

IPSA Member Spotlight

Getting to Know Sam Cloete



“When I was a child, I wanted to be a farmer like my grandfather – growing corn. Some of the most special times as a child revolved around inspecting the corn fields.” Sam Cloete with Kannar Earth Science, Ltd. in Duluth, GA, grew up in Stellenbosch, South Africa, “A beautiful University town with world renowned wineries; close to Cape Town. I grew up on a table grape farm in Paarl, South Africa. Nothing was more special than running into the vineyard with my buddies and coming back with a handful of sweet, ripe grapes. Then we would jump back onto one of the farm trucks while still in motion. We felt like ‘real men,’ with the wind blowing through our hair in the warm summer, enjoying free grapes.

We got to be good at jumping onto the flatbed of the pickup while it was still in motion. But one day, in my effort to jump up, I missed the truck bed and landed on the dirt road instead; grapes flew in every direction. My buddies were much amused.”

Sam spent his college years at the University of Stellenbosch; then graduated from the University of South Africa (UNISA) with a Masters in Accounting Science. “I am a ‘non-practicing’ chartered accountant.” Sam and his wife will be married for ten years in July. “We are expecting our first children in the March/April timeframe. Twins are on the way and we decided to be surprised about their genders until the births.” At this point, a lot of their time is spent organizing their home and getting ready for the twins, but they both enjoy hiking in the warmer weather. “Long distance running is a passion of mine. Swimming and biking also keep me in shape.” Sam is a board member at his church. He tools around on the keyboard for relaxation and started playing the cello last year.

Sam got involved in the seed industry because the idea of promoting environmental stewardship appeals to him. “We achieve that by encouraging wholesome farming; specifically the safe handling of seed. We are drawn to fellow businesses that have integrity, care and growth (continual learning) at their core. We believe that seed safety is an essential component to farming.” Sam is excited to craft real solutions to real problems that arise when treating and handling seed, such as the expanding demands on polymers as a binder system and flow-ability promoter due to the increased pesticide loads being applied to seed. “We recently applied for a patent for a product that keeps certain types of desirable bacteria viable in a flow-able medium. Certain seed can now be enhanced with a ready-to-use biological in a liquid form, as opposed to a seed enhancer having to use a wettable powder. We are excited to have partnered with TJ Technologies, Inc. in filing for the utility patent and bringing the invention to market.”

“We also developed an all-in-one polymer system for applying zinc and various other metals to seeds during seed enhancement – most notably for corn and cotton. The even application and smooth surface aids in plantability when compared to traditional zinc products on seed. We partnered with Edgewell Ag Products L.L.C. to bring the product to market and are excited about promoting yield increases in soils that are low on zinc, copper and manganese.”

Kannar Earth Science, Ltd. is new member of IPSA, and attended the recent Annual Conference and Trade Show for the first time. “There we met a number of companies who ascribe to our core values and who add value to the seed enhancement industry; a few short months later we not only developed new products together, but have manufactured and delivered seed enhancement products to companies who wish to add even more value to seed. I enjoyed learning from Scott McKain in his book and presentation titled ‘What Customers Really Want.’ We value attending various association meetings where we can visit with customers face-to-face.”

