AMS has reviewed the petitions and data submitted, gathered information from government and industry resources and is proposing to revise the standards based on the recommended changes.

A 60 day comment period is provided for interested persons to comment on changes to the standards.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621–1627.

Dated: February 26, 1999.

Robert C. Keeney,

Deputy Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

[FR Doc. 99–5356 Filed 3–3–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[S&T99–001]

Plant Variety Protection Advisory Board; Open Meeting

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the Plant Variety Protection Advisory Board.

DATES: March 24, 1999, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., open to the public.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the National Agricultural Library Building, Conference Room 1400 (Fourteenth Floor), Beltsville, Maryland.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alan A. Atchley, Acting Commissioner, Plant Variety Protection Office, Room 500, National Agricultural Library Building, Beltsville, Maryland 20705 (301/504–5518).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to the provisions of section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub.L. 92–463), this notice is given concerning a Plant Variety Protection Advisory Board meeting. The Board is established pursuant to the Plant Variety Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 2321, *et seq.*). The proposed agenda for the meeting will include discussions of: (1) a proposal to increase user fees for the Plant Variety Protection Office, (2) the handling of Plant Variety Protection Office decisions which are being protested by applicants, (3) long term strategic planning for efficient functioning of the Plant Variety Protection Office, and (4) and other related topics. Written comments may be submitted to the contact person listed above before or after the meeting.

Dated: February 26, 1999.

Kenneth C. Clayton,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 99–5357 Filed 3–3–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99–002–1]

University of Saskatchewan; Receipt of Petition for Determination of Nonregulated Status for Flax Genetically Engineered for Tolerance to Soil Residues of Sulfonylurea Herbicides

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 the University of Saskatchewan seeking a determination of nonregulated status for a flax line designated as CDC Triffid, which has been genetically engineered for tolerance to residues of sulfonylurea herbicides in soil. 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 this flax line presents a plant pest risk.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before May 3, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Please send an original and three copies of your comments to Docket No. 99–002–1, 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. 99–002–1. 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. James White, Biotechnology and Biological Analysis, PPQ, APHIS, Suite 5B05, 4700 River Road, Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–5940. 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 1, 1998, APHIS received a petition (APHIS Petition No. 98–335–01p) from the Crop Development Centre (CDC) of the University of Saskatchewan (CDC/Saskatchewan) of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada, requesting a determination of nonregulated status under 7 CFR part 340 for a flax (*Linum usitatissimum* L.) line designated as CDC Triffid, which has been genetically engineered for tolerance to residues of sulfonylurea herbicides in soil. The CDC Triffid flax line was developed for use as a rotational crop alternative with cereals such as wheat and barley on soils containing residues of sulfonylurea herbicides. The CDC/Saskatchewan petition states that the subject flax line should not be regulated by APHIS because it does not present a plant pest risk.

As described in the petition, the CDC Triffid flax line has been genetically engineered to contain a modified acetolactate synthase (*als*) gene derived from *Arabidopsis thaliana*. The *als* gene encodes a modified acetolactate synthase enzyme that extends to root tissues the reported natural ability of flax to withstand sulfonylurea herbicides. The subject flax line also contains and expresses the nopaline synthase (*nos*) gene derived from *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* and the neomycin phosphotransferase-II (*nptII*) gene derived from *Escherchia coli*. The *nos* and *nptII* genes are used as selectable markers during the plant

transformation process. Expression of the added genes is controlled in part by gene sequences from the plant pathogen *A. tumefaciens*, and the *A. tumefaciens* method was used to transfer the added genes into the parental Norlin commercial flax variety.

The CDC Triffid flax line has been considered a regulated article under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because it contains gene sequences from a plant pathogen. The subject flax line was extensively field tested under confined conditions in Canada in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta between 1989 and 1995, and grown under unconfined conditions in Canada since 1996. Field test data and site monitoring indicate no risk of plant pest introduction or dissemination and no negative environmental impacts from the field testing or unconfined release of this flax line. The CDC Triffid flax line was cleared for variety registration, unrestricted environmental release, and use as animal feed in 1996 by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and Health Canada granted human food approval in 1998.

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 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for the regulation of pesticides under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.*). FIFRA requires that all pesticides, including herbicides, be registered prior to distribution or sale, unless exempt by EPA regulation. In cases in which genetically modified plants allow for a new use of an herbicide or involve a different use pattern for the herbicide, EPA must approve the new or different use. When the use of the herbicide on the genetically modified plant would result in an increase in the residues of the herbicide in a food or feed crop for which the herbicide is currently registered, or in new residues in a crop for which the herbicide is not currently registered, establishment of a new tolerance or a revision of the existing tolerance would be required. Residue tolerances for pesticides are established by EPA under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), as amended (21 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) enforces tolerances set by EPA under the FFDCA. Sulfonylurea herbicides are not registered for use on flax in either the United States or Canada.

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 FFDCA, 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. CDC/Saskatchewan completed consultation with FDA in 1998 on the subject flax line.

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 the CDC/Saskatchewan CDC Triffid flax line 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 26th day of February 1999.

Joan M. Arnoldi,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 99–5360 Filed 3–3–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Maryland Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, that a meeting of the Maryland Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene at 10:00 a.m. and adjourn at 2:00 p.m. on March 24, 1999, at the Montgomery County Human Relations Commission, 164 Rollins Avenue, The Blue Conference Room, Rockville, Maryland 20852. The purpose of the meeting is to update project activity and orient the newly appointed members.

Persons desiring additional information, or planning a presentation to the Committee, should contact Ki-Taek Chun, Director of the Eastern Regional Office, 202–376–7533 (TDD 202–376–8116). Hearing-impaired persons who will attend the meeting and require the services of a sign language interpreter should contact the Regional Office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

The meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Commission.

Dated at Washington, DC, February 23, 1999.

Carol-Lee Hurley,

Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.

[FR Doc. 99–5353 Filed 3–3–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6335–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A–583–832]

Notice of Postponement of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less Than Fair Value: Dynamic Random Access Memory Semiconductors of One Megabit and Above (DRAMs) From Taiwan

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

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 4, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Futtner or Alexander Amdur,