

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. 99-029-1]

Availability of Environmental Assessments and Findings of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that two environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact have been prepared by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service relative to the issuance of permits to allow the field testing of genetically engineered organisms. The environmental assessments provide a basis for our conclusion that the field testing of the genetically engineered organisms will not present a risk of introducing or disseminating a plant pest and will not have a significant impact on the quality

of the human environment. Based on its findings of no significant impact, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has determined that environmental impact statements need not be prepared.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact are available for public inspection 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 requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Arnold Foudin, Assistant Director, Scientific Services, PPQ, APHIS, Suite 5B05, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737-1237; (301) 734-7710. For copies of the environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact, contact Ms. Linda Lightle at (301) 734-8231; e-mail: linda.lightle@usda.gov. Please refer to the permit numbers listed below when ordering documents

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 7 CFR part 340 (referred to below as the regulations) regulate the introduction (importation, interstate movement, and release into the environment) of genetically engineered organisms and products that are plant pests or that there is reason to believe are plant pests (regulated articles). A

permit must be obtained or a notification acknowledged before a regulated article may be introduced into the United States. The regulations set forth the permit application requirements and the notification procedures for the importation, interstate movement, and release into the environment of a regulated article.

In the course of reviewing the permit applications, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) assessed the impact on the environment that releasing the organisms under the conditions described in the permit applications would have. APHIS has issued permits for the field testing of the organisms listed below after concluding that the organisms will not present a risk of plant pest introduction or dissemination and will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. The environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact, which are based on data submitted by the applicant and on our review of other relevant literature, provide the public with documentation of APHIS' review and analysis of the environmental impacts associated with conducting the field tests.

Environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact have been prepared by APHIS relative to the issuance of permits to allow the field testing of the following genetically engineered organisms:

Permit number	Permittee	Date issued	Organisms	Field test location
98-355-01r	USDA/ARS	3-17-99	<i>Fusarium moniliforme</i> fungus genetically engineered to express reduced virulence and antibiotic resistance tested in corn..	Illinois, Iowa
98-032-03r	USDA/ARS	3-17-99	Citrus viroid III genetically engineered to produce dwarfing in citrus trees..	Florida

The environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact have been 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).

Done in Washington, DC, this 6th day of May, 1999.

Joan M. Arnoldi,
Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.
[FR Doc. 99-12149 Filed 5-12-99; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3410-34-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

Designation Amendment for North Dakota (ND) to Provide Official Services in the Southern Illinois (IL) Area

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

ACTION: Notice.