



STATEMENT

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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STATEMENT BY DR. RON DEHAVEN REGARDING APHIS HOLD ON CLEARFIELD CL131 LONG-GRAIN RICE SEED

March 5, 2007

“The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is taking action to prevent the planting and distribution of a long-grain rice seed known as Clearfield CL131 because testing by a private company has revealed the possible presence of trace levels of genetic material not yet approved for commercialization.

“APHIS began issuing emergency action notifications (EANs) yesterday, March 4, to inform distributors that this seed, scheduled for planting this spring, must be held until APHIS can verify and identify the presence of additional genetic material. APHIS directed distributors to begin notifying producers yesterday. Additional EANs are being issued to affected producers as they are identified.

“APHIS is taking this action because the genetic material detected in Clearfield CL131 seed might be regulated, in which case it would not be approved for commercial use. The issuance of EANs will keep any additional CL131 seed from being planted until a determination can be made concerning the identity of this genetic material and the appropriate risk assessment can be conducted. USDA, through its own testing, is in the process of confirming the results reported by BASF Corporation.

“This action is prompted by test results informally reported to APHIS by Horizon Ag last Wednesday evening, with written results being provided to APHIS by BASF Corporation and Horizon Ag on Thursday. Clearfield is a registered trademark of BASF. Clearfield CL131 was not developed as a genetically engineered product. Horizon Ag is licensed by BASF Corporation to market this seed. Both companies are fully cooperating with APHIS.

“This is not the first detection of genetically engineered material in Clearfield CL131 rice seed. Last week, APHIS announced that trace levels of a previously deregulated genetically engineered trait had been identified in Clearfield CL131.

“Because of the possibility that the genetic material in question is regulated, APHIS is conducting an investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the release and whether any violations of USDA regulations occurred.”

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