

Bringing The Dream to Reality

by Ed Baumgartner

When you start a genetic development business, the first question asked is how do you think you can compete? An easy question that is very difficult to answer. It is a David vs. Goliath situation. Our answer is focus, passion, dedication, determination, endurance and enjoyment. Corn breeding has been my career and my hobby. I think that is where the dedication, passion and the enjoyment come in.

My wife, God bless her, has heard more talk about corn than anyone should ever have to hear that is not a certified corn kuku nut. Our children have been subjected to corn discussions since they were born. So much so, that two of them work willingly with us on this project. Our grandsons are now listening to me talk about corn when we visit them. They will learn how to pollinate corn as soon as their mother and father will allow me to teach them. They will be the 5th generation of my family in the corn business if they choose to be in it.

We are focused on where we want to go. Back in 2005, we asked where is the largest need not being met in the corn development world. We determined that the non-GMO market was being overlooked and decided to focus our efforts in that direction. It is becoming evident today that the non-GMO market may even gain market share in the US. We also determined that the difficult

production acres should be our target. We believed in 2005 and still believe today that the largest yield gains worldwide will be made in the tough or marginal production acres.

To endure the long development process, we are forced to be very creative in how to develop the products to handle the tough acres, the products we call Durayield™, and to do it on a limited budget. We look at this business as a long-term plan that will span generations if we approach it properly. We are dedicated to finding the genes that exist in corn to develop the products that will handle the difficult growing environments of today and the future. We are excited

about meeting these challenges. We think that we can do it based on the progress we have made so far. I am continually amazed at how much punishment a corn plant can take. When we first started our Extreme Stress Breeding program, I thought I went too far. Debbie encouraged me to keep going. I am glad we did. I learned two important lessons from that day harvesting in the field. The first lesson is



The Baumgartner Family: Hannah, Rebekah, Debbie, Ed & Raechel

that Debbie was actually listening to me all of those years, and the work of those years was put to use that day as she told me why we should keep going with that program. The second lesson is that correct breeding methodologies can make corn even more resilient than I thought possible. This does not happen overnight, but it does happen over time with dedication, focus, determination, and passion while enjoying the ride.