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GM Corn Pilot Tests Approved

Report Categories:

Biotechnology

Biotechnology and Other New Production

Technologies

Grain and Feed

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Report Highlights:

The Government of Mexico (GOM) has continued granting environmental testing permits to developers of genetically modified corn and other crops (see 2011 GAIN Report [MX1086](#) *Biotech Corn Permits Being Reviewed-November Update*). Moreover, on December 31, 2011, the GOM granted the long-awaited permissions for two pilot tests of genetically modified corn, the subsequent stage in the biotech approval process. Environmental testing requests continue receiving approval, albeit for restricted acreage, as in previous years.

General Information:

On December 31, 2011, the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) through the National Service of Health, Food Safety, and Food Quality (SENASICA) published [updated information](#) on the status of 2011 requests for experimental as well as pilot testing of genetically modified corn.

The relevance of this updated information is that SENASICA finally announced the long-awaited approval of two pilot tests of genetically modified corn. These two approvals for pilot testing were granted in the state of Sinaloa and cover an area of 63.48 hectares. Four other pilot tests were denied in the most recent publication. The approved corn events approved are:

Event	Release Locations	Area Allowed (Ha)
MON-00603-6	Sinaloa municipalities: Guasave, El Fuerte, Salvador, Alvarado, Ahome, Culiacan, and Elota	20.28
MON-89034-3 x MON-88017-3	Sinaloa municipalities: Guasave, Angostura, El Fuerte, Salvador Alvarado, Ahome, Culiacan, Elota, Navolato and Badiraguato	43.20

Moreover, the publication indicated that 38.65 hectares of experimental planting genetically modified corn were approved during the period between January 20 and August 29, 2011. Experimental testing permits were issued for 38 applications for a number of different genetic events across the Mexican states of Tamaulipas, Nayarit, Sinaloa, Baja California Sur and Sonora. There are 27 additional applications (20 for experimental testing and 7 for pilot testing) under risk analysis. As such, a decision on these 27 applications has not been made. The GOM continues permitting only a fraction of the requested area for planting and conducting tests.

Moreover, there are 5 applications under the “Binding Opinion” (i.e., pending a decision) of the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT). Of these 5 applications, one is for an experimental testing permit and four are for pilot testing permits. According to Mexico’s Biosafety Law, in instances in which SAGARPA has primary responsibility for an experiment or activity, SEMARNAT is still responsible for issuing a bio-safety opinion prior to SAGARPA’s final decision.

Information from SAGARPA SENASICA on 2010 and 2009 requests and approvals for environmental and pilot testing of biotech corn is available from the SENASICA [website](#).

For More Information

FAS/Mexico Web Site: We are available at www.mexico-usda.com or visit the FAS headquarters' home page at www.fas.usda.gov for a complete selection of FAS worldwide agricultural reporting.

Other Relevant Reports Submitted by FAS/Mexico:

Report Number	Subject	Date Submitted
MX1100	Mapping Mexican Corn and Implications for Biotech Development	12/21/2011
MX1086	<i>Biotech Corn Permits Being Reviewed-November Update</i>	11/18/2011
MX1070	2011 Biotech Corn Permits Being Reviewed	9/20/2011
MX1056	2011 Biotech Annual: Mexico Authorizes First Commercial Biotech Cultivation	7/15/2011
MX1054	June Cotton Update	6/30/2011
MX1102	2010 Biotech Corn Permits Issued	1/26/2011
MX0044	2010 Biotech Annual: Mexican Government Continues to Support Biotech Crops	7/14/2010

Useful Mexican Web Sites: Mexico's equivalent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (SAGARPA) can be found at www.sagarpa.gob.mx, equivalent to the U.S. Department of Commerce (SE) can be found at www.economia.gob.mx and equivalent to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (SALUD) can be found at www.salud.gob.mx. These web sites are mentioned for the readers' convenience but USDA does NOT in any way endorse, guarantee the accuracy of, or necessarily concur with, the information contained on the mentioned sites.