

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WEBINARS ON APHIS  
BIOTECHNOLOGY REGULATION

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TUESDAY  
MAY 12, 2015

+ + + + +

The webinar commenced at 5:00 p.m.  
Eastern Daylight Time.

PRESENT

RICHARD GEORGE, Communications Branch Chief,  
Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS)  
NEIL E. HOFFMAN, Science Advisor, Office of the  
Deputy Administrator, BRS

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T-A-B-L-E O-F C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

Opening remarks  
Dick George ..... 3  
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Public Comment  
Nina Fedoroff ..... 8  
Patty Lovera ..... 10  
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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 5:02 p.m.

3 MR. GEORGE: Good evening and welcome  
4 to our public engagement webinar on USDA  
5 Biotechnology Regulation. My name is Dick George.  
6 I'm the Communications Branch Chief of  
7 Biotechnology Regulatory Services, or BRS. We're  
8 part of APHIS, the Animal and Plant Health  
9 Inspection Service, an agency of the U.S.  
10 Department of Agriculture.

11 Joining me is Dr. Neil Hoffman, Science  
12 Advisor in BRS's Office of the Deputy  
13 Administrator.

14 DR. HOFFMAN: Our purpose today is to  
15 receive your comments on several subject areas  
16 regarding the regulation of biotechnology by  
17 APHIS. We value your input and are pleased that  
18 you joined us today, either to make a public comment  
19 to listen to the comments of others. Background  
20 information is available at our web site at  
21 [www.aphis.usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings).

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1           In addition to tonight's webinar, there  
2 will be one more on Wednesday, May 20th from 4:00  
3 to 7:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

4           MR. GEORGE: If you prefer to make a  
5 written comment instead of a spoken one, you can  
6 do so by going to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) through June  
7 22nd. Enter APHIS-2015-0036 in the search box and  
8 this will take you to the pages where you can make  
9 a comment. You can go to [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov) any time  
10 up until June 22nd to leave a written public  
11 comment, or you can make a spoken comment here at  
12 our meeting, which will go until 8:00 p.m. Eastern  
13 Time.

14           Whether spoken or written, your comment  
15 will become part of the public record. A  
16 transcript of your spoken comments will be posted  
17 to the website in the next three weeks.

18           Today we're here to listen and to  
19 receive your input only, not to answer questions  
20 about biotechnology regulations.

21           DR. HOFFMAN: APHIS is considering

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1 amending its current regulation and seeks your  
2 input on the following questions.

3 One, should APHIS regulate based on the  
4 characteristics of biotechnology products and the  
5 potential risks that they may pose or by the process  
6 by which they were created? In either case, what  
7 criteria should be used to determine what APHIS  
8 regulates? Are there products and processes APHIS  
9 should not regulate?

10 MR. GEORGE: Two, the Plant Protection  
11 Act gives APHIS the authority to protect plant  
12 health through regulatory programs. APHIS has  
13 implemented the Plant Pest Authority as part of  
14 their biotechnology regulations. Should APHIS  
15 add noxious weed provisions to their biotechnology  
16 regulations? And if so, how? What protection  
17 goals should APHIS consider?

18 DR. HOFFMAN: Three. Are there legal  
19 authorities given to USDA, outside the Plant  
20 Protection Act, that APHIS should examine to  
21 regulate or oversee the products of biotechnology?

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1 What are they and how would they be used?

2 Four. What non-regulatory solutions  
3 or policy alternatives could or should be  
4 considered to complement APHIS' regulatory  
5 program?

6 MR. GEORGE: We have asked commenters  
7 to pre-register to comment. We will ask those  
8 commenters to go first. Each will have up to seven  
9 minutes to speak. After all that have signed up  
10 to speak have done so, we will ask if others on the  
11 call would care to comment and give you the same  
12 opportunity. If we reach a point where all who  
13 choose to comment have commented and there's still  
14 time, we will invite those who have already  
15 commented to come back and make additional  
16 comments, if they care to.

17 With that, we will begin to take your  
18 comments. We ask that you please say your name,  
19 spell your name, and if you represent an  
20 organization, please let us know that so that our  
21 court reporter can capture this information

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1 correctly.

2 Our first registered comment today is  
3 Randy Gordon. So, Randy Gordon, if you're on the  
4 call at this point, if you'd please press one, then  
5 zero on your telephone keypad, and we'll see that  
6 and you'll have the opportunity to make the first  
7 comment today.

8 AUTOMATED PHONE OPERATOR: This  
9 conference is now in question and answer mode. To  
10 alert the speaker that you have a question, press  
11 one, then zero.

12 MR. GEORGE: Hello, Randy, are you  
13 there?

14 (No response.)

15 MR. GEORGE: Okay. Not hearing from  
16 Randy, we'll go to the second comment, who is Nina  
17 Fedoroff. Nina, if you're there, press one, then  
18 zero. We'll be glad to take your comment. Nina  
19 Fedoroff. One, then zero.

20 (No response.)

21 MR. GEORGE: Okay. We'll go to -- the

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1 next is Patty Lovera.

2 AUTOMATED PHONE OPERATOR: You have  
3 one question remaining.

4 MR. GEORGE: Hello?

5 (Simultaneous speaking.)

6 MR. GEORGE: Hello. Please --

7 MS. FEDOROFF: I'm sorry. This is  
8 Nina Fedoroff. Are you hearing me?

9 MR. GEORGE: Yes, we are.

10 MS. FEDOROFF: Okay. I will be  
11 submitting written comments, but the most  
12 important point I would like to make is that there  
13 is absolutely no reason to regulate transgenic  
14 organisms based on the process.

15 (Telephonic interference.)

16 MS. FEDOROFF: It is important to move  
17 to a product-based regulatory scheme and away from  
18 a process-based one. Am I even comprehensible?

19 MR. GEORGE: Yes, your call is breaking  
20 up a little bit. Are you calling in on our  
21 telephone AT&T conference line?

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1 MS. FEDOROFF: Yes, I am.

2 MR. GEORGE: Okay.

3 MS. FEDOROFF: I will submit written  
4 comments, but I would like to get the point across  
5 that --

6 (Inaudible due to audio quality.)

7 MS. FEDOROFF: It's important to  
8 regulate the product characteristics in the  
9 environment in which it will be used.

10 MR. GEORGE: Are you on your cell  
11 phone?

12 MS. FEDOROFF: No, I'm not. I'm on a  
13 land line.

14 MR. GEORGE: You're on a land line?  
15 Okay. I apologize. I don't know why it's  
16 breaking up as it is. I think we got the gist of  
17 what you're saying. If you'd like to repeat it,  
18 we'd be happy to hear it again, but we're a losing  
19 a word here or there.

20 MS. FEDOROFF: Well, I will submit  
21 written comments.

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1 MR. GEORGE: Okay. Thank you so much.  
2 And I apologize for the glitch.

3 MS. FEDOROFF: Okay. Am I supposed to  
4 do something?

5 MR. GEORGE: No, I think that's it. If  
6 you'd like to share more, you're certainly welcome  
7 to.

8 (No response.)

9 MR. GEORGE: Okay. Hearing none --  
10 Nina's typing us a note on the FoodSHIELD. Let's  
11 give her a second to do that.

12 (Pause.)

13 MR. GEORGE: Okay. We'll move on to  
14 our next commenter. I'm going down the list of  
15 those who've pre-registered. So we already  
16 mentioned Randy Gordon. Randy, if you're on the  
17 call, if you've just come on, please press one, then  
18 zero. We'll be glad to take your comment.

19 (No response.)

20 MR. GEORGE: We just spoke with Nina.  
21 Patty Lovera, if you're there, would you please

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1 press one and then zero so that we can take your  
2 comment.

3 AUTOMATED PHONE OPERATOR: You have  
4 one question remaining.

5 MS. LOVERA: Hi, this is Patty. Can  
6 you hear me?

7 MR. GEORGE: Yes, we sure can. Thanks  
8 so much.

9 MS. LOVERA: Okay. Hi, my name is  
10 Patty, P-A-T-T-Y, Lovera, L-O-V-E-R-A. And I'm  
11 with Food & Water Watch. We're a consumer advocacy  
12 group. I think I'm having the same delay that the  
13 last speaker was having, so I may be brief.

14 MR. GEORGE: No, you sound great. We  
15 hear you very well.

16 MS. LOVERA: Oh, okay. My end there's  
17 some kind of echo. Okay. So, Food & Water Watch  
18 is glad to see the USDA is foregoing finalizing the  
19 2008 rule, and we hope that this provides an  
20 opportunity to strengthen the regulations and  
21 oversights of GE crops. We think that lack of

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1 oversight has led to numerous problems, not the  
2 least of which is contamination of organic and  
3 non-GE crops with unwanted GE content.

4 So we think that the new regulatory  
5 system has to include contamination prevention  
6 measures in addition to some mechanisms that  
7 compensate those to our farms, like contamination  
8 events. And key piece of that is going to be  
9 monitoring field trials so that we don't have  
10 repeats of incidents that have already happened  
11 with stray GE crops finding their way to places  
12 where they're not supposed to be and having  
13 dramatic economic consequences. And there are  
14 some other things I'll mention in a second.

15 In terms of the specific questions  
16 you're asking, my colleague Genna Reed contributed  
17 some comments at the last session on noxious weed  
18 authority, so I'm not going to repeat those. But  
19 I will say that in terms of the last question and,  
20 you know, other policy approaches that we think  
21 need to be included in this update, we think that

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1 the focus that the Agency has been trying to have  
2 on coexistence is overdue and it's an important  
3 conversation, but it needs to be a much more  
4 aggressive piece of this -- redoing the  
5 regulations.

6 We did attend the meeting in March about  
7 coexistence and we were disappointed in that  
8 meeting. And I explained more thoroughly the  
9 reasons why in the comments for that comment  
10 period. But one thing that came out of that  
11 meeting was the idea of potentially doing conflict  
12 analysis. And at the document given out at the  
13 public meeting on coexistence conflict analysis  
14 was listed as something that the Agency could do  
15 prior to approval. We think it's something they  
16 should do. We think it's something you should do  
17 prior to the approval and if there is a high  
18 potential for a conflict for contamination to  
19 happen, that should be reason enough to not grant  
20 the non-regulated status. It should be reason  
21 enough to keep something off the market.

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1           So the conflict analysis in coexistence  
2           conversation has been happening as if  
3           contamination is an abstract concept and we're not  
4           sure it's happening. And when we talk to farmers,  
5           we hear that it is happening. And in late 2013 in  
6           an effort to fill this data gap about contamination  
7           and what it costs to try to prevent contamination  
8           Food and Water Watch and the Organic Farmers'  
9           Agency for Relationship Marketing gathered  
10          information from organic producers and co-op  
11          managers on what contamination is costing them and  
12          what trying to prevent it is costing them.

13                 So we sent that survey to 1,500 farmers  
14          and a 19 percent response rate. There was a lot  
15          of response. People are very motivated on this  
16          issue because they're dealing with it every day.  
17          So we have submitted that to the AC21 comment  
18          dossier coexistence following their meeting.  
19          We're happy to share that survey with anybody who  
20          wants it, but a just couple highlights from what  
21          we found.

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1           The preventative measures that organic  
2 growers are taking to try to protect themselves  
3 from contamination costs them significant sums of  
4 money every year. Buffers, planting, testing.  
5 They reported a median cost of about \$6,500 every  
6 year that they could measure. One out of three  
7 responding farmers have already dealt with  
8 contamination, and of those about one-third or half  
9 of them had some products rejected by a buyer for  
10 contamination. They reported a median cost of  
11 \$4,500. One farmer in Illinois reported that most  
12 of what he grew in 2013 was rejected for the organic  
13 food market and that resulted in a \$3.50 loss per  
14 bushel on 105,000 contracted bushels. And we have  
15 example after example in that survey, including  
16 that some have chosen avoid certain markets just  
17 because they're afraid contamination means they  
18 can't access those markets, and they're not even  
19 trying to sell into certain markets where they can  
20 get a premium.

21           So, we think that the contamination

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1 issue has to be part of this discussion as you  
2 update these regs and we would urge you -- we're  
3 going to submit more thorough written comments and  
4 we just really urge you to collect more data on the  
5 contamination issue, consult the data that is  
6 already out there and make mandatory conflict  
7 assessment part of the procedure. So, thanks.

8 MR. GEORGE: Thank you, Patty.

9 Okay. So the next person we have  
10 signed up is Kristina Hubbard. I know Kristina  
11 spoke last week, but if you're there and would like  
12 to comment more, please press one, then zero.  
13 We'll be glad to take your comment.

14 (No response.)

15 MR. GEORGE: Not hearing any response,  
16 we'll go on to Cliff Love. Is Cliff Love on the  
17 call, please?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. GEORGE: No? The next registered  
20 commenter is Brian Lehmann, who also spoke last  
21 week, but would be welcome to elaborate on your

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1           comments and comment again if you care to, if you're  
2           on the call, Brian.

3                           (No response.)

4           MR. GEORGE:   Not hearing any response,  
5           we'll go --

6           PARTICIPANT:   David Kendra says that  
7           they can't hear our moderator.

8           MR. GEORGE:    They can't hear me?  
9           Okay.   That's not good.

10                          Okay.   So can they hear if I speak --

11           PARTICIPANT:   No, someone else said  
12           they can hear you.   One can't hear you; one can.

13           MR. GEORGE:    Some people --

14           PARTICIPANT:   Two others can hear you.

15           MR. GEORGE:    Okay.

16           PARTICIPANT:   Okay.   I'll ask if he  
17           typed the comments.

18           MR. GEORGE:    Okay.

19           PARTICIPANT:   Sorry.

20           MR. GEORGE:    That's okay.   I'll speak  
21           up so hopefully everyone will be able to hear.   So

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1 if any of the following folks are on the call,  
2 please press one, then zero. We'll be happy to  
3 take your comment. That's Cliff Love, Brian  
4 Lehmann, Josh Wilson, if you're on the call.

5 (No response.)

6 MR. GEORGE: Any of those folks on the  
7 call, please press one and then zero.

8 (No response.)

9 MR. GEORGE: No? Okay. And then Zea  
10 Sonnabend, if you're on the call, please press one,  
11 then zero. Zea Sonnabend. Please forgive me if  
12 I'm mispronouncing your name.

13 AUTOMATED PHONE OPERATOR: You have  
14 one question remaining.

15 MS. SONNABEND: Hello?

16 MR. GEORGE: Hello. Zea?

17 MS. SONNABEND: Yes, this is Zea  
18 Sonnabend. It is Z-E-A, S-O-N-N-A-B-E-N-D. I'm  
19 with California Certified Organic Farmers, or  
20 CCOS.

21 I also attended the coexistence

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1 workshop in March was quite disappointed, but I do  
2 appreciate this effort to withdraw the 2008  
3 proposal and hopefully replace it with something  
4 that takes more stakeholder concerns into  
5 consideration.

6           You know, we are plagued in the  
7 non-governmental community with having a hard time  
8 understanding how the government works, and so this  
9 very reductionist thinking of one agency only  
10 regulates it from a plant pest point of view and  
11 another agency might only look at trade issues and  
12 another agency might only look at human health  
13 issues makes it very confusing for those of us who  
14 feel that organic farmers should be protected and  
15 have the right to farm however they would like to  
16 without being trespassed by genetically modified  
17 genes coming in through the pollen, the seed drift  
18 and things like that.

19           So we would like it -- and I realize this  
20 is getting at your last question first, but you need  
21 to work with the other agencies outside of APHIS

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1 and outside of the USDA to have a more comprehensive  
2 regulatory scheme, and this regulatory scheme  
3 should be mandatory for -- have components in it  
4 that are mandatory for users and promulgators of  
5 biotech crops as it is for organic farmers who have  
6 to go to a great deal of effort to keep the GMO crops  
7 out.

8 I am a member of the National Organic  
9 Standards Board, a FACA board that advises the  
10 USDA. We have written a letter several years go  
11 now to Secretary Vilsack that stated the  
12 responsibility for maintaining organic integrity  
13 is a shared responsibility. Organic farmers do a  
14 lot and we have a lot of documents about prevention  
15 strategy guidances against GMOs for organic and the  
16 like and we like conventional farmers to match that  
17 and keep their genes on their side of their fence  
18 lines.

19 We realize that the Plant Protection  
20 Act gives APHIS very limited authority in this  
21 regard, but it just makes no sense to us that for

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1 instance a Roundup Ready biotech crop would only  
2 be reviewed in a very narrow framework of how it  
3 works against the pests without being reviewed on  
4 how the increase usage of Roundup that goes along  
5 with it will affect our environment, will affect  
6 human health and will affect the weeds that are now  
7 resistant to it. It should be comprehensive  
8 review and thorough review on all aspects of the  
9 environmental impact.

10 So we will be submitting written  
11 comments from CCOS also, but I do stress upon you  
12 to enable the government agencies to work together  
13 to try and have real regulatory oversight instead  
14 of what appears to us to be just a rubber stamp  
15 approval at this point. Thank you.

16 MR. GEORGE: Thank you, Zea.

17 So that's the last commenter on our list  
18 that is preregistered. We did print this list out  
19 about a half hour before we went on the air, as it  
20 were. So if there's anyone else who has registered  
21 since then who would like to make a comment, please

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1 press one and then zero on your telephone keypad  
2 and we'll see that. We'd be glad to take your call.

3 (No response.)

4 MR. GEORGE: So, seeing none, we'll  
5 open it to anyone who would like to -- anybody  
6 that's on the call that would like to comment,  
7 please press one, then zero. We shall see that and  
8 be glad to take your call.

9 (No response.)

10 MR. GEORGE: So we'll pause for just a  
11 moment or two to let folks think about it, if they  
12 care to. And please, if you'd like to make a  
13 comment, feel free to do so. Press one and then  
14 zero.

15 (Pause.)

16 MR. GEORGE: So not seeing any  
17 response, I would invite you again -- we're going  
18 to take a little break. We'll just break away for  
19 a few minutes. We'll come back every few minutes  
20 to invite your comments. In the meantime while  
21 we're off camera, as it were, if you press one and

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1 zero, we'll see it. We'll come right back on to  
2 take your comments. So we'll take a little break  
3 and we'll be back in three or four minutes. Thanks  
4 so much.

5 AUTOMATED PHONE OPERATOR: All  
6 participants are now in interactive talk mode.

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
8 went off the record at 5:25 p.m. and resumed at 5:30  
9 p.m.)

10 DR. HOFFMAN: I'm Neil Hoffman. I'm  
11 here with Dick George and we're here to take your  
12 comments on the Biotech 340 regulations. If  
13 anyone wants to speak, please press one and then  
14 zero on your telephone keypad.

15 Nina Fedoroff, if you wanted to try to  
16 deliver the rest of your message, we'd be happy to  
17 see if the phone lines are working any better now.  
18 All the other callers we could hear just fine. So  
19 if you're interested in trying again, we'd be happy  
20 to listen.

21 And anyone else who wants to speak, just

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1 press one and then zero on your telephone keypad.

2 (No response.)

3 DR. HOFFMAN: Okay. We're not getting  
4 any takers. We'll stay on just a little bit  
5 longer.

6 (No response.)

7 DR. HOFFMAN: Okay. So we will take a  
8 break again. During this break if you press one,  
9 then zero on your keypad, we'll know to come back  
10 on and we'll take your comments.

11 MR. GEORGE: See you in a few minutes.

12 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
13 went off the record at 5:32 p.m. and resumed at 5:37  
14 p.m.)

15 MR. GEORGE: And we're back. We're  
16 understanding that we have someone who would like  
17 to make a comment. And so if you would go ahead  
18 and make a comment, we're going to open your mic.

19 AUTOMATED PHONE OPERATOR: You have  
20 one question remaining.

21 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes, can you hear me?

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1 MR. GEORGE: We sure can. Please --

2 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. My name is Dave  
3 Campbell, a certified organic farmer here in  
4 Northern Illinois. We've been certified since  
5 '91.

6 MR. GEORGE: Dave, would you please  
7 just spell your name for us? Even though it  
8 doesn't sound that complicated, we want to make  
9 sure we get it right.

10 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. It's  
11 C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L.

12 MR. GEORGE: Great. Just go ahead.

13  
14 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. Well, the first  
15 comment was that I had four loads of organic corn  
16 rejected for the food grade market back -- I think  
17 it was on March 10th. And that happened to me I  
18 think at the same time, the same day, or one of the  
19 days of the coexistence meeting. And I think that  
20 was in North Carolina. And one of the comments  
21 that came up from someone who was in attendance at

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1 the meeting was that, well, organic farmers are  
2 getting a premium. Well, yes, maybe we get a  
3 premium if it's good enough, but that premium comes  
4 at a cost. And I think that's something that  
5 people don't really understand. When  
6 we're raising these food grade crops for the  
7 organic market the premium means typically, a kind  
8 of a variety that may not yield as well, it requires  
9 more extensive weed control, maybe delayed  
10 planting so that weeds don't overtake the crops.  
11 And so there's a number of issues that play into  
12 the food grade market that even though it may be  
13 a premium as far as price goes, there's not  
14 necessarily a premium in total income. And a lot  
15 of farmers, organic farmers will just forget these  
16 food grade crops just for that very reason, that  
17 it's sometimes not worth the hassle.

18 So when it comes to genetic  
19 trespassing, the premium I had coming was denied  
20 due to someone else's product that ran onto their  
21 property. Now if it was a situation where I had

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1 some technology that was landing on my neighbor's  
2 fields denying them a price for their crops, my  
3 guess is that there would be some kind of lawsuit  
4 or repercussions against me. And so, it's not a  
5 level playing field. We're already sacrificing  
6 the 30-foot border strip around our farm to  
7 accommodate this situation. So it just seems to  
8 be a little bit skewed.

9 And as far as coexistence goes, to me  
10 it would seem like, you know, the person who takes  
11 the high road will get penalized. So I don't see  
12 coexisting working whatsoever. And that's my  
13 comment.

14 MR. GEORGE: Thank you for your  
15 comment.

16 MR. CAMPBELL: You're welcome.

17 MR. GEORGE: If anyone else on the call  
18 would like to make a comment, we would welcome that.  
19 Just press one and then zero on your telephone  
20 keypad and we'll see that and then we'll be glad  
21 to take your comment. So let us pause for a second

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1 to give everyone on the call that opportunity.

2 (Pause)

3 MR. GEORGE: So there's no one in the  
4 queue. So we will break away for a few more  
5 minutes. Come back in about five minutes.

6 In the meantime if you would like to  
7 make a comment, just press one and zero. We'll see  
8 that and we'll come back on right away to take your  
9 comment.

10 So we'll be back in about five minutes.  
11 Thanks so much.

12 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
13 went off the record at 5:41 p.m. and resumed at 5:49  
14 p.m.)

15 MR. GEORGE: Hi, it's Dick George.  
16 I'm here with Neil Hoffman and we're here to take  
17 your comments. And we invite those who are on the  
18 call to please comment, if you care to, by pressing  
19 one and then zero on your telephone keypad.

20 I will also remind you there's an  
21 opportunity to leave also written comments at

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1 regulations.gov through June 22nd.

2 If you'd like to make a spoken comment,  
3 we'd be glad to hear it. Just let us know that by  
4 pressing one and then zero on your telephone  
5 keypad.

6 (No response.)

7 MR. GEORGE: Not seeing anyone in the  
8 queue, we'll pause here for a few seconds to give  
9 you an opportunity to let us know.

10 (No response.)

11 MR. GEORGE: But not seeing anyone in  
12 the queue, we will take another break and remind  
13 you that even during the break if you'd like to make  
14 a comment, if you press one and then zero we shall  
15 see that and we'll be glad to come back on and take  
16 that comment. Thanks so much. We'll be back in  
17 I'm going to say about 10 minutes or so, or sooner  
18 if anyone indicates they'd like to make a comment.  
19 Thanks so much.

20 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
21 went off the record at 5:50 p.m. and resumed at 6:01

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1 p.m.)

2 DR. HOFFMAN: This is Neil Hoffman with  
3 Dick George. We're back ready to take your  
4 comments on the Biotech 340 regulations. If  
5 anyone would like to comment, please press one and  
6 then zero. We don't have any comments in the queue  
7 yet, but we're happy to listen to your comments.  
8 So if you have something to say, please press one  
9 and then zero. We'll wait a few seconds here, see  
10 if anyone has joined us and has a comment to make.

11 (No response.)

12 DR. HOFFMAN: Hearing none, we will  
13 step away from the camera now, but in our absence  
14 if you want to make a comment, press one, then zero  
15 and we will come right back on line.

16 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
17 went off the record at 6:03 p.m. and resumed at 6:21  
18 p.m.)

19 MR. GEORGE: Hi, and welcome back.  
20 I'm Dick George. I'm here with Neil Hoffman to  
21 receive your public comments on the subject of

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1 APHIS biotechnology regulations. If you'd like to  
2 make a comment, we would love to hear it. And just  
3 let us know by pressing one and then zero on your  
4 telephone keypad. And we shall see that and we'll  
5 open up your phone line and take your comment. So,  
6 I would invite anyone on the call who would like  
7 to make a comment to please do so. Just let us know  
8 by pressing one and then zero. We'll pause a  
9 second to give you that opportunity.

10 And I'll remind you in the meantime that  
11 you can also make written comments by going to  
12 [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). And there will be a docket  
13 there where you can leave comments. You would put  
14 in the search box APHIS, A-P-H-I-S,  
15 -2015-0036. That will take you to the docket where  
16 you can leave a written comment if you prefer to  
17 do that, or you could do both.

18 So looking at the queue, and I'm not  
19 seeing anyone in the queue. We will take another  
20 break and we'll be coming back periodically to  
21 invite your comments. In the meantime, even while

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1 we're gone, if you press one and then zero, we will  
2 see that and we will break in and receive your  
3 comment. So we'll see you in a little bit. Thanks  
4 so much.

5 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
6 went off the record at 6:23 p.m. and resumed at 6:40  
7 p.m.)

8 MR. GEORGE: Hi, I'm Dick George. I'm  
9 back with Neil Hoffman to take your comments. And  
10 we're understanding that there is a person in the  
11 queue who would like to comment. And so, I would  
12 ask that you feel free to make your comment.  
13 Please say your name and spell your name for us.

14 AUTOMATED PHONE OPERATOR: You have  
15 one question remaining.

16 MR. LOVE: Yes, hello and thank you for  
17 taking my comment. My name is Cliff Love,  
18 C-L-I-F-F, L-O-V-E. And my comment at this point  
19 in time would be this: As we proceed with the  
20 relevance of these biotechnology products I feel  
21 as though we must keep the interest of the public

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1 as well as the end user in mind. Those who develop  
2 these items need to be able to present the user a  
3 product that is safe and secure to the consumer and  
4 the environment. That is it at this time.

5 MR. GEORGE: Okay. Thank you for your  
6 comment.

7 MR. LOVE: Thank you.

8 MR. GEORGE: If there's anyone else on  
9 the call who would like to comment, we invite your  
10 comment at this time. Press one and then zero on  
11 your telephone keypad and we'll see that you'd like  
12 to comment and we'll open your mic.

13 I will mention that all of the comments  
14 are being recorded by a court reporter that we have  
15 here. And so the transcripts of all the comments  
16 will be posted to our website in the next couple  
17 of weeks. So, the PowerPoint presentation will  
18 be put on the website as well.

19 So not seeing anyone else in the queue,  
20 we'll take another break. Keep in mind if you  
21 press one and then zero on your telephone keypad,

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1 we'll see that and we'll come right back on to  
2 receive your comment. Otherwise, we'll see you in  
3 about 5 or 10 minutes or so. Thanks so much.

4 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
5 went off the record at 6:43 p.m. and resumed at 6:59  
6 p.m.)

7 MR. GEORGE: Hi, and welcome back.  
8 I'm Dick George. I'm here with Neil Hoffman and  
9 we're here to take your comments on biotechnology  
10 regulation. And we're coming back on to see if  
11 anyone on the call would like to make a comment.  
12 And if so, please press one and then zero on your  
13 telephone keypad. We'll be glad to take your  
14 comment. So, we're going to pause for a moment to  
15 see if anyone wants to take us up on this offer at  
16 this time. And seeing that there's no one in the  
17 queue, we'll take a pause.

18 I'll remind you that the transcripts of  
19 the comments will be on our website within the next  
20 couple of weeks. And the PowerPoints will also be  
21 posted there. And if you'd like to make a written

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1 comment, you can do so by going to regulations.gov.  
2 And the docket number is APHIS-2015-0036. If you  
3 go to regulations.gov and put that in the search  
4 box, it'll take you to the docket where you can make  
5 a written comment.

6 We thank those who have commented and  
7 invite anyone else who would like to comment to  
8 press one and then zero. If you've already  
9 commented and would like to add to your comments,  
10 you're welcome to do so.

11 So seeing that there's no one in the  
12 queue, we will take another pause and let you know  
13 that should you press one and then zero, we'll come  
14 right back on to receive your comment. Thanks so  
15 much.

16 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
17 went off the record at 7:01 p.m. and resumed at 7:17  
18 p.m.)

19 DR. HOFFMAN: I'm Neil Hoffman. I'm  
20 here with Dick George and we're here to take your  
21 comments on the biotech regulation. If you have

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1 any comments, we would like to hear from you.  
2 Please press one, zero on your keypad. We don't  
3 have any comments in the queue now. Please let us  
4 know if you would like to make a comment by pressing  
5 one and then zero. We'll stay on the air for a few  
6 more seconds and invite you to make your comments  
7 now.

8 (No response.)

9 DR. HOFFMAN: Okay. Well, it doesn't  
10 look like we're hearing from you, so we'll take a  
11 short recess, and come back on in a few more  
12 minutes. During that period you can press one and  
13 zero and we'll come right back on when we see that  
14 you would like to make a comment.

15 MR. GEORGE: So, and we'll be here  
16 until 8:00 Eastern Time to receive your comments.  
17 We'll be back in a few.

18 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
19 went off the record at 7:18 p.m. and resumed at 7:40  
20 p.m.)

21 MR. GEORGE: Hi, and welcome back.

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1 I'm Dick George. We're here to take your comments  
2 on APHIS biotechnology regulations. If you'd like  
3 to make a comment, we're glad to hear it. We'll  
4 be here until 8:00 Eastern Time. Just press one,  
5 then zero on your telephone keypad and we'll see  
6 that, open your mic and be glad to take your  
7 comment.

8 I will remind you that you can also go  
9 to regulations.gov, www.regulations.gov and enter  
10 in the search box APHIS-2015-0036. That will take  
11 you to a docket where you can also leave a written  
12 comment if you would prefer to do that, or of course  
13 we welcome you actually doing both.

14 So I will also mention that our website is  
15 www.aphis, A-P-H-I-S, A-P-H-I-S,  
16 .usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings. That's one  
17 word, APHISVirtualMeetings. And there you will  
18 find background information. We'll post the  
19 transcripts of these comments there within the next  
20 couple of weeks. We'll put the PowerPoint there  
21 as well. And there is quite a bit of background

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1 information and links to even more information  
2 about APHIS biotechnology regulations.

3 So once again I'll remind you if you'd  
4 like to make a comment, please press one and then  
5 zero. Not seeing any in the queue, however, we  
6 will break away. We'll be here until 8:00 to take  
7 comments. And so we'll take a break here and come  
8 back in about 10 minutes and remind you. And then  
9 at 8:00 we'll close the meeting. So we'll break  
10 away now for about 10 minutes.

11 In the meantime, if you want to make a  
12 comment, we'll come right back on if you press one  
13 and then zero. Thanks so much. See you in a few  
14 minutes.

15 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
16 went off the record at 7:42 p.m. and resumed at 7:50  
17 p.m.)

18 MR. GEORGE: Hi, I'm Dick George.  
19 We're here to take your comments on APHIS  
20 biotechnology regulations. And we're coming near  
21 the close of this public comment meeting. We'll

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1 be closing at 8:00. We welcome your comment. If  
2 you'd care to make a comment, please press one and  
3 then zero on your telephone keypad. And we will  
4 see that and open your mic and welcome your comment.

5 And what we'll do is -- it's about 10  
6 of 8:00 now. We'll come back on just a few minutes  
7 before 8:00 to ask one last time and then we'll  
8 close the meeting promptly at 8:00.

9 So not seeing any commenters in the  
10 queue, we shall take a pause and we'll come back  
11 on a couple minutes before 8:00 and ask one last  
12 time and then we'll bring the meeting to a close.

13 So there's no one indicating they'd  
14 like to comment at the moment, so we'll see you in  
15 six or eight minutes or so. In the meantime press  
16 one, then zero and we'll come right back on. See  
17 you then.

18 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
19 went off the record at 7:52 p.m. and resumed at 7:58  
20 p.m.)

21 MR. GEORGE: Hi, I'm Dick George.

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1 We're back. We're here to take your public  
2 comments on the subject of APHIS biotechnology  
3 regulations. We're coming to the close of the  
4 meeting. If you would like to make a comment, we'd  
5 welcome that comment. Please press one and then  
6 zero on your telephone keypad and we will see that  
7 you would like to speak and we'll open your mic.

8 In the meantime I will mention a couple  
9 of things. One is that you can also leave written  
10 comments by going to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and  
11 entering APHIS-2015-0036 in the search box. That  
12 will take you to a docket where you can make a  
13 comment on APHIS biotechnology regulations.

14 I will also remind you that our website  
15 is [www.aphis,](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings) A-P-H-I-S,  
16 [.usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings). The transcripts  
17 of the comments that we've received both tonight  
18 and last Wednesday night will be posted there  
19 within the next couple of weeks. The PowerPoint  
20 slides will be there. And there's a lot of  
21 background information there on biotechnology

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1 regulations.

2           There will be one more webinar for  
3 public comment. It will be next Wednesday, May  
4 20th from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. That's Eastern Time.  
5 And we ask if you would like to participate in that  
6 meeting or comment at that meeting that you please  
7 register. And you can do that by going to our  
8 website           which           I           mentioned,  
9 [www.aphis.usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/APHISVirtualMeetings).

10           So seeing that there is no one in the  
11 queue I will ask one last time if you'd like to make  
12 a comment, press one and then zero.

13           (No response.)

14           MR. GEORGE: And I see no one in the  
15 queue. So in that case I will thank you for  
16 participating in this meeting either as a listener  
17 or a commenter, or both. We're glad to have your  
18 comments and your participation.

19           And with that, we are concluding this  
20 meeting. There will be another one next  
21 Wednesday. And the information is on our website.

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1 Thanks for being with us and good night.

2 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
3 went off the record at 8:00 p.m.)

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