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Mexico Creates Technical Committee for GMOs

Report Categories:

Biotechnology

Policy and Program Announcements

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Report Highlights:

The Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food (SAGARPA) published in the *Diario Oficial* (Federal Register) on June 22, 2009, an Agreement to create the Technical and Scientific Committee for Genetically Modified Organisms. The main objective of this Committee is to integrate and support the administrative units of SAGARPA regarding the analysis of genetically modified organisms as well as issue technical opinions in respect to requests and notices in accordance with the Bio-safety Law.

General Information:

Introduction: This report summarizes an Agreement from the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food and published in Mexico's *Diario Oficial* (Federal Register) on June 22, 2009.

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 regulation 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 regulation or announcement as published in Spanish, the latter shall prevail.

Title: Agreement to Create the Technical-Scientific Committee of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food with Regard to Genetically Modified Organisms.

Type of Regulation: Agreement

Important Dates

1. Publication Date: June 22, 2009

2. Effective Date: June 23, 2009

Products Affected: Genetically Modified Organisms

FAS/Mexico's Executive Summary: On June 22, 2009, the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food (SAGARPA) published in Mexico's *Diario Oficial* an Agreement to create the Technical and Scientific Committee for Genetically Modified Organisms. According to the agreement, the main objective of this committee is to support SAGARPA in the analysis of petitions and notices related to genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in accordance with the Bio-safety Law.

The specific objectives of this Committee are as follows:

- a. Review, assess and issue technical opinions on the potential risks that GMOs could have on animal, plant and aquaculture health based on the risk analysis and the results submitted by developers and administrative bodies;
- b. Analyze the cases and situations that are submitted for consideration in order to state a technical opinion on the issuance of permits and notices for activities with GMOs under the support of scientific, legal or technical studies;
- c. Understand, discuss and issue technical opinions on safety measures for implementation, based on technical, legal and/or scientists studies;
- d. Follow up on every issue related to GMOs, which is under consideration;
- e. Monitor, review, analyze and issue technical opinions on the actions or omissions that warrant the imposition of administrative penalties in accordance with the current legislation.

The Committee will be headed by a President, who will be designated by the Agriculture Secretariat, and an Executive Director. Members of the Technical Committee will be representatives of several SAGARPA areas: the Fisheries and Aquaculture Scientific Commission; the Coordinator of International Affairs; the National Institute of Forest, Agriculture and Livestock Research; the National Institute of Fisheries; the National Service of Seed Inspection and Certification, the National Service of Agro Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality and the Undersecretary of

Agriculture. Working Groups will be created according to the knowledge and/or needs of each area (technical, scientific and legal).

Additional public servants of SAGARPA and other agencies or entities of the Executive Branch as well as representatives of the private, academic or social sectors, who are considered necessary by the Plenary Session of the Scientific Technical Committee, shall be invited to participate in committee activities. These guests will be able to voice opinions but will not have voting privileges in any decisions.

Also, the agreement states that the Members and Guests of the Scientific Technical Committee will be responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all information that passes through the committee. The agreements emanating from the Scientific Technical Committee will be communicated in writing through the Executive Adviser to the administrative units of the responsible Secretariat.

Post Comments:

With the announcement of the Scientific-Technical Committee, Mexico continues to gradually complete the steps needed to fully implement the Bio-safety Law, which was passed by the Mexican Congress in February 2005. The Bio-safety Law authorizes and governs controlled plantings of GMOs. According to official sources, this Committee will allow greater certainty regarding the governmental scientific and technical requirements for the controlled planting of GMOs so that producers and the industry can more effectively plan their investments in biotechnology.