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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2017-0018]

Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Preliminary Pest Risk Assessment for Permit for Release of Genetically Engineered *Citrus tristeza virus*

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has prepared a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) and preliminary pest risk assessment (PRA) that evaluate the potential environmental impacts and plant pest risk associated with the proposed environmental release of genetically engineered *Citrus tristeza virus*. We are making the draft EIS and preliminary PRA available for public review and comment.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before June 25, 2018.

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

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0018>.

- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2017-0018, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0018> or in our reading room, which 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) 799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Alan Pearson, Chief, Plant Pests, and Protectants Branch, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238; (301) 851-3944, email: Alan.Pearson@aphis.usda.gov. To obtain copies of the documents, contact Ms. Cindy Eck at (301) 851-3882, email: cynthia.a.eck@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under the authority of the plant pest provisions of the Plant Protection Act (PPA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*), 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.” The regulations in § 340.2 contain a list of organisms considered to be regulated articles, including all members of groups containing plant viruses, and all insect viruses.

The regulations in § 340.4(a) provide that any person may submit an application for a permit for the introduction of a regulated article to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Paragraph (b) of § 340.4 describes the form that an application for a permit for the environmental release of a regulated article must take and the information that must be included in the application. In addition, paragraph (b) states that applications must be submitted at least 120 days in advance of the proposed release into the environment in order to allow for APHIS review. However, the 120-day review period would be extended if preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) is necessary.

Under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), Federal agencies must examine the potential environmental impacts of proposed Federal actions that may significantly affect the quality of the human environment before those actions can be taken. In accordance with NEPA, regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), U.S. Department of Agriculture regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1b), and APHIS’ NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372), APHIS has considered how to properly examine the potential environmental impacts of issuing permits for the introduction of genetically engineered regulated articles into the United States.

In a notice¹ published in the **Federal Register** on April 10, 2017 (82 FR 17179-17180, Docket No. APHIS-2017-0018), APHIS announced its intention to prepare an EIS in connection with the potential approval of an application from Southern Gardens Citrus Nursery, LLC, seeking a permit for the environmental release of genetically engineered *Citrus tristeza virus* (CTV) throughout Florida. The virus has been genetically engineered to express defensin proteins from spinach as a biological control approach to managing citrus greening disease in the State of Florida. Citrus greening disease, also called huanglongbing, was first detected in the United States in 2005 in Florida, and has since become a devastating disease of citrus in Florida.

This approach for controlling citrus greening disease does not involve a genetically engineered tree. Instead, the gene from spinach that codes for the defensin protein will be delivered to the tree’s circulatory system by the genetically engineered CTV. APHIS decided to prepare an EIS because of the scope of the proposed releases and to better understand the potential environmental impacts and the associated uncertainty related to permit issuance.

APHIS solicited public comment for a period of 30 days ending May 10, 2017, as part of its scoping process to identify issues to address in the draft EIS. We

¹ To view the notice and the comments we received, go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0018>.

received a total of 94 public comments. Issues most frequently cited in public comments on the notice included:

- The potential for the genetically engineered CTV to change over time and the potential for recombination with other viruses;
- Impacts to non-target species;
- The potential for defensin proteins to be found in areas other than the phloem of the plant;
- The potential for the genetically engineered CTV to become more transmissible;
- The impacts to organic citrus growers; and
- Health and safety concerns.

The issues discussed in the draft EIS were developed by considering the public input from the **Federal Register** notice announcing the intention to draft an EIS. APHIS evaluated these issues to analyze the potential environmental impacts of CTV and included a discussion of these issues in the draft EIS.

Therefore, in accordance with NEPA, APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372), and 7 CFR part 340, APHIS is making available the draft EIS, as well as a preliminary pest risk assessment (PRA), for a 45 day public review and comment period. The draft EIS and preliminary PRA are available as indicated under **ADDRESSES** and **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above.

A notice of availability regarding the draft EIS was also published by the Environmental Protection Agency in the **Federal Register** on May 11, 2018 (82 FR 22060, Docket No. ER-FRL-9039-3).

Done in Washington, DC, this 11th day of May 2018.

Kevin Shea,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2018-10490 Filed 5-16-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Notice of Request for Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Rural Business and Cooperative Programs, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; Comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Rural Business and Cooperative Service's intention to request a revision for a currently

approved information collection in support of the program for 7 CFR, part 1951, subpart R, "Rural Development Loan Servicing."

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by July 16, 2018 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lori Hood, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA, STOP 3226, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-3226, Telephone: (202) 720-1400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Intermediary Relending Program.

OMB Number: 0570-0015.

Expiration Date of Approval: September 30, 2018.

Type of Request: Revision of a currently approved information collection and recordkeeping requirements.

Abstract: The regulations contain various requirements for information from the intermediaries and some requirements may cause the intermediary to require information from ultimate recipients. The information requested is vital to RBS for prudent loan servicing, credit decisions, and reasonable program monitoring.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response.

Respondents: Non-profit corporations, public agencies, and cooperatives.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 450.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 8.3.

Estimated Number of Responses: 3,741.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 11,253 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Jeanne Jacobs, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, Support Services Division, at (202) 692-0040.

Comments: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of Business and Cooperative Programs, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of Business and Cooperative Programs 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 appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Jeanne Jacobs, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, Support Services Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0742, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250. 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.

Dated: May 3, 2018.

Bette B. Brand,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 2018-10549 Filed 5-16-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A-570-932]

Certain Steel Threaded Rod From the People's Republic of China: Preliminary Results of the Antidumping Duty Administrative Review and Rescission of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review, in Part; 2016-2017

AGENCY: Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (Commerce) preliminarily determines that Fastenal Canada Ltd. (Fastenal Canada) did not cooperate to the best of its ability and has based its margin on adverse facts available (AFA), and that RMB Fasteners Ltd. and IFI & Morgan Ltd. (RMB/IFI) did not have any reviewable transactions during the POR.

DATES: Applicable May 17, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul Walker, AD/CVD Operations, Office V, Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: 202.482.0413.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On June 7, 2016, Commerce published the *Initiation Notice* of the eighth administrative review of the antidumping duty (AD) order on steel threaded rod (STR) from China.¹ The

¹ See *Initiation of Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Administrative Reviews*, 82 FR 26444, 26448-50 (June 7, 2017) (*Initiation Notice*).