Questions & Answers
Chinese Import of Corn Hybrids with the Agrisure Viptera™ trait
August 17, 2011

Situation Overview

- Chinese orders for U.S. corn increased this year and recently began to include the 2011 crop. China has not previously represented a substantial portion of the U.S. corn export market.
- The Chinese regulatory system has not approved the Agrisure Viptera™ trait (Event MIR162). This situation has caused concern among some grain traders.
- Syngenta is working with the grain trade, the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) and other key stakeholders to determine how best to address this new situation with minimal disruption to the marketplace.

Overview Questions

What has happened?
Chinese orders for U.S. corn increased in July and include the 2011 crop. China has not previously represented a substantial portion of the U.S. corn export market. According to the International Grains Council, last year the U.S. exported 1.7 million tons of corn to China. Recently, they have increased their orders for U.S. corn. However, the updated U.S. Department of Agriculture forecast estimates that, even with increase, approximately 99 percent of the U.S. corn crop goes to domestic and foreign markets other than China.

Why is this causing concern with some grain traders?
The Chinese regulatory system has not yet approved the Agrisure Viptera trait. Syngenta expects to receive regulatory approval in late March 2012.

While the Agrisure Viptera trait is in compliance with the NCGA and Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) guidelines, Bunge and Consolidated Grain & Barge (CGB) have indicated they will not accept grain containing the Agrisure Viptera trait. We are disappointed with their decision; however, other major grain companies have told Syngenta that they are accepting grain containing the Agrisure Viptera trait.

What is the regulatory history of the Agrisure Viptera trait?
Syngenta received deregulation from the USDA for the Agrisure Viptera trait in April 2010. Since then, the Agrisure Viptera trait has received approval in all key import markets recommended by both the NCGA and BIO. The technology has been approved for cultivation in Canada, Argentina and Brazil, and for import in the key markets of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, Korea and Taiwan. Syngenta applied for Chinese approval of its Agrisure Viptera trait in March 2010 (upon approval in Brazil) and currently expects to receive regulatory clearance in late March 2012.

In the past, technology providers have not delayed commercialization of new traits due to absence of Chinese approvals.

Has this happened to any other traits?
In the past, technology providers have not held up commercialization of new traits due to absence of Chinese approvals. Major trait launches – including MON89034 contained in the Genuity® VT Triple PRO™ and Genuity® SmartStax® trait stacks from Monsanto and Mycogen® SmartStax® trait stacks from Dow AgroSciences – were conducted in 2010 in the absence of Chinese approval because it was not considered a key export market.

In comparison to the millions of acres represented by previous product launches that followed this protocol, total acres of hybrids with the Agrisure Viptera trait represented less than 2 percent of the U.S. corn acres.
Is Syngenta working with China on this issue?
Yes, Syngenta is working diligently with China. Syngenta applied for Chinese approval of the Agrisure Viptera trait in March 2010 (upon approval in Brazil) and currently expects to receive regulatory clearance in late March 2012.

Additional Questions
What should growers do if they have grain containing the Agrisure Viptera trait?
Many major grain handlers have notified Syngenta that they will accept grain with the Agrisure Viptera trait. They request that growers notify them upon delivery that their grain contains the trait.

Is there a number growers can call with questions?
Growers can call 800-319-1360 between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. CST Monday through Saturday with questions, or email Syngenta at Export.Info@syngenta.com. Information can also be found online at AgrisureViptera.com/exportinfo. Syngenta is working with the grain trade to discuss market options for grain with the Agrisure Viptera trait and will continue to develop customer communications.

When was the Agrisure Viptera trait commercialized?
2011 is the first year of commercialization for Syngenta’s Agrisure Viptera trait. Syngenta received deregulation from the USDA for the Agrisure Viptera trait in April 2010.

How many hybrids are involved?
Approximately 70 different hybrids contain the Agrisure Viptera trait, all ending in the hybrid designation of either 3110 or 3111.

Are any other Agrisure® traits affected by Chinese import restrictions?
No other commercially available Agrisure® traits are affected.

Were corn hybrids with the Agrisure Viptera trait sold by GreenLeaf™ or any third parties in 2011?
The Agrisure Viptera trait was offered in a limited number of hybrids through GreenLeaf and third parties.

Will this affect sales of corn hybrids with the Agrisure Viptera trait?
Syngenta intends to sell corn hybrids with the Agrisure Viptera trait for next year and expects approval for the Agrisure Viptera trait in China by late March 2012.

Is this comparable to the StarLink™ situation?
Absolutely not. The Agrisure Viptera trait is fully approved for all uses in the U.S., including approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Also, the trait has approval in all of the key import markets for which the NCGA and BIO recommend before commercial launch.

What is the NCGA?
The NCGA (National Corn Growers Association) represents 35,000 dues-paying corn farmers nationwide and the interests of more than 300,000 growers who contribute through corn checkoff programs in their states. NCGA and its 48 affiliated state associations and checkoff organizations work together to create and increase opportunities for their members and their industry. More information is available at www.ncga.com

What is BIO?
BIO (Biotechnology Industry Organization) is the world’s largest biotechnology organization, providing advocacy, business development and communications services for more than 1,100 members worldwide. BIO members are involved in the research and development of innovative healthcare, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products. More information is available at www.bio.org.

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