



**Animal and Plant  
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# News Release

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**USDA Announces Request for Public Input on Agricultural Coexistence**  
*Acts on Recommendations Made by Advisory Committee on Biotechnology in 21st Century*

WASHINGTON, September 20, 2013 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced today that the Department of Agriculture (USDA) will soon publish a notice in the Federal Register asking the public to comment on how agricultural coexistence in the United States can be strengthened.

“The Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture recommended that USDA support agricultural coexistence by strengthening education and outreach on this vital issue,” said Secretary Vilsack. “In response, with this notice, we are asking all those with a vested interest in coexistence to help us learn more about what coexistence means to them, how they are already contributing to it, and what more is needed to achieve coexistence. With this input, we can continue the dialogue begun by the AC21 group and find practical solutions that will help all sectors of American agriculture be successful.”

The AC21 made recommendations in five major areas regarding agricultural coexistence. In the area of education and outreach, the committee recommended that USDA foster communication and collaboration to strengthen coexistence. USDA’s notice seeks public comment to identify ways to foster communication and collaboration among those involved in all sectors of agriculture production. The comment period begins upon publication of the notice in the Federal Register and will be 60 days.

Coexistence is defined as the concurrent cultivation of crops produced through diverse agricultural systems including traditionally produced, organic, identity preserved, and genetically engineered crops. USDA supports all forms of agriculture and wants each sector to be as successful as possible providing products to markets in the United States and abroad. For more information, visit <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=AC21Main.xml&contentidonly=true>.

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