

plants also express the *pat* gene from *Streptomyces viridochromogenes*, a common soil bacterium. The *pat* gene expresses a phosphinothricin acetyltransferase enzyme, which confers tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate, and is useful as a marker gene. The experimental genes were transferred into corn plants through use of the *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* transformation system, and expression of the added genes is controlled in part by the plant pathogen cauliflower mosaic virus. The genetically engineered corn 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 proposed field trial is threefold: (1) Grain production; (2) hybrid seed production; and (3) line development in a nursery. The tests will be conducted through use of a combination of biological and physical containment measures. In addition, the experimental protocols and field plot design, as well as the procedures for termination of the field tests, are designed to ensure that none of the subject corn plants persist in the environment beyond the termination of the experiments.

To provide the public with documentation of APHIS' review and analysis of any potential environmental impacts and plant pest risk associated with the proposed confined field test of the subject corn plants, an environment 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).

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1622n and 7701–7772; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of June 2004.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 04–14431 Filed 6–24–04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 04–044–1]

#### Availability of Environmental Assessment for Field Test of Genetically Engineered Organisms

**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 a confined field of corn plants genetically engineered to express the protein aprotinin. This environmental assessment is available for public review and comment.

**DATES:** We will consider all comments we receive on or before July 26, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:*

Please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to Docket No. 04–044–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 04–044–1.

- *E-mail:* Address your comment to [regulations@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:regulations@aphis.usda.gov). Your comment must be contained in the body of your message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in your message and “Docket No. 04–044–1” on the subject line.

- *Agency Web site:* Go to <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/cominst.html> for a form you can use to submit an e-mail comment through the APHIS Web site.

- *Reading Room:* You may read the environmental assessment and any comments that we receive 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.

- *Other Information:* You may view APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register** and related information, including the names of groups and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. James White, BRS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–5940. To obtain a copy of the environmental assessment, contact Ms. Kay Peterson at (301) 734–4885; e-mail:

[Kay.Peterson@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Kay.Peterson@aphis.usda.gov). The environmental assessment is also available on the Internet at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/04\\_12101r\\_ea.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/04_12101r_ea.pdf).

**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 into the United States. The regulations set forth the permit application requirements and the notification procedures for the importation, interstate movement, and release into the environment of a regulated article.

On April 30, 2004, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) received a permit application (APHIS No. 04–121–01r) from ProdiGene, Inc., College Station, TX, for a permit for a confined field test of corn (*Zea mays* L.) plants genetically engineered to express a gene coding for the enzyme (protein) aprotinin. The field test is to be conducted in Frio County, TX. The subject corn plants have been genetically engineered to express an aprotinin protein that is identical to the native bovine (*Bos taurus* L.) protein. The subject corn plants also express the *pat* gene from *Streptomyces viridochromogenes*, a common soil bacterium. The *pat* gene expresses a phosphinothricin acetyltransferase enzyme, which confers tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate, and is useful as a marker gene. The experimental genes were transferred into corn plants through use of the *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* transformation system, and expression of the added genes is controlled in part by the plant pathogen cauliflower mosaic virus. The genetically engineered corn 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 proposed field trial is to produce grain, hybrid seed, and to develop a research line in a nursery. The tests will be conducted through use of a combination of biological and physical containment measures. In addition, the experimental protocols and field plot design, as well as the procedures for termination of the field tests, are designed to ensure that none of the subject corn plants persist in the environment beyond the termination of the experiments.

To provide the public with documentation of APHIS' review and analysis of any potential environmental impacts and plant pest risk associated with the proposed confined field test of the subject corn plants, an environment 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).

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1622n and 7701–7772; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of June 2004.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 04–14432 Filed 6–24–04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 04–053–1]

#### Horse Protection Technology Meeting; Animal Care

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** We are giving notice to horse industry members and other interested persons that Animal Care will host a series of educational meetings to present current information on new technology being explored for use in the enforcement of the Horse Protection Act. This notice provides the agenda for the meetings, information on the location and dates of the first meeting, and general information on subsequent meetings.

**DATES:** The first meeting will be held in Lexington, KY, on June 29, 2004.

Registration will take place from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. The meeting will begin at 8 a.m. and end at noon. Additional meetings are being planned for July through October 2004, for Tennessee, Missouri, and Oregon.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Four Points Sheraton, 1938 Stanton Way, Lexington, KY 40511, (859) 259–1311.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. James Tuck, Management Analyst, PPD, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737; (301) 734–5819.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Animal Care, is announcing a series of educational meetings on the new technology being tested to enforce the Horse Protection Act. The meetings are designed to provide a forum for information dissemination on various topics that are important for the horse industry to understand. This series of meetings will be held in various geographical locations to facilitate attendance by most of our regulated parties that maintain horses.

The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 29, 2004, at the Four Points Sheraton, Lexington, KY. Additional meetings are being planned for July through October 2004, for Tennessee, Missouri, and Oregon.

The series of meetings have been developed to provide current information and ideas on a variety of technological innovations Animal Care is testing to assist in the enforcement of the Horse Protection Act. Each meeting will, with the exception of possible minor modifications, follow the same agenda:

7:30 a.m.–8:30 a.m.—Registration

8:00 a.m.–8:45 a.m.—Welcome

Overview

8:45 a.m.–9:30 a.m.—Thermography

Technology

9:45 a.m.–10:45 a.m.—Sniffer

Technology

10:45 a.m.—Noon—Other Horse Protection Enforcement Issues

Meeting notices are also available on the Animal Care Web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac>.

Please note that these meetings are being held to provide and disseminate information on the technology being tested by Animal Care to enforce the Horse Protection Act and is not an opportunity to submit formal comments on proposed rules or other regulatory initiatives.

Pre-registration is requested by calling (301) 734–7833, or emailing Animal

Care at [ACE@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:ACE@aphis.usda.gov) and providing your name, number of attendees, phone number, email address or other contact address. This information is needed in the event of any changes to the meeting schedule so we may inform registrants in a timely manner. Please pre-register for the meeting by June 28, 2004.

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of June, 2004.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 04–14434 Filed 6–24–04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 04–050–1]

#### National Animal Identification System; Public Meetings

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** We are advising the public that the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, will host a series of listening sessions to provide livestock producers and other stakeholders with the opportunity to offer their comments regarding the Department's implementation of a National Animal Identification System.

**DATES:** The public meetings will be held in Oregon on July 1, 2004; in California on July 10, 2004; in New Mexico on July 16, 2004; in Washington (State) on July 23, 2004; in Colorado on August 10, 2004; in Montana on August 13, 2004; in Florida on August 16, 2004; in Ohio on August 18, 2004; in Iowa on August 26, 2004; in Missouri on August 27, 2004; in Wisconsin on August 30, 2004; and in Minnesota on August 31, 2004. Information regarding the specific time of each session will be made available as soon as arrangements are finalized (see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**).

**ADDRESSES:** The public meetings will be held in the following cities:

- Prineville, OR;
- Stockton, CA;
- Socorro, NM;
- Pasco, WA;
- Greeley, CO;
- Billings, MT;
- Kissimmee, FL;
- Columbus, OH;
- Ames, IA;
- Joplin, MO;