Technology (C04) Division chair

Claire Heinitz, Plant Genetic Resources (C08) Division chair

Susan Fisk (staff), public and science communications director

DJ McCauley (staff), *CSA News* magazine science editor/writer

Rachel Schutte (staff), science communications manager

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