



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

STOP 0201 – Room 3071-S
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington, D.C. 20250-0201

TO: All Domestic (U.S.) USDA-Accredited Certifying Agents (ACAs)

FROM: Barbara C. Robinson August 18, 2006
Deputy Administrator
Transportation & Marketing Programs

Mark Bradley
Associate Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

SUBJECT: Records Review and Reporting for Certified Rice Production Operations

On August 18, 2006, USDA announced that Bayer CropScience had reported detecting a regulated genetically engineered (GE) rice in long grain rice taken from commercial rice samples. As you know, GE organisms are considered the result of an excluded method and are prohibited under the National Organic Program (NOP) regulations, 7 CFR § 205.105(e).

At this time, we do not know if any organic rice is affected. We consider products bearing organic labels that contain rice and that are already in the marketplace to have been labeled in good faith, and we have no evidence that they are mislabeled.

With respect to products containing rice that are to be manufactured from this year's crop, we have determined that all United States certifying agents certifying rice operations must immediately review production operation records to identify, by operation, all rice varieties planted and the seed suppliers. This information should be reported to NOP no later than September 1, 2006.

Based on these findings, NOP will work with certifying agents to develop a plan for any further actions that may be necessary. If you have any questions, please contact Mark Bradley at 202-720-3252 or Mark.Bradley@usda.gov.

From: Bradley, Mark [Mark.Bradley@usda.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2006 12:13 PM

To: Torres, Francine; ascorganic@aol.com; rfstewart@ucdavis.edu; cofa2000@cofa.net; Jake Lewin; globalculture@earthlink.net; Heermans@tfb.com; marin.dept.ag@co.marin.ca.us; allenke@co.monterey.ca.us; hpatel@scscertified.com; organic@west.net; gayt@mac.com; brian@primuslabs.com; qai@qai-inc.com; John.Young@yolocounty.org; Don.Gallegos@ag.state.co.us; qcs@qcsinfo.org; gacrop@bellsouth.net; hofa@hawaiiorganicfarmers.org; certifiedorg@netins.net; maury.wills@idals.state.ia.us; mvoai@maharishi.net; mmisner@agri.state.id.us; cvof@iquest.net; jake.schmitz@ky.gov; hschexnayder@ldaf.state.la.us; dfranczyk@starpower.net; baldwidl@mda.state.md.us; certification@mofga.org; roger007@EOT.com; guyf@mdac.state.ms.us; dcrabtree@mt.gov; daryl_bowman@ncsu.edu; info@ics-intl.com; ryazowski@aol.com; sam@onecert.net; JSee@ocia.org; vsmith@agr.state.nh.us; erich.bremer@ag.state.nj.us; brett.bakker@state.nm.us; gcross@agri.state.nv.us; certifiedorganic@nofany.org; info@nfc certification.com; kananen@logan.net; organic@oeffa.org; cbgoss@oda.state.ok.us; organic@tilth.org; Demeter@peak.org; leslie@paorganic.org; matt.green@dem.ri.gov; Howle, David; leslie.mckinnon@agr.state.tx.us; sethwinterton@utah.gov; nicdehne@hotmail.com; Organic@agr.wa.gov; mosa@mosaorganic.org
Cc: Robinson, Barbara -AMS; Mathews, Richard; Wilson, Demaris; Faust, Jessica
Subject: URGENT UPDATE: Directive to U.S. ACAs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up

Flag Status: Yellow

Attachments: Statement about Engineered Rice.pdf; NOP Rice Directive final 8 18 06 (4) (2).pdf

Dear NOP Accredited Certifiers,

On Friday, August 18, 2006, the NOP issued a request for information regarding organic rice operations and their seed suppliers. A copy of the Secretary's statement and NOP request are attached for your reference.

The initial request called for each ACA to report the name of certified operations growing organic rice, the varieties of rice planted, and the suppliers of those seeds. The only sources of this information available are the records of the accredited certifiers, who are required to maintain copies of organic systems plans which would include varieties and sources of both organic and conventional seed used in a certified operation.

Since the initial request, the Program has been asked to move up the time frame to early next week so that the information may be provided to policy makers as soon as possible. Therefore, we are asking certifiers to expedite this request and reply as soon as possible, no later than Wednesday, August 30, 2006.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We apologize for this inconvenience.

Mark A. Bradley

Associate Deputy Administrator

USDA, AMS, TM, National Organic Program

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STATEMENT

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Release No. 0307.06

Contact:
Karen Eggert (202) 720-2511
Ed Loyd (202) 720-4623

Statement by Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns Regarding Genetically Engineered Rice

August 18, 2006

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Food and Drug Administration have been notified by Bayer CropScience that the company has detected trace amounts of regulated genetically engineered (GE) rice in samples taken from commercial long grain rice. Both have reviewed the available scientific data and concluded that there are no human health, food safety, or environmental concerns associated with this GE rice.

"Bayer has developed many GE herbicide-tolerant products with the protein called Liberty Link, three of which are rice. The regulated line is LLRICE 601 and Bayer reports finding only trace amounts of it during testing. LLRICE 601 was field tested between 1998 and 2001. Two deregulated lines, LLRICE 62 and LLRICE 06, have been through thorough safety evaluations and have been deemed safe for use in food and safe in the environment, although these lines have not been commercialized.

"Based on the available data and information, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has concluded that the presence of LLRICE 601 in the food and feed supply poses no safety concerns. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service also conducted a risk assessment, which indicates LLRICE 601 is safe in the environment.

"Bayer indicated it had no plans to market LLRICE 601 and therefore had not requested deregulation. Based on reports that LLRICE 601 is in the marketplace and a petition from Bayer, APHIS will conduct a deregulation process, including an opportunity for public comment.

"Because the line of GE rice in question was regulated, APHIS is conducting an investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the release and whether any violations of USDA regulations occurred.

"The protein found in LLRICE 601 is approved for use in other products. It has been repeatedly and thoroughly scientifically reviewed and used safely in food and feed, cultivation, import and breeding in the United States, as well as nearly a dozen other countries around the world.

"Since 1987, APHIS has deregulated more than 70 GE crop lines and in the last decade farmers have increasingly planted biotech varieties engineered mainly for herbicide tolerance, insect resistance, and enhanced quality traits. USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service

estimates that in 2006, 61 percent of the corn, 83 percent of the cotton and 89 percent of the soybeans planted in the United States were biotech varieties."

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CCOF

Certification Services, LLC



FAX COVER SHEET

Comments:

X Urgent

For Review

Please Comment

X Please Reply

Dear Valued CCOF Organic Rice Producer,

Due to a GMO contamination event in non-organic rice supplies, the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) has required that CCOF immediately report all 2006 organic rice varieties and seed suppliers. This is being done to gauge the severity of the situation and provide critical reporting data to the USDA and other agencies. At this time we have no knowledge of contamination in organic crops.

CCOF is reviewing farm inspection and other data, but needs your immediate help to fulfill this request. Please provide the following information within 48 hours:

1. Your Company/Farm Name
2. 2006 Organic Rice Varieties Grown/Handled
3. Seed Suppliers for your 2006 Organic Rice Crop

Please fax a completed copy the attached 2006 Rice Reporting Form to 831-423-4528. Or, you may call 831-423-2263 ext.30 or email us at ccof@ccof.org.

For more information please see the USDA request and announcement at www.ccof.org/pdf/Enews/NOP_2006_Organic_Rice_Statement.pdf

Your information will help us prepare and meet our obligations to the USDA. We must report to the USDA by Wednesday, August 30 (several days earlier than originally requested by the USDA).

To process your responses appropriately, CCOF must receive them by Friday, August 25.

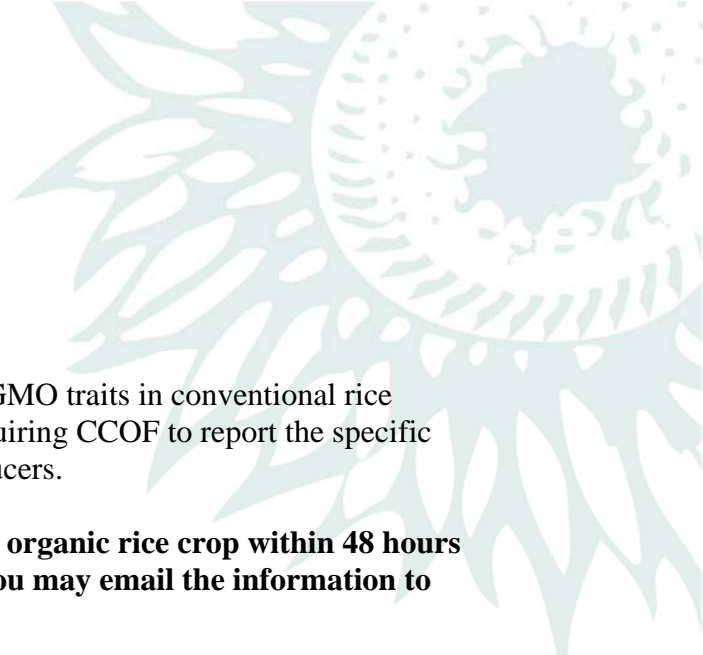
We sincerely appreciate your assistance and understand that you are extremely busy.

Best Regards,
Jake Lewin
Certification Services Director



CCOF

Certification Services, LLC



Dear CCOF Rice Producer,

Due to the discovery of trace quantities of regulated GMO traits in conventional rice supplies, the USDA National Organic Program is requiring CCOF to report the specific 2006 varieties produced by CCOF certified rice producers.

Please complete the following regarding your 2006 organic rice crop within 48 hours and fax it CCOF at 831-423-4528. Alternatively, you may email the information to ccof@ccof.org.

Company Name: _____

Q1) My 2006 organic rice crop is composed of:

- Short Grain Rice Only
- Medium Grain Rice Only
- Long Grain Rice Only
- A Combination of Types

Q2) Please list each 2006 variety you produce organically the seed supplier(s).

2006 Crop Organic Varieties	Seed Supplier

Name

Signature

We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your assistance. CCOF remains committed to serving your needs. If you have any questions, please contact:

Jake Lewin,
Certification Services Director,
jake@ccof.org or 831-423-2263 ext.21.