

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

February 22, 2007.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-13. Comments regarding (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-8681.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it

displays a currently valid OMB control number.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Title: Equine Survey.

OMB Control Number: 0535-0227.

Summary of Collection: The primary objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue current official State and national estimates of crop and livestock production, disposition, and prices. Services such as statistical consultation, data collection, summary tabulation, and analysis are performed for other Federal and State agencies on a reimbursable basis as the need arises. In the past, equine surveys have been conducted in twelve States where equine is a significant portion of their agriculture. The results are used to provide an assessment of the equine industry's contribution to the State's economy in terms of infrastructure and value.

Need and use of the Information: NASS will collect information on equine inventories, by category; equine revenue, by activity; and equine related expenditures, by purpose. In addition, these surveys will provide NASS with names and addresses of equine operations that can be used for Census of Agriculture enumeration and for the NASS program that seeks to cover 99 percent of U.S. agricultural cash receipts.

Description of Respondents: Farms.

Number of Respondents: 37,917.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: One-time.

Total Burden Hours: 15,360.

Charlene Parker,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. E7-3483 Filed 2-27-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-20-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2007-0006]

Ventria Bioscience; Availability of an Environmental Assessment for Field Tests of Rice Genetically Engineered To Express Lactoferrin, Lysozyme, or Serum Albumin

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has prepared an environmental assessment for confined field plantings of rice plants genetically engineered to express the human proteins lactoferrin, lysozyme, or serum albumin. This environmental assessment is available for public review and comment.

DATES: We will consider all comments received on or before March 30, 2007.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and, in the lower "Search Regulations and Federal Actions" box, select "Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service" from the agency drop-down menu, and then click on "Submit." In the Docket ID column, select APHIS-2007-0006 to submit or view public comments and to view supporting and related materials available electronically. Information on using Regulations.gov, including instruction for accessing documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket after the close of the comment period, is available through the site's "User Tips" link.

- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to Docket No. APHIS-2007-0006, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. APHIS-2007-0006.

Reading Room: You may read the environmental assessment (EA) and any comments we receive on this docket in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690-2817 before coming. The EA is available on the internet at the following links: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_27801r_ea.pdf, http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_27802r_ea.pdf, http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_27801r_ea.pdf, http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_27802r_ea.pdf, http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_27801r_ea.pdf, http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_27802r_ea.pdf

www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_28502r_ea.pdf

Other Information: Additional information about APHIS and its programs is available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. John Cordts, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236; (301) 734-5531. To obtain copies of the environmental assessment, contact Ms. Cynthia Eck at (301) 734-0667; e-mail: cynthia.a.eck@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 7 CFR part 340, "Introduction of Organisms and Products Altered or Produced Through Genetic Engineering Which Are Plant Pests or Which There Is Reason to Believe Are Plant Pests," regulate, among other things, the introduction (importation, interstate movement, or release into the environment) of organisms and products altered or produced through genetic engineering that are plant pests or that there is reason to believe are plant pests. Such genetically engineered organisms and products are considered "regulated articles." A permit must be obtained or a notification acknowledged before a regulated article may be introduced. The regulations set forth the permit application requirements and the notification procedures for the importation, interstate movement, or release in the environment of a regulated article.

On October 2, 2006, APHIS received two Permit applications (06-278-01r and 06-278-02r) followed by a third Permit application (06-285-02r) received on October 12, 2006, from Ventria Bioscience, Sacramento, CA, for confined field plantings of rice (*Oryza sativa*) plants genetically engineered to express gene coding for the proteins lactoferrin, lysozyme, or serum albumin, respectively. The proposed field plantings are to be conducted in Geary County, KS. The subject plants have been genetically engineered, using techniques of micro-projectile bombardment or disarmed *Agrobacterium*-mediated transformation, to express proteins for human lactoferrin, lysozyme, or serum albumin. Expression of the genes is controlled by the rice glutelin 1 promoter (GT1), the rice glutelin 1 signal peptide (gt1), and the nopaline synthase (NOS) terminator sequence from *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*. The genes are expressed only in the endosperm. In addition, the plants may contain either or both of the coding sequences for the genes hygromycin

phosphotransferase (*hpt*) or phosphinothricin acetyltransferase (*pat*), which are marker genes that allow for the selection of transgenic tissues in the laboratory using the antibiotic hygromycin and/or the herbicide bialaphos. Neither selectable marker gene is expressed in mature rice tissues, nor do they have any inherent plant pest characteristics or enhance gene transfer from plants to other organisms. The genetically engineered rice plants are considered regulated articles under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because they contain gene sequences from plant pathogens.

The purpose of the field plantings are for pure seed production and for the extraction of lactoferrin, lysozyme, and serum albumin for a variety of research and commercial products. There is currently no commercial rice production in Geary County or in any other location in the state of Kansas. The planting will be conducted using physical confinement measures. In addition, the protocols and field plot design, as well as the procedures for termination of the field plantings, are designed to ensure that none of the subject rice plants persist in the environment after the crop is harvested.

To provide the public with documentation of APHIS' review and analysis of any potential environmental impacts and plant pest risks associated with the proposed release of these transgenic rice plants, an environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared. 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). Copies of the EA are available from the individual listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701-7772 and 7781-7786; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 22nd day of February 2007.

Kevin Shea,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. E7-3484 Filed 2-27-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2007-0026]

Public Meetings; National Animal Identification System Animal Identification Number Device Distribution Databases

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: This is a notice to inform interested stakeholders of upcoming public meetings to discuss the implementation of private/State animal identification number device distribution databases for the animal identification component of the National Animal Identification System, which is a voluntary program. The meetings are being organized by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

DATES: Two meetings will be held, the first on Monday, March 5, 2007, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., and Tuesday, March 6, 2007, from 8 a.m. to noon, and the second on Monday, March 12, 2007, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., and Tuesday, March 13, 2007, from 8 a.m. to noon.

ADDRESSES: The public meetings will be held in the Hilton Kansas City Airport, 8801 NW. 112th Street, Kansas City, MO.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Neil Hammerschmidt, Coordinator, National Animal Identification System, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 200, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-5571.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As part of ongoing efforts to safeguard animal health, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) initiated implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) in 2004. The NAIS is a cooperative State-Federal-industry program coordinated by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

The first two components of the program, premises registration and animal identification, are well underway. The third component, animal tracing, is currently under development by APHIS and its State and industry partners. Industry, through private systems, and States will manage the animal tracking databases (ATDs) that maintain the movement records of animals. These information systems will provide the locations of a subject animal and the records of other animals that the subject animal came into contact with at