



**Animal and Plant
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News Release

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USDA INVESTIGATING DETECTION OF POSITIVE GENETICALLY ENGINEERED (GE) GLYPHOSATE-RESISTANT WHEAT IN OREGON

WASHINGTON, May 29, 2013 –The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced today that test results of plant samples from an Oregon farm indicate the presence of genetically engineered (GE) glyphosate-resistant wheat plants. Further testing by USDA laboratories indicate the presence of the same GE glyphosate-resistant wheat variety that Monsanto was authorized to field test in 16 states from 1998 to 2005. APHIS launched a formal investigation after being notified by an Oregon State University scientist that initial tests of wheat samples from an Oregon farm indicated the possible presence of GE glyphosate-resistant wheat plants. There are no GE wheat varieties for sale or in commercial production in the United States at this time, as APHIS has not deregulated any GE wheat varieties.

The detection of this wheat variety does not pose a food safety concern. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) completed a voluntary consultation on the safety of food and feed derived from this GE glyphosate-resistant wheat variety in 2004. For the consultation, the developer provided information to FDA to support the safety of this wheat variety. FDA completed the voluntary consultation with no further questions concerning the safety of grain and forage derived from this wheat, meaning that this variety is as safe as non-GE wheat currently on the market.

“We are taking this situation very seriously and have launched a formal investigation,” said Michael Firko, Acting Deputy Administrator for APHIS’ Biotechnology Regulatory Services, “Our first priority is to as quickly as possible determine the circumstances and extent of the situation and how it happened. We are collaborating with state, industry, and trading partners on this situation and are committed to providing timely information about our findings.”

The Plant Protection Act (PPA) provides for substantial penalties for serious infractions. Should APHIS determine that this situation was the result of a violation of the PPA, APHIS has the authority to seek penalties for such a violation including civil penalties up to \$1,000,000 and criminal prosecution, if appropriate.

APHIS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Food and Drug Administration (FDA) work together to regulate the safe use of organisms derived from modern biotechnology. APHIS regulates the introduction (meaning the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release/field testing) of certain

GE organisms that may pose a risk to plant health. EPA regulates pesticides, including plants with plant-incorporated protectants (pesticides intended to be produced and used in a living plant), to ensure public safety. EPA also sets limits on pesticide residues on food and animal feed. FDA has primary responsibility for ensuring the safety of human food and animal feed, as well as safety of all plant-derived foods and feeds.

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