



National Association for Plant Breeding ANN MARIE THRO FRIENDS OF PLANT BREEDING AWARD 2026

**Dave Bubeck
Corteva Agriscience
Grimes IA**

The National Association for Plant Breeding (NAPB) Ann Marie Thro Friends of Plant Breeding award honors unique individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to engage the plant breeding community, advance the discipline and support NAPB activities. The 2026 recipient of the Breeding is Dr. Dave Bubeck, Research Director and Seed Product Development (SPD) Global Breeding Alliances Lead for Corteva Agriscience, Grimes, Iowa.

Prior to his recent retirement, Bubeck served the Corteva plant breeding organization through the efforts of the Seed Product Commercialization team, drove global germplasm intellectual property protection and provided a key connection point for SPD with regulatory, compliance and stewardship activities. Dave is a past member of the NAPB Executive Committee and past Chair of the NAPB Advocacy Committee, serves as current President of the Seed Science Foundation and is on the Board of Directors for the Living History Farms.

As one colleague noted: "Dr. Bubeck truly merits the Ann Marie Thro Friends of Plant Breeding Award. Drawing on decades of private-sector experience, he has consistently bridged public and private perspectives, championed plant breeding in policy and industry forums and advocated for the discipline on behalf of the broader community."

Bubeck entered the seed industry in 1991 as a corn breeder with Northrup King Co. (Sandoz, Novartis, Syngenta). In 1998 he joined Pioneer Hi-Bred, now Corteva Agriscience, as a Research Coordinator in Corn Breeding and became a Research Director in 2000. His contributions as a corn breeder include several U.S. patents along with multiple maize inbred patents. His research significantly impacted the evaluation of inbred genetic gain and hybrid grain yield improvement, contributing to tens of millions of units of commercial maize hybrid sales.

Since 2013, Bubeck has had several administrative responsibilities at Corteva, including: Corn Platform Product Program Director, Global Trait Integration, Global Plant Pathology and Germplasm Security and Global Parent Characterization. He has regularly served as a mentor for graduate and undergraduate students and within professional organizations like the American Seed Trade Association, the Crop Science Society of America and the NAPB Borlaug Scholars Program.

Bubeck is a long-time and active advocate for plant breeding and related plant science technologies. He has regularly met with policymakers and regulatory agencies at the national and international level to



advocate and educate on the importance of plant breeding, biotechnology, germplasm preservation and utilization and optimized regulations for products of biotechnology.

As another colleague summarized: *“Throughout his career, Dr. Bubeck has shown an exceptional commitment to advancing and strengthening the plant breeding community through leadership, advocacy, mentorship and service. Equally recognized for his generosity as a mentor and his genuine investment in the success of others, Dave exemplifies the spirit of the award by using his expertise, influence and character to lift the entire plant breeding profession.”*

Bubeck earned his B.S. degree in agronomy and his M.S. in plant breeding and cytogenetics from Iowa State University. He received his Ph.D. in plant breeding and crop science at North Carolina State University.



Dr. Dave Bubeck is the 2026 recipient of the National Association for Plant Breeding Ann Marie Thro Friends of Plant Breeding Impact Award. Dave is currently Research Director, Global Breeding Alliances Lead at Corteva Agriscience.



Dr. Dave Bubeck, the 2026 recipient of the National Association for Plant Breeding Ann Marie Thro Friends of Plant Breeding Award, addressing officials from the European Community Plant Variety Office during a genome edited maize plot tour in Seville, Spain.



Dr. Dave Bubeck (r), the 2026 recipient of the National Association for Plant Breeding Ann Marie Thro Friends of Plant Breeding Award, accompanied by Dr. Paul Nelson (l) (Bayer), Dr. Major Goodman (middle) (North Carolina State University) during a Congressional visit in Washington DC.



Dr. Dave Bubeck (center, blue jacket), the 2026 recipient of the National Association for Plant Breeding Ann Marie Thro Friends of Plant Breeding Award, with Student Connection Recipients and their mentors at the 2026 Leadership Summit Sponsored by the American Seed Trade Association.