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Mexico

Post: Mexico

Mapping Mexican Corn and Implications for Biotech Development

Report Categories:

Biotechnology
Biotechnology and Other New Production
Technologies
Agriculture in the News
Agriculture in the Economy
Grain and Feed
Climate Change
National Plan

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Report Highlights:

The Government of Mexico is planning to publish a map delineating the centers of origin and centers of maize genetic diversity in Mexico. It has generated a great controversy between numerous government, industry, academic, and other public interests, as genetically modified corn production would be prohibited in the majority of the country. No date has been provided when the final map would be published or released in Mexico's Federal Register (*Diario Oficial*).

General Information:

Disclaimer: This summary is based on a *cursory* review of the subject announcement and therefore should not, under any circumstances, be viewed as a definitive reading of the resolution in question, or of its implications for U.S. agricultural export trade interests. In the event of a discrepancy or discrepancies between this summary and the complete resolution or announcement as published in Spanish, the latter shall prevail.

Title of Notice: Final Assessment on the Draft Agreement to Determine the Centers of Origin and Centers of Genetic Diversity of Corn in Mexico.

Type of Resolution: Final Assessment.

Publication Date: December 13, 2011

Products Affected: Corn

Agency in Charge: Federal Regulatory Improvement Commission (COFEMER)

Note: COFEMER is an autonomous, technical, and administrative body of the Economy Secretariat (SE) charged with ensuring transparency in the drafting of federal regulations and for promoting the development of cost effective regulations that produce the greatest net benefit. End Note.

Background: On December 13, 2011, COFEMER published its final assessment on the [Draft Agreement](#) to Determine the Centers of Origin and Centers of Genetic Diversity of Corn in Mexico.

This agreement is part of the legal process required by Mexico's Bio-safety Law (see Provision 86 of the 2008 GAIN report [MX8048 Mexico Biotechnology Annual](#)). The Draft Agreement specifies the guidelines for protecting native corn species and a map delineating the centers of origin and centers of maize genetic diversity in Mexico.

According to Provision 86 of the Bio-safety Law, the center of origin and genetic diversity of maize in Mexico as well as the geographic areas in which the related species in question are found shall be determined jointly by a resolution issued by the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food (SAGARPA). Moreover, both Secretariats should establish resolutions issuing the measures required for the protection of such species and geographic areas.

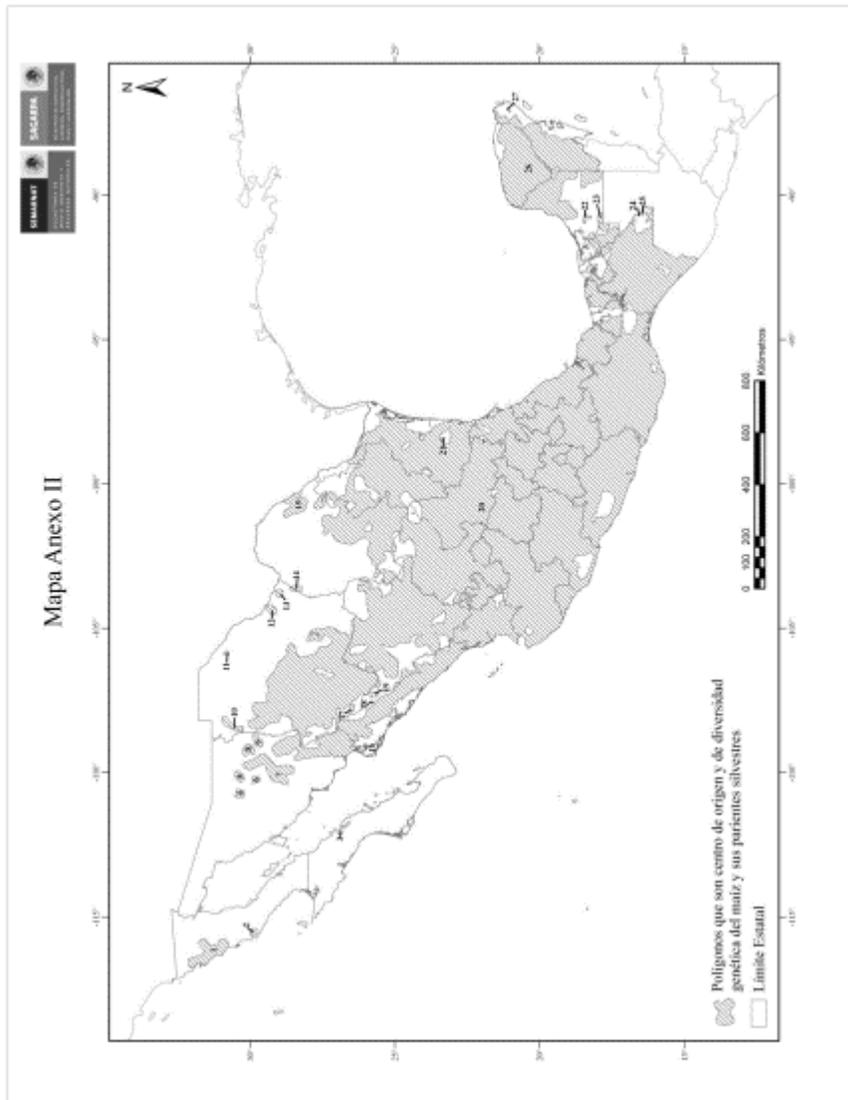
On November 17, 2011, the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) submitted a [draft agreement](#) including a map (Annex 2 of the agreement and provided, below), delineating the centers of origin and centers of maize genetic diversity in Mexico to COFEMER. The document subsequently was made available to the public for comment for which a [number of responses](#) from concerned parties are available for viewing from the COFEMER website.

On December 2, 2011, COFEMER published its [preliminary assessment](#) of the draft Agreement. On the same date, [SEMARNAT provided several responses](#) to many of the comments received to date and attempted to address concerns raised by academics, industry, and several other members of the concerned public. Subsequently, additional comments were submitted to COFEMER. On December 7, SEMARNAT provided [additional responses](#) to the received comments. Then, finally, after receiving and reviewing approximately forty comments, COFEMER published its [Final Assessment on the](#)

[Agreement](#) on December 13, 2011. In brief, in the Final Assessment on the Agreement, COFEMER raised and summarized a number of points and recommended that SEMARNAT evaluate the comments more fully before publishing the Final Agreement in Mexico's Federal Register.

DRAFT Map

As can be seen in the accompanying image, the shaded area of the map covers a significant portion of the country as being either a center of origin of corn (and related species) or a center of genetic diversity. If this becomes the final version, biotech corn production would be restricted to the northern most and non-arable desert areas of the country.



Author Defined:

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
MX1086	2011 Biotech Corn Permits Being Reviewed-November Update	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.