

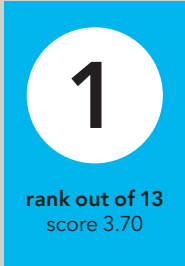


East-West Seed

Access to Seeds Index

Corporate data
Headquarters: Nonthaburi, Thailand
Ownership type: Private
Group revenue (2017): USD 150,000,000
www.eastwestseed.com

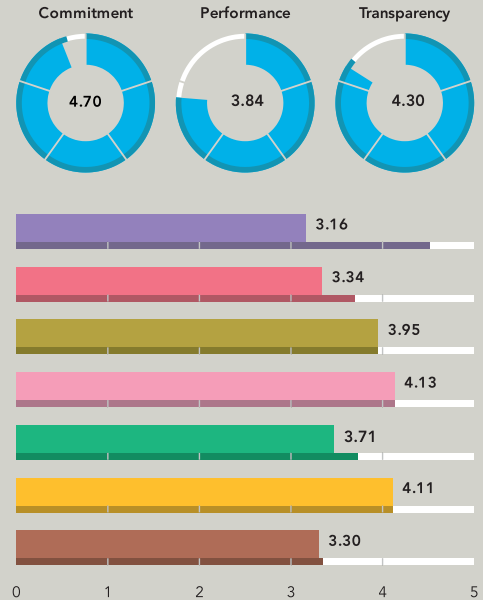
East-West Seed Company Ltd (East-West Seed) was founded in 1982 in the Philippines, with a mission to improve the income of farmers through high-quality vegetable seed. It led the 2016 Access to Seeds Global Index for vegetable seed companies as well as the Regional Index for Eastern Africa. The majority of the company's clients are smallholder farmers. Its portfolio contains over 900 hybrid and open-pollinated varieties. Now headquartered in Thailand, East-West Seed has about 5,000 employees and breeding and sales activities in all four index regions. In 2015, the company set up Knowledge Transfer, a foundation that seeks to increase the income of smallholder vegetable farmers by sharing the knowledge and skills needed to improve their productivity.



2019 Index - Global Seed Companies

East-West Seed tops the 2019 Index. It performs strongly across all measurement areas, with a variety of programs, initiatives and projects designed to improve access to seeds for smallholder farmers. The company has in place a global strategy and mission statement around access to seeds for smallholder farmers. It also has

extensive distribution channels in most index countries in which it makes a large proportion of its vegetable seed portfolio available, resulting in leading scores in Marketing & Sales. A broad breeding program that includes a large number of local crops earns it points in Research & Development, while the high score in Seed Production can be attributed to its collaboration with smallholder farmers, who account for 95% of its production. The company also shows a notable improvement in transparency compared to 2016.



Leading practices

East-West Seed demonstrates a strong commitment to access to seeds for smallholder farmers and publicly discloses supporting strategies. In its mission statement, the company articulates the importance of smallholder farmers for food security worldwide and how it intends to serve them in a manner that 'improves their livelihoods and income'. The company considers 98% of its customer base to be smallholder farmers.

For many years, the company has actively supported the development of the seed sector in Myanmar. In December 2017, the company facilitated a visit by government officials from Myanmar to the Philippines to gain insight into the latter's seed sector development and regulatory framework. East-West Seed also helped to establish the Myanmar Seed Association.

The company supports the Philippines' National Plant Genetic Resources Laboratory by regenerating its old germplasm collection,

characterizing some accessions that have not yet been documented and conducting conservation-related research and training. The objective is to contribute to varieties specifically adapted to the needs of Southeast Asia.

The company has initiated a breeding program in Benin, the only company in the index to report such activity in Western and Central Africa.

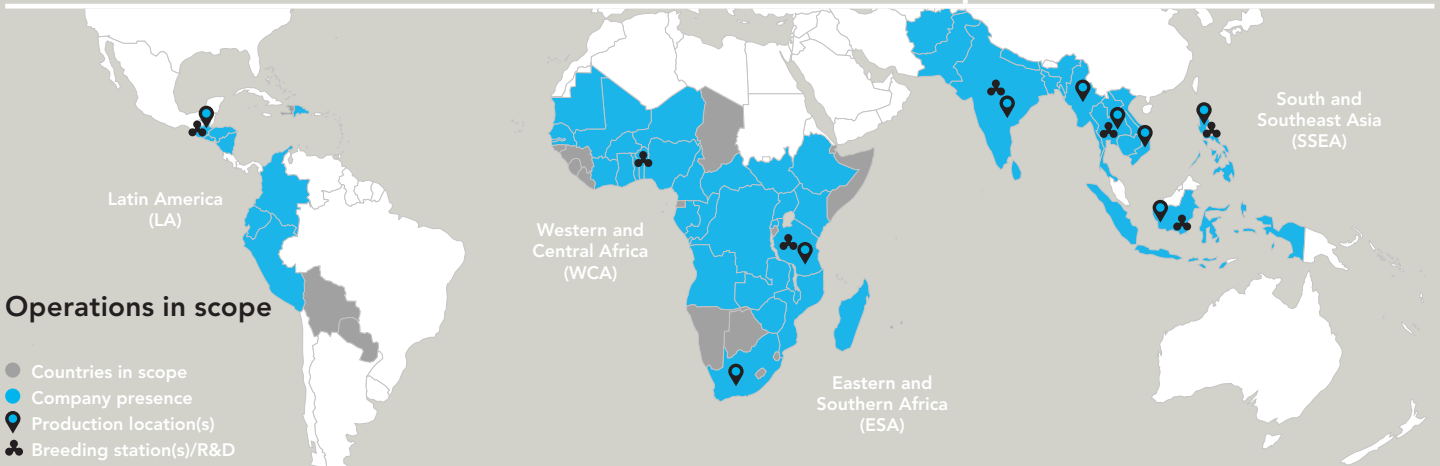
Smallholder farmers produce 95% of the company's seed. In addition, the company is encouraging young farmers in Indonesia to become successful seed producers.

The company introduced its 'Go Grow' packages in Thailand and the Philippines. The packages feature instructions in the form of pictograms for illiterate farmers as well as a QR code that links farmers to a Plant Doctor online, helping them to identify plant diseases in crops.

Areas for improvement

East-West Seed can improve its score in the index by extending its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), linking its business activities to specific SDGs and setting measurable targets.

With extensive capacity building programs in South and Southeast Asia and reported plans to scale up, the company is encouraged to leverage this knowledge and experience in other regions, notably Western and Central Africa, where it has initiated business operations.



Index crops in portfolio

	Sales				Seed type			Source		
	LA	WCA	ESA	SSEA	Hybrid	OPV	GM	Own breeding program	Public research institute	Licensed from other company
Vegetables										
Cabbage	●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Carrot		●	●	●		●				●
Cauliflower		●	●	●	●					●
Cucumber	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		
Eggplant	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		
Gourd	●	●	●		●	●		●		
Green bean	●	●	●	●		●				●
Lettuce	●	●	●	●		●				●
Melon	●	●	●	●	●			●		
Okra		●	●	●	●	●		●		
Onion		●	●	●	●	●		●		
Pepper (hot)	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		
Pepper (sweet)	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		
Pumpkin	●	●	●	●	●			●		
Squash	●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Tomato	●	●	●	●	●			●		
Watermelon	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		

Local crops in portfolio

	Sales			
	LA	WCA	ESA	SSEA
African eggplant		●	●	
Amaranth			●	●
Bush sitao				●
Choisam		●		●
Hairy nightshade		●		
Kaliaan			●	●
Kangkong		●		●
Mungbean				●
Mustard				●
Pea eggplant				●
Spider plant			●	
Tinda				●
Winged bean				●
Yardlong bean	●	●		

Notable findings

■ The company demonstrates leadership in public policy advocacy, particularly in South and South-east Asia, by participating in multi-stakeholder initiatives and engaging in public and industry dialogue that supports smallholder farmers and access to seeds. It discloses several initiatives covering many countries in South and Southeast Asia and involves senior management in some of these initiatives.

■ East-West Seed is the only global company with both a smallholder-centric business model, whereby its entire corporate strategy is geared toward this client group, and headquarters in an index country (Thailand). Smallholder farmers make up 98% of the company's clients, and 19 million smallholders have reportedly been reached through sales and 100,000 through agronomic training via the company's Knowledge Transfer foundation.

■ The company's code of conduct, called '7 essentials', addresses various topics including anti-corruption and social and labor standards. It contains an online quiz with real-life case studies to test employees' knowledge of the code.

■ The company recognizes the breeders' exemption on its PVP-registered varieties and farmers' right to save, use, sow, re-sow, exchange, share and sell farm produce, including seed from a protected variety under the Plant Variety Protection Act. The only restriction is that farmers are not allowed to sell branded seed of the protected variety for commercial purposes.

■ With its focus on tropical agriculture, East-West Seed pays particular attention to regional pests and diseases in its breeding program. For instance, to fight a polerovirus attacking bitter melon in the Philippines, East-West Seed developed a hybrid with a high level of resistance to the disease.

■ The company conducts variety trials in 32 index countries, about two thirds of all index countries it has sales activities in.

■ The company's research and development efforts include local crops in all index regions except Latin America, with the highest number in its breeding program reported for South and Southeast Asia. The company tries to conserve and introduce rare indigenous crops on the brink of disappearance.

■ In India, Myanmar, Tanzania, Thailand and Vietnam, the company works directly with smallholder farmers in its seed production activities, formalizing farmers' involvement with contracts. In the Philippines, cooperatives set up by East-West Seed are in charge of seed production. In Indonesia, a decentralized system exists of 'key farmers' who liaise and guide smallholder farmers in seed production while taking care of postharvest treatment and payments.

■ The company puts particular emphasis on India under its No Child Labor initiative, although its child labor policy is applicable to all of its subsidiaries. The company organizes meetings and awareness campaigns in villages and schools to discuss labor standards and education. Audits are carried out to ensure compliance with this policy. In addition to child labor, East-West Seed has standards and monitoring systems addressing health and forced labor under its five-step Social compliance program in seed production.

■ East-West Seed has established distribution channels in 48 out of 65 index countries, even serving remote areas through individual 'promoters' or its foundation, Knowledge Transfer. These promoters tour a region or sub-region, meeting farmers along the way. Typically, the company's distribution channels are structured around agro-dealers and sub-retailers.

■ The company spends the equivalent of 8% of its seed sales on field demonstrations and related marketing campaigns, making this the core of its marketing strategy. In Thailand, the largest field day attracted 13,000 people in 2017. In Tanzania, promotional demonstrations were held under the Seeds of Expertise for the Vegetable Sector of Africa (SEVIA) project, co-organized with Rijk Zwaan and Wageningen University & Research.

■ The company offers a high proportion of its portfolio in all countries, with an average of 16 global vegetable crops on offer out of the 17 in its general portfolio. Notably, East-West Seed is the only global index company that is active in the Central African Republic and Mauritania, offering all of its crops in these countries.

■ The company's foundation, Knowledge Transfer, is in charge of most extension services and capacity building activities, particularly in pre-commercial areas, in South and Southeast Asia and East and Southern Africa. As an example, Knowledge Transfer established two projects in Cambodia to support young farmers: with USAID to transform the local vegetable sector, and with the NGO World Vision to train young farmers to become agronomic and technical experts within their cooperatives.

■ One of the few companies to have capacity building activities in Myanmar, East-West Seed has partnered with MEDA, an international economic development organization, to launch ADVANCE Myanmar in Kayin State to train 60 women lead farmers over a two-year period.