

Questions and Answers: Monsanto Drought Tolerant Corn— MON 87460 Determination of Nonregulated Status

Q. What is the intended purpose of this drought tolerant corn?

A. Monsanto developed MON 87460 corn expecting to reduce yield loss under water-limited, or drought, conditions by minimizing the effect of water deficiency on kernel (seed) formation and development.

Q. Has this corn been reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for food and feed safety?

A. Yes. The Monsanto Company completed the consultation process with FDA for the food and feed safety assessment on December 10, 2010. This included submission of a safety and nutritional assessment of food and feed derived from MON 87460.

Q. Is this corn variety intended for human consumption?

A. Yes. This corn has completed FDA consultation and is appropriate for use in the many food products that are produced using field corn.

Q. Has the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) previously granted nonregulated status for genetically engineered (GE) organisms with a drought-tolerant trait?

A. This is APHIS' first determination of nonregulated status for a GE organism containing an introduced drought tolerant trait.

Q. Why wasn't an environmental impact statement (EIS) used to evaluate this corn's environmental risk?

A. APHIS conducted both a plant pest risk assessment and environmental assessment on MON 87460

corn. The environmental assessment conducted by APHIS did not identify any significant environmental impacts that would require the agency to conduct an EIS. Due to the lack of plant pest risk from the inserted genetic material including the lack of atypical responses to disease or plant pests in the field, APHIS concluded that MON 87460 corn is unlikely to pose a plant pest risk.

Q. How does this corn variety differ from traditional or organic corn?

A. MON 87460 has been engineered to produce a new protein which protects the plant at the cellular level from damage under certain environmental stresses such as periods of drought. Certain varieties of non-GE corn have also been developed through conventional breeding to tolerate periods of drought stress, although the cellular mechanisms are likely different than those in MON 87460.

Q. Following APHIS' determination, will the agency have any continued oversight over the product?

A. Following APHIS' determination of nonregulated status, MON 87460 and varieties derived from MON 87460 through conventional breeding may be used freely in commercial channels. APHIS does not have regulatory authority under 7 CFR part 340 and does not track marketing practices of a crop after the agency makes a determination of nonregulated status.

Q. In what regions of the U.S. are growers most likely to adopt this corn?

A. Growers are expected to adopt MON 87460 in regions suitable for corn production that are most prone to frequent drought stress. In the U.S., the major area of adoption is likely to be the western dryland region of the Corn Belt.

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