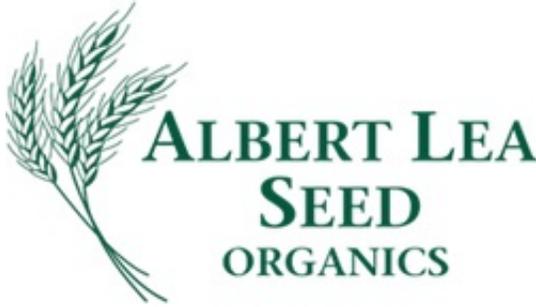




## Organic seed pioneer debuts 'highest purity' seed corn

*Albert Lea Seed terminates GMO seed distribution licenses*

by *Sustainable Food News*  
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**Albert Lea Seed House, Inc.** is launching a new line of certified-organic seed corn called ULTRAPURE under its flagship Viking Seed Corn & Soybeans line that is "guaranteed 99.9 percent free of GMOs" and is the "highest purity available to farmers," Mac Ehrhardt, owner, told *Sustainable Food News*.

Based in Albert Lea, Minn., the family-owned company, founded in 1923, supplies organic, non-GMO and GMO field seed throughout Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa and the Northeast.

The company said it is also dropping GMOs from the Viking line to meet a growing demand from farmers moving to or considering planting premium-

priced organic and non-GMO corn and soybeans and other grains driven by the burgeoning consumer demand for non-GMO and organic foods.

"It's a market segment that we can provide some leadership," said Ehrhardt, whose grandfather Lou founded the business in 1923. "We view organic as the real non-GMO."

Albert Lea Seed was among the first to offer farmers certified-organic field seed over 20 years ago. The company also sells non-GMO seed corn and soybeans, relying on systems for isolation and minimizing commingling in place for two decades. Last year, the company began offering select varieties of certified-organic, [Non-GMO Project Verified](#) seed for planting in 2016, including oats, wheat, barley, and rye.

Organic seed sales comprise about 31 percent of the company's overall sales, Ehrhardt told *SFN*, while non-GMO seed sales comprise about 52 percent of the company's sales, not including barley, oats, and wheat. He declined to provide the company's annual sales.

Albert Lea Seed plans to launch the new ULTRAPURE organic seed corn product by the end of the month, and a total of three ULTRAPURE organic hybrids by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, the company has terminated its distribution licenses for seed traits and genetics with all major biotech companies. While Albert Lea Seed will no longer produce or package GMO seeds, it will supply them to farmers through a distribution deal with [NorthStar Genetics](#).