

*AgBiotech Planning Committee  
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Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 220-0608*

August 8, 2003

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The AgBiotech Planning Committee (ABPC) is a coalition of agriculture producers, processors, merchandisers, food processors, manufacturers and biotechnology providers that support the continued availability and marketability of agriculture and food biotechnology. Members of the ABPC reiterate our organizations' view that regulatory analyses of biotechnology food, feed and agriculture products be based on sound, scientific safety considerations.

International trading rules and standards that provide for science-based risk assessment of products for human health or the environment are fundamental to accessing global export markets. We encourage the United States to provide strong leadership in important international forums, such as Codex Alimentarius and the Biosafety Protocol, supporting science-based standards for risk assessment. We applaud recently approved Codex principles and guidelines for the conduct of food safety assessment for foods derived from biotechnology.

ABPC organizations stress the importance of maintaining U.S. science-based regulatory policies. We strongly support the U.S. coordinated framework for the review of new plant varieties as a scientifically defensible and appropriate mechanism for the oversight of crops produced using biotechnology.

Inclusion of non-scientific considerations would compromise the integrity of the current regulatory system and weaken U.S. arguments against technical and non-tariff trade barriers. Such considerations should not be part of the regulatory system. Non-scientific factors are most appropriately addressed in the marketplace.

Biotechnology is a promising tool for agriculture and consumers and has potential for alleviating world hunger, fostering more sustainable production practices, improving quality and addressing natural resource concerns. Rigorous scientific review of biotechnology products is necessary. Affirmative safety findings contribute toward consumer confidence and acceptance and help ensure that access to new biotechnology products is not limited by unfounded restrictions.

Thank you for your attention to the important policy issues surrounding agriculture and food biotechnology. We appreciate the opportunity to continue discussions with your Administration on these issues.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Seed Trade Association  
American Soybean Association  
Biotechnology Industry Organization  
Corn Refiners Association  
CropLife America  
Food Marketing Institute  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Food Processors Association  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
North American Millers Association  
USA Rice Federation  
Wheat Export Trade Education Committee