

February 23, 2016

Regulatory Analysis and Development  
PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8  
4700 River Road Unit 118  
Riverdale, MD 20737-1238

Submitted Electronically via Federal eRulemaking Portal (<http://www.regulations.gov>)

Re: Docket No. APHIS-2014-0054— Environmental Impact Statement; Introduction of the Products of Biotechnology

Dear Mr. Able:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on APHIS' plans to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS) in connection with potential changes to the regulations regarding biotechnology (7 CFR 340). Our organizations represent a diverse group of scientific societies dedicated to the food, agricultural and natural resources sciences.

We are committed to engaging with APHIS to ensure that we have a scientifically sound U.S. biotechnology regulatory system that fosters public confidence and maintains access to cutting-edge technologies. Innovative breeding techniques, including biotechnology, hold tremendous promise for improving the productivity and sustainability of food, fiber, feed and fuel.

We respectfully request an extension of the comment period by an additional 60 days. We support efforts to evaluate biotechnology regulations to ensure that they are up-to-date with the best available science. However, 30 days is not enough time for our organizations to provide input on an issue of this complexity and importance. Additional time will allow the scientific community an opportunity to help APHIS develop an effective and broadly supported regulatory scheme.

We appreciate your consideration of our request to extend the comment period. Our societies look forward to engaging with APHIS during the policy process and providing constructive, science-based input on biotechnology policy proposals.

Sincerely,

Crop Science Society of America  
The American Phytopathological Society  
...and many others