Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 98–009–2]

Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.; Availability of Determination of Nonregulated Status for Corn Genetically Engineered for Male Sterility and Glufosinate Herbicide Tolerance

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public of our determination that the Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., corn lines designated as 676, 678, and 680, which have been genetically engineered for male sterility and tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate as a marker, are no longer considered regulated articles under our regulations governing the introduction of certain genetically engineered organisms. Our determination is based on our evaluation of data submitted by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., in its petition for a determination of nonregulated status and an analysis of other scientific data. This notice also announces the availability of our written determination document and its associated environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 14, 1998.

ADDRESSES: The determination, an environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact, and the petition 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 those documents are asked to call in advance of visiting at (202) 690–2817 to facilitate entry into the reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Subhash Gupta, Biotechnology and Biological Analysis, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–8761. To obtain a copy of the determination or the environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact, contact Ms. Kay Peterson at (301) 734–4885; e-mail: mkpeterson@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On December 8, 1997, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) received a petition (APHIS Petition No. 97–342–01p) from Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. (Pioneer), of Johnston, IA, seeking a determination that corn lines designated as 676, 678, and 680, which have been genetically engineered for male sterility and tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate as a marker, do not present a plant pest risk and, therefore, are not regulated articles under APHIS regulations in 7 CFR part 340.

On February 18, 1998, APHIS published a notice in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 8161–8162, Docket No. 98–009–1) announcing that the Pioneer petition had been received and was available for public review. The notice also discussed the role of APHIS, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Food and Drug Administration in regulating corn lines 676, 678, and 680 and food products derived from them. In the notice, APHIS solicited written comments from the public as to whether these corn lines posed a plant pest risk. The comments were to have been received by APHIS on or before April 20, 1998. APHIS received no comments on the subject petition during the designated 60-day comment period.

Analysis

Corn lines 676, 678, and 680 have been genetically engineered to contain a *dam* gene derived from *Escherichia coli.* The *dam* gene expresses a DNA adenine methylase enzyme in specific plant tissue, which results in the inability of the transformed plants to produce anthers or pollen. The subject corn lines also contain the *pat* selectable marker gene isolated from the bacterium *Streptomyces viridochromogenes.* The *pat* gene encodes a phosphinothricin acetyltransferase (PAT) enzyme, which, when introduced into a plant cell, inactivates glufosinate. Linkage of the *dam* gene, which induces male sterility, with the *pat* gene, a glufosinate tolerance gene used as a marker, enables identification of the male sterile line for the production of hybrid seed. The subject corn lines were transformed by the particle gun process, and expression of the introduced genes is controlled in part by gene sequences derived from the plant pathogen cauliflower mosaic virus.

Corn lines 676, 678, and 680 have been considered regulated articles under APHIS regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because they contain regulatory gene sequences derived from a plant pathogen. However, evaluation of field data reports from field tests of the subject corn lines conducted under APHIS notifications since 1995 indicates that there were no deleterious effects on plants, nontarget organisms, or the environment as a result of the environmental release of these corn lines.

Determination

Based on its analysis of the data submitted by Pioneer and a review of other scientific data and field tests of the subject corn lines, APHIS has determined that corn lines 676, 678, and 680: (1) Exhibit no plant pathogenic properties; (2) are no more likely to become a weed than corn lines developed by traditional breeding techniques; (3) are unlikely to increase the weediness potential for any other cultivated or wild species with which they can interbreed; (4) will not cause damage to raw or processed agricultural commodities; and (5) will not harm threatened or endangered species or other organisms, such as bees, that are beneficial to agriculture. Therefore, APHIS has concluded that corn lines 676, 678, and 680 and any progeny derived from hybrid crosses with other corn varieties will not exhibit new plant pest properties, i.e., properties substantially different from any observed for the subject corn lines already field tested, or those observed for corn in traditional breeding programs.

The effect of this determination is that Pioneer's corn lines designated as 676, 678, and 680 are no longer considered regulated articles under APHIS'

regulations in 7 CFR part 340. Therefore, the requirements pertaining to regulated articles under those regulations no longer apply to the field testing, importation, or interstate movement of Pioneer's corn lines 676, 678, or 680 or their progeny. However, the importation of the subject corn lines or seeds capable of propagation are still subject to the restrictions found in APHIS' foreign quarantine notices in 7 CFR part 319.

National Environmental Policy Act

An environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared to examine the potential environmental impacts associated with this determination. The EA was prepared in accordance with: (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (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). Based on that EA, APHIS has reached a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) with regard to its determination that Pioneer's corn lines 676, 678, and 680 and lines developed from them are no longer regulated articles under its regulations in 7 CFR part 340. Copies of the EA and the FONSI are available upon request from the individual listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.**

Done in Washington, DC, this 22nd day of May 1998.

Charles P. Schwalbe,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 98–14260 Filed 5–28–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Office of the Inspector General

Application for Funding Assistance

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (DOC), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before July 28, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Barbara A. Bynum, Department of Commerce, Office of Inspector General, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 7089, Washington, DC 20230. She may be reached at (202) 482–5348.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

DOC, through the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), the International Trade Administration (ITA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Telecommunications and Information Agency (NTIA), and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NTIS), and other programs, assists reliable, capable individuals and firms in the pursuit of various business development, business enterprise development and other forms of economic development. The CD–346 form is used to establish the good character of principal officers and employees of organizations, firms, or recipients or beneficiaries of grants, loans, or loan guarantee programs, through the organizations cited above. This requirement is derived from 42 USC 3211(12); 44 USC 3101; and 15 USC 1519, as well as the responsibilities cited in the Inspector General Act of 1978, Sec. 4(a)(3) and Departmental Orders (DAO) 207–10 and 203–26.

II. Method of Collection

The information is collected in written form.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0605–0001.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular Submission.

Affected Public: Individual, businesses or other for-profit organizations, not-for-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 2,000.

Estimated Time Per Response: 15 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 500.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: $0 (no capital expenditures required).

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 22, 1998.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 98–14211 Filed 5–28–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE: 3510–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

Initiation of Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Administrative Reviews and Requests for Revocations in Part

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of initiation of antidumping and countervailing duty administrative reviews and requests for revocations in part.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce has received requests to conduct administrative reviews of various antidumping and countervailing duty orders and findings with April anniversary dates. In accordance with the Department's regulations, we are initiating those administrative reviews. The Department of Commerce also received a request to revoke one antidumping duty order in part.

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 29, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Holly A. Kuga, Office of AD/CVD Enforcement, Import Administration, International Trade Administration,