

BUILDING LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

Name: Edward (Rob) Robinson III

Title: CEO/Owner, Rob-See-CO, LLC

Career: Served in various leadership roles at Golden Harvest Seeds; Business Transformation Lead for Syngenta Seeds in NAFTA; Exec VP of JC Robinson Seeds, Inc., a member company of Golden Harvest Seeds, Inc.; and Secretary on JC Robinson Seeds Board of Dirs.



AM: Please provide an overview and brief history of Rob-See-Co.

RR: Rob-See-Co (RSC) has a long and storied history. The brand Rob-See-Co was first used in the early 1930s to introduce a line of hybrid corn by the **J.C. Robinson Seed Co.** It was used continuously until 2004 when The J.C. Robinson Seed Company and **Golden Harvest** were sold to **Syngenta**.

On October 1, 2013, Rob-See-Co was reintroduced.

Although our first sales season was abbreviated, it was still a successful season, highlighted by the development of an experienced team of managers and direct sales professionals and the introduction of the Innotech Seed brand.

Other accomplishments achieved during the 2013-2014 sales season included:

- The development a sales team active in eight states with five regional sales managers, 17 direct sales reps and plans to add another eight DSRs this year.
- Over 40 business associates joining RSC as part of our distribution team.
- Built corn and soybean seed lineups unmatched in the industry.
- The introduction of multiple products with the industry's best above ground insect control, Viptera, the industry's best below ground insect control, Duracade and the industry's best drought protection, Artesian.

AM: What's the business outlook for Rob-See-Co?

RR: The outlook is strong. Our ten year objective is 4% market share in the western half of the U.S. corn seed

market. The incredible progress we've made in ten short months is a testament to the demand among producers for a strong regional company with a simple, friendly and personal style of business.

From a recruiting viewpoint, our objectives for the 2015 planting season are 25 full-time sales people and 60 business associates (similar to a professional dealer). Our sales objectives are aggressive as well.

AM: What new products/services are you planning to introduce?

RR: We're introducing Duracade, the premiere trait for control of underground insect pests and Artesian, the premiere drought control product in Artesian.

But more than anything, it's the approach and style of business that we're reintroducing to the market that cause customers to be excited.

Our programs are built for simplicity and transparency so our customers and sales people can dedicate time to more important pieces in the seed buying process, such as placing the right hybrid on the right farm.

Another area we feel is important is people.

At Rob-See-Co, customers will know the people with whom they are dealing, from the bottom to the top of the company. This offers a greater comfort level that the promises we make will actually happen, year after year.

The other part of the people equation is to hire people who have a

passion for customers, a passion for the seed industry and a passion for the personal friendly style of business found in a regional company.

But we aren't satisfied with just returning to what some may think are the good old days. We're a progressive company and will continue to find ways to deliver on our promises in unique and innovative ways.

AM: What role does marketing communications play at Rob-See-Co?

RR: Rob-See-Co has a great story to tell so it's important that all of our employees and our business associate network are in concert when communicating our story to their customers. Our leadership team spent a great deal of time developing our company strategic plan including a communication strategy.

The first phase of our communication strategy is "direct" in focus and involves having our leadership team spending the summer meeting customers and telling the Rob-See-Co story.

This personalized, one-on-one approach is a key pillar of our business ... building strong, trusting relationships. It also provides an opportunity to not only correct any rumors growers may have heard, but we can also gain valuable feedback on additional needs they might have. This could lead to additional programs and services we might offer.

The second phase of our communications strategy involves various types of targeted marketing to small, clearly defined market segments that complement the unique, individual efforts of our district sales representatives and business associates.

The third phase of our communication plan involves sharing our yield story. Because our products are regionally defined, it's important we use a mix of selected radio, print, direct mail, e-mail and social media. We work to directly impact a select group of growers, building local brand awareness in communities where our sales teams live and work. **AM**