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1. [Home](#)
2. Print
3. Pdf
4. Node
5. Entity Print

USDA Seeks Public Input on Draft Environmental Documents for Deregulation of American Chestnut Developed Using Genetic Engineering

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is reopening public comment on a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) and draft plant pest risk assessment (PPRA) prepared in response to a petition seeking deregulation of an American chestnut variety, known as Darling 54. The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) produced this variety using genetic engineering for tolerance to chestnut blight

APHIS published the draft EIS for public comment on November 10, 2022. On December 12, 2023, SUNY-ESF informed APHIS that the plant tested was different than the plant listed in the petition. SUNY-ESF submitted a revised petition incorporating name corrections and providing clarification regarding the plant, additional updates and research findings related to molecular characterization, and other minor technical corrections.

The *Federal Register* notice of availability of the draft EIS and draft PPRA can be viewed now on the [APHIS News page](#). Beginning June 6, 2025, members of the public can submit comments for a period of 45 days through July 21, 2025, by going to www.regulations.gov and entering "APHIS-2020-0030" into the Search field.