



# Biotechnology

Through the Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) protects against risks to U.S. plant health by overseeing the safe import, interstate movement, and environmental release/field testing of certain organisms developed using genetic engineering. APHIS coordinates these responsibilities along with the other designated Federal agencies as part of the Federal Coordinated Framework for the Regulation of Biotechnology.



**\$19M**  
BUDGET

**89**  
EMPLOYEES

**WHERE  
WE WORK**

- Riverdale, MD (APHIS Headquarters)
- Fort Collins, CO
- Raleigh, NC

## 2020 Highlights



Published the final SECURE<sup>1</sup> rule, the first-ever major revision of USDA’s biotechnology regulations, which streamlines and modernizes our system, providing over **\$8 million** in annual cost savings



With APHIS’ Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) and States, performed more than **500** safety inspections of authorized field trials involving organisms developed using genetic engineering, with over **80%** done virtually to maintain this essential function during the COVID-19 pandemic



Completed **1** petition for deregulation bringing the total number of deregulated products to **133**



Responded to **86** “Am I Regulated” requests before retiring the process and launching the SECURE rule’s new exemptions and confirmation process



Processed over **730** permits and notifications authorizing more than **17,000** locations and over **3,000** sites in **49** U.S. States and territories for the movement or field testing of organisms produced using genetic engineering



Continued conducting a pilot version of eFile, APHIS’ new online permitting system—with **45** stakeholders participating this year and **40** permits and notifications issued in the new system



Held **10** informational meetings, **2** technical webinars, and over **30** one-on-one sessions—all virtually—for more than **350** stakeholders to offer continued guidance on biotechnology regulatory processes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic



Delivered presentations to **50** visitors representing **16** countries to offer technical information and build capacity abroad for regulating biotechnology



Managed **8** FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) requests and released over **38,000** pages of records under FOIA, upholding our commitment to the public and transparency about biotechnology regulatory activities



Provided over **\$260,000** in cooperative funding to universities and other partners for critical biotechnology work, including State inspections, risk assessments, and protecting natural plant heritage

<sup>1</sup>“SECURE” stands for “Sustainable, Ecological, Consistent, Uniform, Responsible, and Efficient”

[www.aphis.usda.gov/biotechnology](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/biotechnology)