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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99-003-1]

Agritope, Inc.; Receipt of Petition for Determination of Nonregulated Status for Cantaloupe Genetically Engineered for Altered Fruit Ripening

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 received a petition from Agritope, Inc., seeking a determination of nonregulated status for certain cantaloupe lines, which have been genetically engineered for altered fruit ripening. The petition has been submitted in accordance with our regulations concerning the introduction of certain genetically engineered organisms and products. In accordance with those regulations, we are soliciting public comments on whether these cantaloupe lines present a plant pest risk.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before May 17, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Please send an original and three copies of your comments to Docket No. 99-003-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comments refer to Docket No. 99-003-1. A copy of the petition and any comments received may be inspected at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing access to that room to inspect the petition or comments are asked to call in advance

of visiting at (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Sivramiah Shantharam, Biotechnology and Biological Analysis, PPQ, APHIS, Suite 4C03, 4700 River Road Unit 133, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236; (301) 734-4882. To obtain a copy of the petition, contact Ms. Kay Peterson at (301) 734-4885; e-mail: Kay.Peterson@usda.gov.

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."

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

On December 16, 1998, APHIS received a petition (APHIS Petition No. 98-350-01p) from Agritope, Inc., (Agritope) of Portland, OR, requesting a determination of nonregulated status under 7 CFR part 340 for cantaloupe (*Cucumis melo* L.) lines designated as A and B, which have been genetically engineered for altered fruit ripening. The Agritope petition states that the subject cantaloupe lines should not be regulated by APHIS because they do not present a plant pest risk.

As described in the petition, cantaloupe lines A and B have been genetically engineered to contain a SAMase gene derived from *Escherichia coli* bacteriophage T3. The SAMase gene encodes an S-adenosylmethionine hydrolase enzyme capable of degrading and thus reducing S-adenosylmethionine (SAM). The reduction of SAM results in less ethylene production during fruit ripening in cantaloupe lines

A and B and a corresponding increase in the uniformity of ripening in the field.

The subject cantaloupe lines also contain the *npIII* marker gene used in the early stages of plant transformation. Expression of the added genes is controlled in part by gene sequences derived from the plant pathogen *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* and the A. *tumefaciens* method was used to transfer the added genes into the parental inbred cantaloupe lines.

Cantaloupe lines A and B have been considered regulated articles under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because they contain gene sequences from a plant pathogen. The subject cantaloupe lines have been field tested in the United States since 1997 under APHIS permits and notifications. In the process of reviewing the applications for field trials of this cantaloupe, APHIS determined that the trials, which were conducted under conditions of reproductive and physical containment or isolation, would not present a risk of plant pest introduction or dissemination.

In the Federal Plant Pest Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 150aa *et seq.*), "plant pest" is defined as "any living stage of: Any insects, mites, nematodes, slugs, snails, protozoa, or other invertebrate animals, bacteria, fungi, other parasitic plants or reproductive parts thereof, viruses, or any organisms similar to or allied with any of the foregoing, or any infectious substances, which can directly or indirectly injure or cause disease or damage in any plants or parts thereof, or any processed, manufactured or other products of plants." APHIS views this definition very broadly. The definition covers direct or indirect injury, disease, or damage not just to agricultural crops, but also to plants in general, for example, native species, as well as to organisms that may be beneficial to plants, for example, honeybees, rhizobia, etc.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a statement of policy on foods derived from new plant varieties in the **Federal Register** on May 29, 1992 (57 FR 22984-23005). The FDA statement of policy includes a discussion of FDA's authority for ensuring food safety under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), as amended (21 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*), and provides guidance to industry on the

scientific considerations associated with the development of foods derived from new plant varieties, including those plants developed through the techniques of genetic engineering. AgriTope has begun consultation with FDA on the subject cantaloupe lines.

In accordance with § 340.6(d) of the regulations, we are publishing this notice to inform the public that APHIS will accept written comments regarding the Petition for Determination of Nonregulated Status from any interested person for a period of 60 days from the date of this notice. The petition and any comments received are available for public review, and copies of the petition may be ordered from the individual listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

After the comment period closes, APHIS will review the data submitted by the petitioner, all written comments received during the comment period, and any other relevant information. Based on the available information, APHIS will furnish a response to the petitioner, either approving the petition in whole or in part, or denying the petition. APHIS will then publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing the regulatory status of AgriTope's cantaloupe lines A and B and the availability of APHIS' written decision.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 150aa–150jj, 151–167, and 1622n; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.2(c).

Done in Washington, DC, this 10th day of March 1999.

Joan M. Arnoldi,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 99–6345 Filed 3–15–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99–019N]

National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Fresh Produce Subcommittee of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) will hold a public meeting on March 29, 1999, to review and discuss its ongoing work on sprouts.

DATES: The Fresh Produce Subcommittee will meet at 9:00 a.m. on March 29, 1999.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held in Room 1813 Federal Office Building 8, 200 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20240. Persons interested in making a presentation, submitting technical papers, or providing comments should contact Ms. Amelia L. Wright, Advisory Committee Specialist, Scientific Research Oversight Staff, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, Suite 6913 Franklin Court, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250–3700, or by FAX 202–501–7366. Comments and requests may be provided by e-mail to amelia.wright@usda.gov. Submit one original and two copies of comments to the FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket No. 99–019N, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250–3700. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be considered part of the public record and will be available for viewing in the Docket Room between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Persons requiring a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should notify Ms. Wright by March 24, 1999. All meeting rooms will be wheelchair accessible.

This meeting is open to the public; however, space is limited and will be on a first-come first-serve basis. Please register by March 24, 1999, by contacting Ms. Catherine M. DeRoeve, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Food and Drug Administration, by FAX 202–205–4970 or by e-mail cderoeve@bangate.fda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Amelia L. Wright, Advisory Committee Specialist, Scientific Research Oversight Staff, Food Safety and Inspection Service at the address given above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

NACMCF provides advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on the microbiological safety and wholesomeness of food by assessing available data as it relates to the human health consequences of food safety. The Committee also provides guidance to the Departments of Commerce and Defense.

The Fresh Produce Subcommittee will be editing and revising its white paper on sprouts. Dr. Robert L. Buchanan, Senior Science Advisor, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Food and

Drug Administration, will be the subcommittee chair.

Done at Washington, DC, on March 9, 1999.

Thomas J. Billy,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 99–6343 Filed 3–15–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–DM–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A–580–815 & A–580–816]

Certain Cold-Rolled and Corrosion-Resistant Carbon Steel Flat Products From Korea: Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Reviews

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Final results of antidumping duty administrative reviews.

SUMMARY: On September 9, 1998, the Department of Commerce (“the Department”) published the preliminary results of the administrative reviews of the antidumping duty orders on certain cold-rolled and corrosion-resistant carbon steel flat products from Korea. These reviews cover three manufacturers/exporters of the subject merchandise to the United States and the period August 1, 1996, through July 31, 1997. We gave interested parties an opportunity to comment on our preliminary results. Based on our analysis of the comments received, we have changed the results from those presented in the preliminary results of review.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 16, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Juanita Chen (Dongbu), Becky Hagen (POSCO), Cindy Sonmez (Union), Steve Bezirgianian, or James Doyle, AD/CVD Enforcement Group III—Office 7, Import Administration, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230, telephone 202/482–0409 (Chen), 202/482–1102 (Hagen), 202/482–0961 (Sonmez), 202/482–0162 (Bezirgianian), or 202/482–0159 (Doyle), fax 202/482–1388.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Applicable Statute

Unless otherwise indicated, all citations to the Tariff Act of 1930 (“the Act”) are references to the provisions effective January 1, 1995, the effective date of the amendments made to the Act