

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."

The regulations in § 340.6(a) provide that any person may submit a petition to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) seeking a determination that an article should not be regulated under 7 CFR part 340. Further, the regulations in § 340.6(e)(2) provide that a person may request that APHIS extend a determination of nonregulated status to other organisms. Such a request must include information to establish the similarity of the antecedent organism and the regulated article in question.

Background

On January 11, 2000, APHIS received a request for an extension of a determination of nonregulated status (APHIS No. 00-11-01p) from Monsanto Company (Monsanto) of St. Louis, MO, for a corn line designated as Roundup Ready® corn line NK603 (NK603), which has been genetically engineered for tolerance to the herbicide glyphosate. The Monsanto request seeks an extension of a determination of nonregulated status issued for Roundup Ready® corn line GA21 (GA21) in response to APHIS petition number 97-099-01p (62 FR 64350-64351, December 5, 1997, Docket No. 97-052-2). Based on the similarity of NK603 to GA21, the antecedent organism, Monsanto requests a determination that glyphosate-tolerant corn line NK603 does not present a plant pest risk and, therefore, is not a regulated article under APHIS' regulations in 7 CFR part 340.

Analysis

Like the antecedent organism, corn line NK603 has been genetically engineered to contain an enzyme, 5-enolpyruvylshikimate-3-phosphate synthase (EPSPS), that imparts tolerance to the herbicide glyphosate. However, corn was the source of the EPSPS enzyme in the antecedent organism, while the EPSPS enzyme in NK603 was derived from *Agrobacterium* sp. strain CP4. The subject corn line and the antecedent organism were developed through use of the particle acceleration method, and expression of the added genes in NK603 and the antecedent organism is controlled in part by gene

sequences derived from the plant pathogen *A. tumefaciens*.

Corn line NK603 and the antecedent organism were genetically engineered using the same transformation method and contain a functionally equivalent enzyme that makes the plants tolerant to the herbicide glyphosate. Accordingly, we have determined that corn line NK603 is similar to the antecedent organism in APHIS petition number 97-099-01p, and we are proposing that this line should no longer be regulated under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340.

The subject corn line has been considered a regulated article under APHIS' regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because it contains gene sequences derived from plant pathogens. However, evaluation of field data reports from field tests of NK603 conducted under APHIS notifications since 1997 indicates that there were no deleterious effects on plants, nontarget organisms, or the environment as a result of its environmental release.

Should APHIS approve Monsanto's request for an extension of a determination of nonregulated status, corn line NK603 would no longer be considered a regulated article under APHIS' regulations in 7 CFR part 340. Therefore, the requirements pertaining to regulated articles under those regulations would no longer apply to the field testing, importation, or interstate movement of the subject corn line or its progeny.

National Environmental Policy Act

An environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared to examine any potential environmental impacts associated with this proposed extension of a determination of nonregulated status. 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 Monsanto's extension request and the EA are available upon request from the individual listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.**

Done in Washington, DC, this 15th day of June 2000.

Craig A. Reed,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 00-15622 Filed 6-20-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Foreign Agricultural Service

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Paperwork Reduction Act, this notice announces the Foreign Agricultural Service's intention to request an extension for a currently approved information collection in support of the regulations governing the entry of raw-cane sugar under the tariff rate quota (TRQ) into the United States.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by August 21, 2000 to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS:

Mail or deliver comments to James D. Grueff, Assistant Deputy Administrator, International Trade Policy and Acting Division Director, Import Policies and Programs Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 1021, Washington, DC 20250-1021. For further information, contact Mr. Grueff at telephone number (202) 720-4055.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Certificate of Quota Eligibility
OMB NUMBER: 0551-0014.

Expiration date of approval:
November 30, 2000.

Type of Request: Extension and revision of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the quantity of raw-cane sugar which may be entered at the in-quota duty rates of the TRQ. The terms under which Certificates of Quota Eligibility will be issued to foreign countries that have been allocated a share of the TRQ are set forth in 15 CFR part 2011, Subpart A, Allocation of Tariff-rate Quota on Imported Sugars, Syrups, and Molasses. The authority for Certificates of Quota Eligibility is additional U.S. note 5(b)(iv) to chapter 17 of the HTS.

The regulation, promulgated by the U.S. Trade Representative, provides for the issuance of Certificates of Quota Eligibility by the Secretary of Agriculture, and in general prohibits sugar subject to the TRQ from being imported into the United States or withdrawn from a warehouse for consumption at the in-quota rates unless

such sugar is accompanied by a Certificate of Quota Eligibility. Certificates of Quota Eligibility are issued to foreign countries by the Licensing Authority who is the Assistant Deputy Administrator, International Trade Policy, Foreign Agricultural Service, United States Department of Agriculture, or his or her designee. The issuance of Certificates of Quota Eligibility is in such amounts and at such times as the Secretary determines are appropriate to enable the foreign country to fill its quota allocation for such quota period in a reasonable manner, taking into account traditional shipping patterns, harvesting period, U.S. import requirements, and other relevant factors.

The information required to be collected on the Certificate of Quota Eligibility is used to monitor and control the imports of sugar. Proper completion of the Certificate of Quota Eligibility is mandatory for those foreign governments that are eligible and elect to export raw sugar to the United States under the provisions of the tariff-rate quota.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for these collections vary in direct relation to the number of Certificates of Quota Eligibility issued.

Respondents: Foreign governments.

Estimated number of respondents: 40 per annum.

Estimated number of responses per respondent: 30 per annum.

Estimated total annual burden of respondents: 200 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Kimberly Chisley, the Agency Information Collection Coordinator, at (202) 720-2568.

Request for Comments: Send comments regarding (a) Whether the proposed 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 the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments may be sent to James D. Grueff, Assistant Deputy Administrator, International Trade Policy and Acting Division Director, Import Policies Division, Foreign Agricultural Service,

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 1021, Washington D.C. 20250-1021. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Signed at Washington, D.C. on June 14, 2000.

Timothy J. Galvin,

Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service.

[FR Doc. 00-15624 Filed 6-20-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-10-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Information Collection; Request for Comments; Annual Wildfire Summary Report

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Forest Service announces its intention to reinstate a previously approved information collection with a change. Two forms are authorized under OMB number 0596-0025: FS-3100-8, Annual Wildfire Summary Report, for which OMB authorization expired April 30, 1996, and FS-3200-6, Cooperative Forestry Accomplishment Report, for which authorization expired October 31, 1999. The agency requests reinstatement of FS-3100-8 and will retire FS-3200-6.

The information collected using FS-3100-8, Annual Wildfire Summary Report, will enable the Forest Service to provide timely, substantive information to Congress about the effectiveness of State and local fire fighting agencies, when the agency requests annual funding for the Forest Service State and Private Forestry Cooperative Fire Program. This Program supplements the funding of State and local fire fighting efforts.

State fire marshals will use FS-3100-8 to collect information from their State and local fire agencies in response to a request for this information from the Forest Service.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing on or before August 21, 2000.

ADDRESSES: All comments should be addressed to Roger Condie, State and Private Forestry Deputy Area, Forest Service, USDA, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090.

Comments also may be submitted via facsimile to (202) 205-1174 or by email to: rcondie@fs.fed.us.

The public may inspect comments received at the Office of the Deputy

Chief, State and Private Forestry, Forest Service, USDA, 2nd Floor NW, Yates Building, 201 14th Street S.W., Washington D.C. Visitors are urged to call ahead to facilitate entrance into the building.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Roger Condie, State and Private Forestry, 202-205-1037.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101 (note) Sec. 10) requires the Forest Service to collect information about wildfire suppression efforts by State and local fire fighting agencies in order to support specific congressional funding requests for the Forest Service State and Private Forestry Cooperative Fire Program. The Program provides supplemental funding for State and local fire fighting agencies. The Forest Service works cooperatively with State and local fire fighting agencies to support their fire suppression efforts.

State and local fire agencies, such as the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program, are the first line of defense against fires that might spread to National Forest System lands.

State fire marshals use FS-3100-8, Annual Wildfire Summary Report, to collect this information for the Forest Service. The Forest Service is requesting authorization to reinstate this form under OMB number 0596-0025. This form expired April 30, 1996.

A second form was authorized under OMB number 0596-0025; the form, FS-3200-6, Cooperative Forestry and Accomplishment Report, expired October 31, 1999. This form is no longer used and the Forest Service will retire FS-3200-6.

The Forest Service would be unable to assess the effectiveness of the State and Private Forestry Cooperative Fire Program if the information using FS-3100-8 were not collected.

Description of Information Collection

The following describes the information collection to be reinstated with change:

Title: FS-3100-8, Annual Wildfire Summary Report.

OMB Number: 0596-0025.

Date of Expiration: April 30, 1996.

Type of Request: Reinstatement of an information collection, with change, that was previously approved by the Office of Management and Budget.

Abstract: Forest Service State and Private Forestry Cooperative Fire Program managers will evaluate the collected information to determine if the Cooperative Fire Program funds,