Permit No.	Permittee	Date Issued	Organisms	Field test location
96–355–01	Applied Phytologics, Incorporated.	3–31–97	Rice plants genetically engineered to express proteins of pharmaceutical interest.	California.
97–023–01	Auburn University	3–31–97	*Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *tomato* strain DC3000 genetically engineered for decreased virulence.	Alabama.
97–044–02	Betaseed, Incorporated	4–25–97	Sugar beet plants genetically engineered to express virus resistance and a marker gene.	Idaho.

The environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact have been prepared in accordance with: (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), (3) USDA regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1b), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

Done in Washington, DC, this 4th day of June 1997.

Terry L. Medley,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 97–15257 Filed 6–10–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 97–027–1]

International Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-Setting Activities

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and solicitation of comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with legislation implementing the Uruguay Round of the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade, we are informing the public of international standard-setting activities of the Office International des Epizooties, the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention, and the North American Plant Protection Organization, and we are soliciting public comment on the standards to be considered.

ADDRESSES: Please send an original and three copies of your comments to Docket No. 97–027–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state in your letter that your comments refer to Docket No. 97–027–1, and state the name of the committee or working group to which your comments are addressed. Comments received may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to inspect comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690–2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. John Greifer, Acting Director, Trade Support Team, International Services, APHIS, room 1128, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC, 20250, (202) 720–7677; or e-mail jgreifer@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Legislation implementing the Uruguay Round of the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (the Uruguay Round Agreements Act) was signed into law (Pub. L. 103–465) by the President on December 8, 1994. The Uruguay Round Agreements Act amended title IV of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979 (19 U.S.C. 2531 *et seq.*) by adding a new subtitle F, ''International Standard-Setting Activities.'' Subtitle F requires the President to designate an agency to be responsible for informing the public of the sanitary and phytosanitary standard-setting activities of each international standard-setting organization. The designated agency must inform the public by publishing a notice in the **Federal Register**, which provides the following information: (1) The sanitary or phytosanitary standards under consideration or planned for consideration by the international standard-setting organization; and (2) for each sanitary or phytosanitary standard specified: a description of the consideration or planned consideration of the standard; whether the United States is participating or plans to participate in the consideration of the standard; the agenda for United States participation, if any; and the agency responsible for representing the United States with respect to the standard.

Subtitle F defines ''international standard'' as a standard, guideline, or recommendation: (1) Adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission regarding food safety; (2) developed under the auspices of the Office International des Epizooties regarding animal health and zoonoses; (3) developed under the auspices of the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention in cooperation with the North American Plant Protection Organization regarding plant health; or (4) established by or developed under any other international organization agreed to by the member countries of the North American Free Trade Agreement or by member countries of the World Trade Organization.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) was created in 1962 by two United Nations organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization. It is the major international organization for encouraging international trade in food and protecting the health and economic interests of consumers.

The Office International des Epizooties (OIE) was created in Paris, France, in 1924, with the signing of an international agreement by 28 countries. The OIE facilitates intergovernmental cooperation to prevent the spread of contagious diseases in animals, assists in the development of animal production through improved health information, and shares scientific progress among its members. The OIE provides the major international forum for discussion and agreement on recommendations and proposals on topics such as disease control, technical cooperation, trade standards, and the exchange of research and disease information.

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), in effect since 1952, is a multilateral treaty, administered by FAO, that promotes ''* * * common and effective action to prevent the spread and introduction of pests of plants and plant products and to promote measures for their control (IPPC Preamble).'' The IPPC Secretariat, established within the FAO in 1993, works with plant protection organizations at the national and regional levels to harmonize plant quarantine activities worldwide, facilitate the dissemination of phytosanitary information, strengthen

international cooperation, and support technical assistance to developing countries.

The North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) was created in 1976 to coordinate plant protection activities in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. NAPPO provides a mechanism by which the three countries can exchange information related to plant pest control. NAPPO conducts its business through permanent and ad hoc committees and annual meetings of the three member countries. NAPPO cooperates with other regional plant protection organizations and the FAO to achieve the objectives of the IPPC.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) was established on January 1, 1995, as the common international institution for the conduct of trade relations among the members in matters related to the Uruguay Round Agreements. The WTO is the successor to the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade. U.S. membership in the WTO was approved by Congress when it enacted the Uruguay Round Agreements Act.

The President, pursuant to Proclamation No. 6780 of March 23, 1995 (60 FR 15845), designated the Secretary of Agriculture as the official responsible for informing the public of the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standard-setting activities of Codex, OIE, IPPC, and NAPPO. This responsibility was delegated to the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) for Codex activities and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for OIE, IPPC, and NAPPO activities.

FSIS is responsible for publishing an annual notice in the **Federal Register** to inform the public of SPS standard-setting activities for Codex. APHIS is responsible for publishing notice of OIE, IPPC, and NAPPO activities related to international standards.

The United States is a participant in each of the following activities, and APHIS is the agency responsible for representing the United States with respect to these standards. In some cases, working groups and committees have not yet set meeting dates and locations or determined specific standards to be discussed. Also, because working groups and the issues they address are not static, this list may not present a complete picture of OIE, IPPC, and NAPPO SPS standard-setting activities for the coming year.

OIE Standard Setting Activities

1. Committee/Working Group: General Session.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Delegate—Dr. Joan Arnoldi, Deputy Administrator, Veterinary Services, APHIS, Washington, D.C.; Alternate delegate—Dr. Alex Thiermann, Regional Director (Europe, Africa, and Asia), International Services, APHIS, Brussels, Belgium.

General Purpose: Establish, review, and adopt international standards dealing with animal health.

Date of Meeting: May (annually).

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Animal health standards related to trade, including risk assessment standards, regionalization, and specific disease issues.

2. Committee/Working Group: Regional Commission for the Americas.

Agency Participant(s): Dr. Joan Arnoldi.

General Purpose: The Regional Commission for the Americas is one of four OIE Regional Commissions. Regional Commissions nominate candidates for election to the expert Commissions and Working Groups, discuss regional animal health issues, and propose topics of regional concern as agenda items or for scientific review at upcoming meetings of the OIE General Session.

Dates of Meetings: May and December or January (twice annually).

Location of Meetings: Variable.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Location of regional office for the Americas, animal health diseases control issues of regional concern.

3. Committee/Working Group: Standards Commission.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Dr. James Pearson, Director, National Veterinary Services Laboratory, APHIS, Ames, IA.

General Purpose: The Standards Commission recommends changes in international standards for diagnostic tests and vaccines. These changes, when approved by the General Session, are published in the *OIE Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines.*

Dates of Meetings: February and September (twice annually).

Location of Meetings: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Review and recommend revisions to international diagnostic test standards published in the *OIE Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines;* review OIE reference laboratories, OIE reference sera, laboratory quality assurance, and make recommendations to the OIE Animal Health Code Commission; discuss which diagnostic procedures would be most appropriately prescribed for specific animal and poultry diseases.

4. Committee/Working Group: International Animal Health Code Commission.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Dr. Alex Thiermann.

General Purpose: The Code Commission develops disease-specific recommendations for international standards regarding the movement of animals and animal products. The Code Commission also develops generic standards for animal transport, regionalization and risk assessment procedures, surveillance and monitoring guidelines, and procedures for evaluating animal health infrastructures. When adopted by the General Session, these standards are published in the OIE International Animal Health Code, the WTO-recognized manual of standards for international movement of animals and animal products.

Dates of Meetings: January and September (twice annually).

Location of Meetings: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: The Code Commission reviews and updates the Code after proposed changes are circulated to member countries for comments. Updates are submitted for adoption at the General Session.

5. Committee/Working Group: Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Other Epizootics Commission.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): There is no Agency or U.S. member on the FMD Commission.

General Purpose: The FMD and Other Epizootics Commission monitors the world status of FMD and other major animal diseases and prepares recommendations for adoption by the General Assembly.

Dates of Meetings: The Commission meets when called by the Director General.

Location of Meetings: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Current issues facing the Commission: International standards for FMD serological testing, protocols for endorsement of FMD-free areas, standards for epidemiological surveillance for contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, and surveillance and monitoring standards for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

6. Committee/Working Group: Fish Diseases Commission.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): There is no Agency or U.S. member on the Fish Diseases Commission. However, Dr. J. R. Winton, Research Team Leader at Northwest Biological Science Center in Seattle, WA, is a U.S.-citizen observer.

General Purpose: The Fish Diseases Commission drafted an *Aquatic Animal Health Code* and a *Diagnostic Manual*

for Aquatic Animal Diseases that contain international standards for fish diseases. These manuals have been approved by the General Session.

Date of Meeting: September (annually).

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Current activities of the Fish Diseases Commission: Continual updating of the OIE Fish Disease Manuals, preparation of the annual OIE report on the world-wide status of fish diseases, and planning and hosting international conferences on current topics in aquatic animal health.

7. Committee/Working Group: Ad Hoc Working Group on Biotechnology.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Dr. John R. Gorham, Animal Disease Research Unit, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Pacific Western Area, is President of the Working Group.

General Purpose: The Ad Hoc Working Group on Biotechnology reviews the biotechnological aspects of each chapter of the OIE Manual for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines and prepares an annual report and recommendations dealing with biotechnology for consideration by the General Session. The Working Group has also developed an international database on sources of biotechnologically engineered vaccines and diagnostic reagents.

Date of Meeting: The Working Group meets when called by the Director General.

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Current issues facing the Working Group: Ongoing reviews of diagnostic test kits, applications of genetic engineering to animal health, veterinary products developed using biotechnology, and possible uses of new biotechnological techniques in veterinary medicine.

8. Committee/Working Group: Working Group on Veterinary Drug Registration.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Dr. Sharon R. Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director, Center for Veterinary Medicine, Food and Drug Administration, USDA.

General Purpose: Prepares recommendations for the General Session.

Date of Meeting: Every 2 years.

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Current issues facing the group: Planning for the upcoming session of the International Technical Consultations on Veterinary Drug Registration, developing training programs for veterinary drug registration officials of OIE member countries, and assisting an OIE ad hoc group in developing draft international guidelines for veterinary drug registration.

9. Committee/Working Group: Working Group on Informatics and Epidemiology.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): There is no Agency or U.S. member on the Working Group. However, Dr. Steve Weber, Acting Director, Centers for Animal Health and Epidemiology, APHIS, Fort Collins, CO, serves as a consultant to the working group.

General Purpose: The Working Group on Informatics and Epidemiology develops programs to increase the efficiency of OIE communications and to assist animal health officials of member countries to more effectively utilize contemporary communications technology. One project of the Working Group is HandiStatus, an information network on animal diseases of international importance.

Date of Meeting: The Working Group meets when called by the Director General.

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: The Working Group is currently developing a Windows version of HandiStatus and designing and developing the OIE Web Page.

10. Committee/Working Group: Working Group on Wildlife Diseases.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Dr. Victor Nettles, Director, Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Georgia, and Dr. M.H. Woodford (Working Group Chairman).

General Purpose: The Working Group addresses issues involving the relationship between diseases of wildlife and those of domestic animals and poultry.

Date of Meeting: The Working Group meets when called by the Director General, usually annually in the summer or fall.

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Some issues currently facing the Working Group are: development of reporting methods for wildlife diseases (particularly those naturally transmissible between domesticated and wild species); facilitating worldwide wildlife disease surveillance and the applicability of routine diagnostic tests to wildlife species; and problems related to propagation of wildlife species in captivity and the disease hazards associated with their release from zoos or game farms.

11. Committee/Working Group: Ad Hoc Working Group on Animal Disease Categorization.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Dr. William D. Hueston, Associate Dean, Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine.

General Purpose: The Working Group is considering changes in disease categorization used to determine the urgency of reporting and the placement of certain diseases on OIE Lists A, B, or C. The Working Group submitted a report to the Code Commission suggesting changes in categorization criteria. The proposed changes are being reviewed by the Code Commission. After the Code Commission reviews the report, it will be presented for review by the General Session.

Date of Meeting: The Working Group meets when called by the Director General.

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: The issue currently facing this working Group is to determine how frequently certain diseases should be reported to the OIE.

12. Committee/Working Group: Ad Hoc Group on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs): Coordination of Research and Epidemiological Studies.

Agency/U.S. Participant(s): Dr. Linda Detwiler, Veterinary Services, APHIS, Robbinsville, NJ.

General Purpose: The Group reported its findings on TSEs and BSE to the FMD Commission and developed a separate report on TSE research needs.

Date of Meeting: The group is currently inactive.

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Currently there are no issues facing this Working Group.

For further reference, the OIE standards are contained in two OIE publications, the ''International Animal Health Code'' and the ''OIE Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines.'' Staff veterinarians with National Center for Import and Export, Veterinary Services, APHIS, each have copies of these publications. The publications may also be ordered from the OIE web page at http://www.oie.org.

IPPC Standard Setting Activities

There is no rigid structure for development of draft IPPC standards. In some cases, the IPPC Secretariat may form an international working group to draft a standard deemed a priority by FAO. In most cases, however, draft IPPC standards originate from industry, State or provincial governments, or other interested parties; they are submitted to the IPPC Secretariat through the representative organization of the member country (APHIS) or through the regional plant protection organization

(NAPPO). The IPPC Secretariat refers draft standards to the Committee of Experts on Phytosanitary Measures (CEPM). The CEPM considers the draft standards and recommends action; the draft standards are submitted either to FAO for approval or to member countries for consultation and comment (country consultation). The FAO approval process involves review by several bodies—the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG), FAO Council, and FAO Conference—before standards are adopted.

Technical experts from the United States have participated directly in working groups and indirectly as reviewers of all current IPPC draft standards. In addition, documents and positions developed by APHIS and NAPPO have served as the basis for many of the standards adopted to date. A range of standards are currently moving through different stages of development, review, and approval. The status of all IPPC standards (existing, drafted, and proposed) is summarized below:

I. Reference Standards (completed but subject to revision).

a. *Plant Quarantine Principles as Related to Trade,* adopted in 1993.

b. *Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms,* revised in September 1995.

c. *Policy and Standards for Construction of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs),* adopted in May 1994.

d. *International Plant Protection Convention,* revised in April 1997.

II. Completed Standards (approved by the FAO Committee on Agriculture and FAO Council and adopted by FAO Conference in November 1995).

a. *Guidelines for Pest Risk Analysis (PRA).*

b. *Code of Conduct for the Import and Release of Exotic Biological Control Agents.*

c. *Requirements for the Establishment of Pest Free Areas.*

III. Draft Standards (currently being finalized).

a. *Guidelines for Survey and Monitoring Systems,* revised and approved by the CEPM in May 1996, adopted by COAG in April 1997.

b. *Framework for an Export Certification System,* revised and approved by the CEPM in May 1996, adopted by COAG in April 1997.

c. *Inspection Methodology*—redrafted for review by the October 1997 CEPM and possible country consultation.

IV. Draft Supplementary Standards (require additional expert review).

a. *PRA, Pest Categorization.*

b. *PRA, Economic Impact Assessment.*

c. *PRA, Probability of Pest Introduction.*

d. *PRA, Pest Management.*

e. *Procedures for Determining Freedom of an Area—Citrus Canker,* drafted in October 1995; supplement to the *Guidelines for Survey and Monitoring* standard which is currently under review by citrus canker experts.

The four PRA supplementary standards (a through d) were combined into one integrated PRA supplementary standard in 1996. This integrated supplementary standard was not approved by the CEPM pending further work; upon approval by the CEPM (possibly in October 1997) the document will go for country consultation.

V. New Standards (in initial draft stage).

a. *Post-entry Quarantine Facilities,* postponed since 1996, no draft to date.

b. *Pest Free Production Sites,* drafted in October 1995, may be finalized by CEPM in October 1997 for FAO adoption.

c. *Eradication,* drafted in November 1995, may be finalized by CEPM in October 1997 for FAO adoption.

d. *Guidelines for Import Regulations,* drafted in April 1996, will be reviewed by CEPM in October 1997 for country consultation.

e. *Phytosanitary Certification (supplementing annexes to the Convention),* drafted August 1996, will be reviewed by CEPM in October 1997 for country consultation.

f. *Pest Status Reports (previously referred to as Pest Data Sheets),* drafted in March 1997, will be reviewed by CEPM in October 1997 for country consultation.

g. *Pest Management (Quarantine Security),* working group proposed for 1997.

h. *Dispute Resolution,* proposed by some members as a new priority.

i. *Regulated Non-quarantine Pests,* proposed by some members as a new priority.

Further information on the IPPC standards is available from the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization web page at: http://faowfs0a.fao.org/waicent/faoinfo/agricult/agp/agpp/PQ/Default.htm.

Revision of the IPPC

The IPPC was amended in 1979 in response to changing plant pest conditions and quarantine concerns. The amendment came into force in 1991 upon ratification by two-thirds of the IPPC signatory countries. However, the current IPPC does not directly recognize SPS principles and obligations. Nor does it discuss the harmonization of phytosanitary measures through standards. In October 1995, IPPC signatory countries agreed to revise the IPPC again in response to changes in global agriculture, including the requirements of the SPS Agreement regarding the development and application of international phytosanitary standards.

The IPPC Secretariat gathered recommendations from signatory countries regarding potential revisions to the current scope, coverage, and provisions of the IPPC. In March 1996, plant quarantine experts from various signatory countries met to discuss and develop draft text for the revised IPPC. In January 1997, IPPC signatory countries met in Rome to further negotiate changes to the revised text. Due to an inability to resolve several key issues over the course of the Technical Consultation, the Consultation did not produce a final revised text to submit to FAO for approval.

Following the January Technical Consultations, the COAG established an open-ended working group to finalize the revision. This working group developed a final revised text which was presented to the COAG in April 1997. The COAG adopted the revised text and will submit it to FAO Council and legal experts in June 1997 for consideration. If Council approves the revised text, it will be submitted to Conference for final approval in November 1997. If approved, the revised IPPC will be distributed to signatory countries in January 1998.

NAPPO Standard Setting Activities

Current information on NAPPO policies, standard setting activities, U.S. participants, and meeting agendas and dates is available on the NAPPO home page at http://www.nappo.org. Interested individuals may also contact Marshall Kirby, current APHIS representative on the APHIS NAPPO Standards Panel, at (301) 734–8262.

NAPPO Standards Panel

The NAPPO Standards Panel handles or supports development of NAPPO standards and other cross-commodity issues, reviews proposed international standards, and recommends NAPPO positions on proposed international standards. At the July 1997 meeting, the Panel will develop a work plan for the upcoming year. Issues to be considered include:

a. Review of existing NAPPO and international standards for equivalency; and

b. Planning for NAPPO development of, or input into, new or revised regional and international standards.

In addition, the Standards Panel supports the work of other NAPPO panels on standards development. Following is a summary of panel charges as they relate to the development of standards (see the NAPPO home page for the most up-to-date information, including a list of U.S. participants on the panels):

Accreditation Panel

The Panel will finalize the draft standard, The accreditation of individuals to issue phytosanitary certificates, for approval by the NAPPO Executive Committee (EC) at the 1997 NAPPO Annual Meeting (October 21–24).

Biological Control Panel

The Panel will:

a. Develop a framework, with timelines, for the development of science-based guidelines to harmonize regulations and protocols for the importation, quarantine, and release of exotic biological control agents; and

b. Revise and resubmit draft of NAPPO guidelines for petition for release of exotic phytophagous insects and mites for the biological control of weeds in the NAPPO Standards format.

Biotechnology Panel

The Panel will:

a. Develop a NAPPO biotechnology standard, taking into consideration existing national and international standards; and

b. Explore development of a NAPPO release policy for wild types of maize (cotton and tomato) and consider whether it can be included in the standard.

Forestry Panel

The Panel will:

a. Develop a NAPPO standard for the movement of Christmas trees within and among NAPPO member countries;

b. Harmonize gypsy moth regulations among NAPPO member countries;

c. Develop a NAPPO standard for the movement of wood (including dunnage); and

d. Review the European Plant Protection Organization list of forestry words/definitions for possible adoption by NAPPO; propose alternatives for those considered inappropriate.

Fruit Fly Panel

The Panel will:

a. Complete the list of quarantine significant fruit flies for the NAPPO region and member countries; and

b. Prepare NAPPO standards pertaining to survey procedures and phytosanitary procedures for quarantine significant fruit flies.

Fruit Tree and Grapevine Nursery Stock Certification Standard Panel

The Panel will:

a. Complete the grapevine portion of the Fruit Tree and Grapevine Nursery Stock Certification Standard in time for EC approval at the 1997 annual meeting; and

b. Proceed with other components of the standard.

Grains Panel

The Panel will:

a. Review the list of weed species intercepted by Mexico in imported consignments of wheat grain for processing from other NAPPO countries and determine which species meet the NAPPO definition of quarantine pest;

b. Determine which phytosanitary measures will reduce the probability of introduction of weed species that are determined to be quarantine pests into Mexico's territories;

c. Review the *Tilletia controversa* (dwarf bunt) PRA conducted by Mexico in March 1996 and recommend the pest status for this species in the NAPPO region; and

d. Complete development of a NAPPO sampling protocol for the examination of railway (box) cars for (1) the presence of wheat grains and (2) the presence of Karnal bunted wheat grains that meets the quarantine security requirements of NAPPO member countries.

Hemispheric Training Center Panel

The Panel will continue with the design of a Hemispheric Training Center to enable plant protection staffs in Western Hemisphere countries to build and strengthen plant health infrastructures and to harmonize international plant protection and quarantine systems.

Irradiation Panel

The NAPPO Irradiation Standard, developed by the Irradiation Panel, was approved by the EC in April 1997. There are no current charges to this panel.

Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) Panel

The Panel will:

a. Develop guidelines for the harmonized implementation and application of the NAPPO PRA Standard and consider possible amendment of the standard;

b. Compare and contrast how individual NAPPO member countries apply the NAPPO PRA Standard using, as a case study, the PRAs which each country has prepared on Chrysanthemum white rust; and

c. Analyze the Chrysanthemum white rust PRAs prepared by NAPPO member countries to determine the status of the causal agent of this disease as a quarantine pest in the NAPPO region.

Potato Panel

The Panel will:

a. Advance the NAPPO Potato Standard towards becoming an international standard; and

b. Convene a subgroup to harmonize and/or determine equivalencies among diagnostic tests for Potato Virus Y Strain N within the NAPPO region.

Comments on standards being considered or to be considered by any of the committees or working groups listed above may be sent to APHIS as directed under the heading **ADDRESSES**.

Done in Washington, DC, this 4th day of June 1997.

Terry L. Medley,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 97–15256 Filed 6–10–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Proposed Perkins—Manistique 138 kV Transmission Line Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The USDA Forest Service will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze and disclose the effects of a proposal by Wisconsin Electric Power Company WEPCO and Edison Sault Electric (ESE) to construct a 24 mile, 138 kV transmission line in Delta county, Michigan. The project area includes portions of the Hiawatha National Forest (HNF), Rapid River/Manistique Ranger Districts.

DATES: Written comments concerning the scope of the analysis (issues, preliminary alternatives, etc.) must be received in writing by July 11, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments and suggestions to Mr. William F. Spinner, Forest Supervisor, Hiawatha National Forest, 2727 Lincoln Road, Escanaba, Michigan, 49829.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Technical questions regarding the proposed action and EIS should be directed to Ms. Patty Beyer, Project Coordinator, (906) 228–9681.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: WEPCO/ESE propose to construct, operate, and maintain a 138 kV double circuit transmission line from the existing Perkins Substation one mile west of Perkins, Michigan to the proposed Indian Lake Substation one mile northwest of Manistique, Michigan. The proposed 24 mile route lies adjacent to the Lakehead Oil Company pipeline right-of-way. The Substation locations are outside the boundaries of the Hiawatha National Forest. The Federal Land and Policy Act allows the use of national forest lands for electric transmission rights-of-way. The Hiawatha National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan allows for utility right-of-ways within management areas crossed by the proposed project.

WEPCO/ESE have identified a lack of adequate electric transmission facilities serving Delta and Schoolcraft counties in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan,