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## Gray Reed Recognized in Nation's 2017 Top 100 Verdicts List

April 30, 2018

Gray Reed & McGraw LLP obtained the tenth largest verdict in the nation according to the National Law Journal's (NLJ) annual list of the nation's Top 100 Verdicts. The trial was on behalf of the Kansas class of corn farmers. The farmers claimed that Switzerland-based Syngenta's premature marketing of its genetically modified strains of corn, led to the loss of an important market for U.S. corn, causing them economic harm.

Gray Reed attorney [Bill Chaney](#) was one of four lead trial counsel for the plaintiffs in the multi-district litigation cases filed against Syngenta.

The Kansas plaintiffs alleged they suffered significant economic damages when Syngenta sold two genetically modified strains of its corn seed – Agrisure Viptera and Agrisure Duracade – to the U.S. market prior to China approving them. China, a major importer of U.S. corn, began refusing shipments of U.S. corn in 2013 after a genetic trait found in Viptera – MIR162 – was detected in shipments from the United States. The genetic trait at the time was not approved in China. With the loss of the Chinese market, corn growers in Kansas and across the United States saw the price of corn plummet and suffered long-lasting economic damage, according to the lawsuit.

After a half day of deliberation, the jury found Syngenta negligent and [awarded](#) \$217,700,000 in compensatory damages to the class of more than 7,000 Kansas corn growers, who were represented in the lawsuit by four Kansas corn producer plaintiffs. The verdict represented 100 percent of the losses incurred by the farmers.

On March 12, 2018, Gray Reed and other plaintiffs' counsel filed a motion for preliminary approval of a settlement with Syngenta. If the settlement is approved, Syngenta will contribute \$1.51 billion to a settlement fund that would be used to make payments to be allocated among eligible U.S. corn farmers, grain handling facilities and ethanol production facilities who fall within the settlement class and to cover the costs of administering the settlement, including any court-approved award of fees to plaintiffs' counsel, in exchange for a classwide release of all claims against Syngenta related to the launch of Agrisure Viptera and Agrisure Duracade. The \$1.51 billion settlement will resolve thousands of pending cases against Syngenta and is the largest agricultural settlement in U.S. history.

The rankings are based on research by NLJ's *VerdictSearch*, the recognized leader in U.S. verdict information. The full list will be published in the May issue of NLJ.

### About Gray Reed & McGraw



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Founded in 1985, Gray Reed & McGraw is a full-service, Texas based law firm with more than 130 lawyers practicing in Dallas and Houston. Gray Reed & McGraw offers a wide range of legal services including business litigation, corporate transactions, oil & gas, tax planning and litigation, real estate, healthcare, trusts and estates, employment law, family law, intellectual property, and bankruptcy. For more information, visit [www.grayreed.com](http://www.grayreed.com).