

should discuss the following topics with the STLTG and, as appropriate, formalize agreements in writing:

- a. The nature and type of the collaboration (e.g., provision of financial assistance, consultation, technical support);
- b. The legal and policy frameworks that govern the actions of federal officials and the STLTG;
- c. Objectives for the collaboration and metrics for determining whether the collaboration is successful;
- d. The leadership and points of contact for the federal agency and the STLTG;
- e. Procedures for managing the collaboration and communicating with the STLTG, including mechanisms for obtaining feedback and evaluating the collaboration;
- f. The information the federal agency and the STLTG may and will share with each other and the public, and the processes by which such information will be shared; and
- g. The human, financial, technological, and other resources available to the federal agency and the STLTG.

#### Strengthening Specific Collaborations With STLTGs

11. Federal agencies should develop guidelines to assist personnel involved in specific collaborations in coordinating and managing them. Such guidelines should:
  - a. Identify the official responsible for making significant decisions regarding the collaboration;
  - b. Establish mechanisms to ensure relevant personnel communicate regularly;
  - c. Establish mechanisms to ensure relevant personnel coordinate their communications with STLTGs;
  - d. Specify processes for documenting engagements with STLTGs;
  - e. Specify processes for sharing information with or receiving information from the STLTG, including information that may be sensitive or protected by law; and
  - f. Establish mechanisms for obtaining STLTG feedback and acting on it as appropriate.

12. Federal agencies should ensure that personnel involved in a collaboration with an STLTG receive training as needed on topics including:

- a. The laws and policies governing the actions of the STLTG;
- b. Best practices for engaging with the STLTG;
- c. Guidelines for sharing information with or receiving information from the STLTG, including information that may be sensitive or protected by law; and
- d. Procedures for managing the collaboration and communicating with the STLTG.

13. To understand on-the-ground conditions and available resources and to foster stronger working relationships, federal officials involved in collaborations with STLTGs, should:

- a. Involve personnel in their regional and local offices in collaborations with STLTGs, as appropriate;
- b. Visit the states, localities, tribal nations, and territories with which they collaborate; and
- c. Attend conferences and meetings in which STLTGs participate and otherwise

take advantage of opportunities to interact with STLTGs in person.

14. To facilitate coordination among agency personnel and ensure continuity of operations, federal agencies should develop or maintain repositories of records and information related to specific collaborations with particular STLTGs. Such repositories may include information such as:

- a. Any written agreements between the federal agency and STLTGs (see Paragraph 10);
- b. Federal agency officials' substantive communication as part of collaborations;
- c. The guidelines to assist personnel involved in specific collaborations (see Paragraph 11); and
- d. The points of contact for the STLTG.

#### Evaluating Collaborations With STLTGs

15. Federal agencies should provide opportunities on an ongoing or periodic basis for the following persons and entities to provide feedback on their collaborations with STLTGs:

- a. Agency personnel involved in collaborations with STLTGs;
- b. STLTGs;
- c. Relevant advisory committees and similar entities that include STLTG representatives;
- d. National organizations that represent STLTGs; and
- e. Other persons interested in or affected by the collaboration.

16. Federal agencies should collect information about their collaborations with STLTGs to evaluate performance in achieving the objectives for their collaborations, implement improvements, and engage in strategic planning. Such information should include:

- a. How collaborations develop over time; and
- b. Progress in achieving the performance metrics for collaborations.

17. Federal agencies should have a community of practice to share information about their experiences with and practices for improving collaboration with STLTGs. Public Availability of Information About Collaborations With STLTGs

18. Federal agencies should provide up-to-date information on their websites describing:

- a. Collaborations with STLTGs;
- b. The leadership and points of contact for the federal agency for specific collaborations (see Paragraph 10(d));
- c. The federal agency official(s) with primary responsibility for coordinating and evaluating collaborations with STLTGs (see Paragraph 4);
- d. A general point of contact for STLTG collaborations;
- e. Written agreements regarding collaborations, as appropriate (see Paragraph 10); and
- f. Information about opportunities to provide feedback on collaborations (see Paragraph 15).

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2026-0001]

#### Ball Horticultural Company: Availability of a Petition for a Determination of Nonregulated Status and Draft Plant Pest Risk Assessment for Red Flower Petals African Marigold (*Tagetes erecta*) Event pBALL123-022-BE113.

**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 received a petition from Ball Horticultural Company seeking a determination of nonregulated status for African marigold (*Tagetes erecta*) event pBALL123-022-BE113 which has been developed using genetic engineering to produce red flower petals. We are making the petition and draft plant pest risk assessment available for public review and comment.

**DATES:** We will consider all comments that we receive on or before April 13, 2026.

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

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Enter APHIS-2026-0001 in the Search field. Select the Documents tab, then select the Comment button in the list of documents.

- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2026-0001, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue #AP760, Beltsville, MD 20705.

The petition, draft plant pest risk assessment, and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), or in our reading room, which is located in 1620 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:** Mr. Alan Pearson, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, APHIS, USDA, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, AP100-3-WS-1151, Beltsville, MD 20705; (301) 851-3944; email: [alan.pearson@usda.gov](mailto:alan.pearson@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the authority of the plant pest provisions of

the Plant Protection Act (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 organisms and products are considered “regulated articles.”

Section 340.6(a) of the regulations provides 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. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of § 340.6 describe the form that a petition for a determination of nonregulated status must take and the information that must be included in the petition.

APHIS has received a petition (APHIS Petition Number 25–205–01p) from Ball Horticultural Company seeking a determination of nonregulated status for African marigold (*Tagetes erecta*) event pBALL123–022–BE113, designated as pBALL123, which has been developed using genetic engineering to produce red flower petals. The petition states that the information provided indicates that pBALL123 is unlikely to pose a plant pest risk and therefore should not be regulated under APHIS’ regulations in 7 CFR part 340.

As part of our decision-making process regarding the organism’s regulatory status, APHIS prepared a draft plant pest risk assessment (PPRA) to assess the plant pest risk of the organism. APHIS’ draft PPRA compared the pest risk posed by pBALL123 with that of the nonmodified variety from which it was derived. The draft PPRA concluded that pBALL123 is unlikely to pose an increased plant pest risk compared to the nonmodified African marigold.

Paragraph (d) of § 340.6 provides that APHIS will publish a notice in the **Federal Register** providing 60 days for public comment on petitions for a determination of nonregulated status. In accordance with § 340.6(d), we are publishing this notice to inform the public that APHIS will accept written comments regarding the petition and draft PPRA from interested or affected persons for a period of 60 days from the date of this notice. The petition and draft PPRA are available for public review and comment, and copies are available as indicated under **ADDRESSES**

and from the individual listed under the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this notice. We are particularly interested in receiving comments regarding biological or ecological issues, and we encourage the submission of scientific data, studies, or research to support your comments.

After the comment period closes, APHIS will review and evaluate any information received during the comment period and any other relevant information. Based upon available information, APHIS will respond to the petitioner either approving or denying the petition. APHIS will post its regulatory determination on its website and publish a notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

**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 9th day of February 2026.

**Kelly Moore**

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2025–1067]

#### Soil Culture Solutions, LLC: Availability of a Petition for a Determination of Nonregulated Status and Draft Plant Pest Risk Assessment for HLB-Resistant Carrizo Citrange Rootstock (CarriCea)

**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 received a petition from Soil Culture Solutions, LLC seeking a determination of nonregulated status for CarriCea Carrizo citrange rootstock which has been developed using genetic engineering for improved resistance to citrus greening disease (also known as Huanglongbing or HLB). We are making the petition and draft plant pest risk assessment available for public review and comment.

**DATES:** We will consider all comments that we receive on or before April 13, 2026.

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

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Enter APHIS–2025–1067 in the Search field. Select the Documents tab, then select the Comment button in the list of documents.

- **Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:** Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS–2025–1067, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, #AP760, Beltsville, MD 20705.

The petition, draft plant pest risk assessment, and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), or in our reading room, which is located in 1620 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:** Mr. Alan Pearson, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, APHIS, USDA, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, AP100–3–WS–1151, Beltsville, MD 20705; (301) 851–3944; email: [alan.pearson@usda.gov](mailto:alan.pearson@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the authority of the plant pest provisions of the Plant Protection Act (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 organisms and products are considered “regulated articles.”

Section 340.6(a) of the regulations provides 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. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of § 340.6 describe the form that a petition for a determination of nonregulated status must take and the information that must be included in the petition.

APHIS has received a petition (APHIS Petition Number 25–125–01p) from Soil Culture Solutions, LLC (SoilCea) seeking a determination of nonregulated status for Carrizo citrange rootstock, designated as event CarriCea, which has been developed using genetic engineering for improved resistance to citrus greening disease (also known as