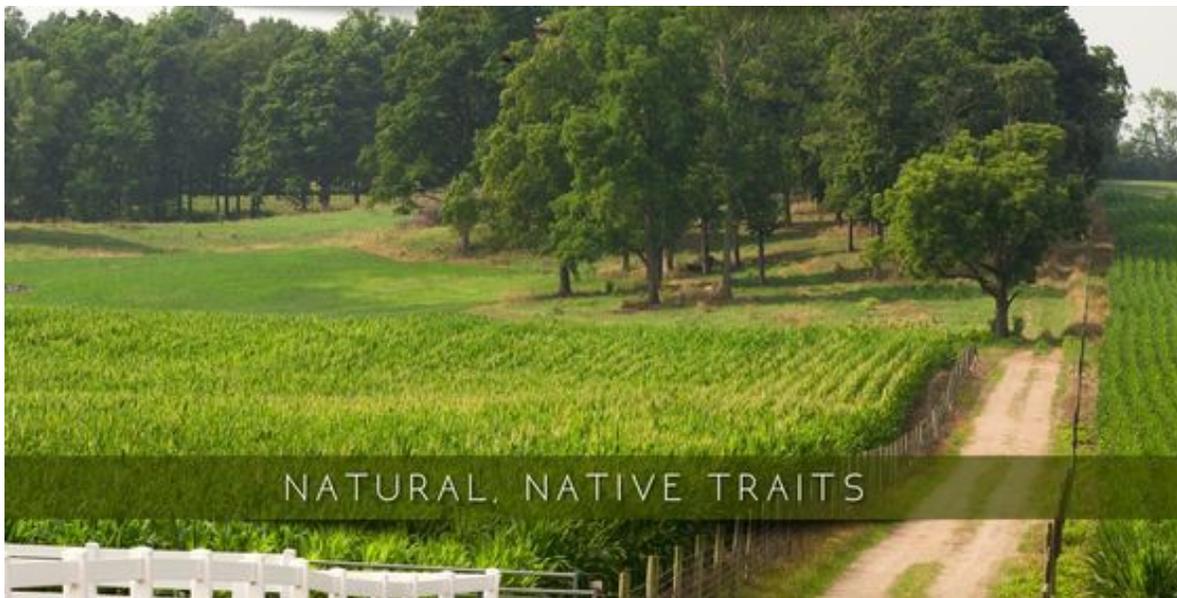


Native Traits changes the competitive landscape of the seed corn industry

Kalamazoo ag startup Native Traits Corp. has developed a novel technology that aims to fundamentally alter hybrid corn development. Using a proprietary algorithm that identifies desirable traits that occur naturally, Native Traits was able to develop and is now marketing a naturally occurring (non-GMO) trait known as EaSY™ (Enhanced Seed Yield).



Native Traits Corporation continues to make strides securing contractual agreements with three seed corn developers to add EaSY to their genetic lines and collaborating with a major multi-national company is also underway. The company has received financial support from several Michigan investors and hybrid seed companies, as well as financial backing from the [Biosciences Research & Commercialization Center \(BRCC\)](#) at Western Michigan University and [Invest Michigan](#), both of which are supported by [the Michigan Economic Development Corporation \(MEDC\)](#).



Highlights contributing to the company's success are as follows:

- The company placed first and second in elevator pitch competitions held in Michigan and in Wisconsin, respectively
- The initial investment in Native Traits was led by the BRCC and allowed the company to generate additional test data, secure its intellectual property with patent positions and identify genetic biomarkers for the EaSY trait
- A Series A Preferred Stock round of financing was completed in March of 2016. Participants included a regional seed corn company, Northern Michigan Angels and several other investors
- A round of convertible note financing was completed in June of 2018. Two regional seed companies participated along with the BRCC and several angel investors
- Extensive field testing of the EaSY trait demonstrated double-digit improvements in the yield of hybrid varieties in 2017 and 2018

- A Material Transfer Agreement was signed with a major multi-national company in the fall of 2018, thereby positioning the company for large-scale tests of pre-commercial hybrids in 2019
- The company has signed a confidentiality agreement with a consortium of hybrid seed companies. Further collaborative projects are anticipated
- A second round of convertible note financing is underway as a prelude to a deal with a major strategic partner

According to its company president, Dr. James Friedrich, “Native Traits has the potential to change the competitive landscape of the seed corn industry—an achievement that would not have been possible without the support of the MEDC and its partnering organizations, including the BRCC, Invest Michigan and others.”

For more information, please visit the company’s website at www.nativetraits.net
