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Report Name: Agricultural Biotechnology Annual

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Report Category: Biotechnology and Other New Production Technologies

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Report Highlights:

Agricultural biotechnology constitutes an opportunity to U.S. suppliers, as non-governmental and governmental organizations have been working to encourage its integration into the Haitian economy in recent years. Although it is a controversial issue among the Haitian community, Haiti depends heavily on imports from countries where the use of agricultural biotechnology is common. Currently, there is no policy against genetically engineered crops, animals, and microbial biotech-derived food.

Executive Summary:

Haiti depends heavily on the imports of U.S. agricultural products. Even though there is no policy prohibiting genetically engineered (GE) products nor microbial biotech-derived food products, biotechnology is a controversial issue among the Haitian populace. The dominant public opinion is that biotechnology negatively affects human health. However, Post is not aware of any intentions to restrict GE products nor microbial biotech-derived food products. On the contrary, the position of the Haitian government has changed in recent years related to biotechnology, and there is even an expectation of more discussions to inform the Haitian populace on biotechnology. However, the Haitian government is still cautious about the public reaction.

Currently, Haiti does not produce any GE crops, animals or microbial biotech-derived food products, nor are there any GE products or microbial biotech-derived food products under development. However, a few non-governmental organizations are interested in conducting research in biotechnology to improve domestic agricultural production in Haiti.

CHAPTER 1: PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART A: PRODUCTION AND TRADE

a) PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT:

Currently, Haiti does not have any genetically engineered (GE) plants under development. The introduction of biotechnology in Haitian agriculture is under discussion between stakeholders, including the government of Haiti, private companies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, this topic remains controversial as people have raised concerns about the perceived negative effects of GE plant products on human health.

b) COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION:

Currently, Haiti does not commercially cultivate any GE plants.

c) EXPORTS: N/A

d) IMPORTS:

Currently, Haiti does not ban the importation of GE products. Haiti's legislation regarding the trade of agricultural products does not differentiate between GE and non-GE products. In fact, Haiti depends heavily on imports of agricultural products originating from countries where GE commodities are commonly used,

particularly the United States, Argentina and Brazil. For example, the poultry industry of Haiti depends heavily on U.S. soybeans imports for animal feed production. In MY 2019/20 (October/September), Haiti imported 6,000 MT of non-segregated U.S. soybeans.

e) FOOD AID:

Haiti is a food aid recipient for many years. Currently, there is no legislation that impedes imports of GE food aid. However, civil organizations are opposed to the introduction of GE products, which they argue are dangerous for human consumption.

f) TRADE BARRIERS:

As mentioned above, there is no policy regarding the production, use or importation of GE crops or GE plant products, and Post is not aware of any intention to set rules and regulations on such products.

PART B: POLICY

a) REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

Currently, there is no regulatory process related to the development, use, import or disposal of GE plants and GE plant products. However, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provided technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) through the project, "Support to the revival of the seed sub-sector in Haiti" financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). This project led to a draft seed bill and the development of seed policies, which requested inputs from participants at a workshop in early 2017. GE plants are mentioned in the draft but without further details, which has raised concerns from participants including Haitian officials. Some representatives of ministries, non-governmental organizations and universities have also raised various concerns, including: certification; the protection of breeders; farmers rights to multiply either their farm seeds or Quality Declared Seeds (QDS) supplied by artisanal seed producer groups; and importers obligation to meet phytosanitary requirements for imported plant propagation materials. This proposal is under review for improvements, and the GoH has not taken an official position to date on it.

b) APPROVALS: N/A

c) STACKED OR PYRAMID EVENT APPROVALS: N/A

d) FIELD TESTING:

N/A

e) INNOVATIVE BIOTECHNOLOGIES:

Haiti does not have any regulation for innovative technologies. As a result, Haiti has not determined the regulatory approach yet for innovative biotechnologies in plant or plant products.

f) COEXISTENCE:

In Haiti, there is no policy that addresses the issue of coexistence between GE and non-GE crops.

g) LABELING AND TRACEABILITY:

Haiti does not have any specific requirements for labeling of GE content.

h) MONITORING AND TESTING:

Haiti does not test imports or exports, nor Haitian production fields for GE traits.

i) LOW LEVEL PRESENCE (LLP) POLICY:

Haiti does not have an LLP policy.

j) ADDITIONAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS:

None.

k) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR):

Currently, Haiti does not have legislation to address intellectual property for the cultivation of GE plants. However, a draft bill, as mentioned above, is under discussion to protect plant breeder rights in general.

l) CARTAGENA PROTOCOL RATIFICATION:

Although Haiti ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in September 1996, it has not signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

m) INTERNATIONAL TREATIES /FORUMS:

Haiti is a member of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), ISO and Codex Alimentarius. In

addition, a Department of Plant Protection was created in MARNDR to implement plant protection measures. However, Haiti has never participated in discussions related to GE plants within these international organizations but they did participate in a workshop on agricultural health in general, which included GE plants, in April 2019. This workshop was sponsored by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

n) *RELATED ISSUES*: N/A.

PART C: MARKETING

a) *PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS*:

Biotechnology is a controversial issue in Haiti. Perceptions vary depending on the intended use of GE plants. The GE plants utilized for food use are predominantly perceived as dangerous for human health. This perceived safety concern raised by the public would not be alleviated solely on the advice of research organizations in the short or middle term. In fact, biotechnology organizations, both pro and con, are active in the discussion around the use of GE plants for human consumption. However, public reaction is less controversial for feed use than food use.

b) *MARKET ACCEPTANCE STUDIES*: N/A.

CHAPTER 2: ANIMAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART D: PRODUCTION TRADE

a) *PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT*:

There is no research or development of GE animals or cloning in Haiti at this time.

b) *COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION*:

Haiti does not commercially produce any GE animals or cloned animals.

c) *EXPORTS*: N/A

d) *IMPORTS*: N/A

e) TRADE BARRIERS:

Haiti has no legislation or regulations that impede or encourage the trade of animal biotechnology or animal cloning and Post is not aware of any intention to set legislation and regulations on such products.

PART E: POLICY

a) REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

There is no regulatory process related to the development, use, import or disposal of GE or cloned animals and animal products.

b) APPROVALS: N/A

c) INNOVATIVE BIOTECHNOLOGIES: N/A

d) LABELING AND TRACEABILITY: N/A

e) ADDITIONAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS: N/A

f) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR): N/A

g) INTERNATIONAL TREATIES /FORA:

Haiti is a member of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). However, Haiti has never participated in discussions on GE animals or animal cloning.

h) RELATED ISSUES: N/A

PART F: MARKETING

a) PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS:

The issue of GE animals is controversial in Haiti. The public perceives the use of GE animals for food as dangerous for human health. Although there is no science-based evidence about the negative effect of GE products on human health, this perception is part of the discussion on increased diseases in the population. However, there are no active non-governmental organizations lobbying either for or against the use of GE

animals in the country. The public attitude is more accepting of information from research institutions as opposed to the biotechnology industry, however public opinion is steadfast and would not rapidly switch position due to solely study results.

b) MARKET ACCEPTANCE /STUDIES:

None.

CHAPTER 3: MICROBIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART D: PRODUCTION AND TRADE

a) COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION:

Haiti does not commercially produce food ingredient or processed food product derived from microbial biotechnology.

b) EXPORTS: N/A

c) IMPORTS:

Haiti imports agricultural products from countries where microbial biotech-derived food ingredients are commonly used. In fact, Haiti imports alcoholic beverages, dairy products, and processed products that may contain microbial biotech-derived food ingredients.

d) TRADE BARRIERS:

Haiti has no legislation or regulations that impede or encourage microbial biotech-derived food ingredients or processed food products containing microbial biotech-derived food ingredients. Post is not aware of any intention to set legislation and regulations on such products.

PART E: POLICY

a) REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

There is no regulatory process related to the development, use, import or disposal of microbial biotech-derived food ingredients or processed food products containing microbial biotech-derived food ingredients.

b) APPROVALS: N/A

c) LABELING AND TRACEABILITY: N/A

d) MONITORING AND TESTING:

Haiti does not test for evidence of genetically engineered ingredients in imports or exports of processed products.

e) ADDITIONAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS: N/A

f) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR): N/A

g) RELATED ISSUES: N/A

PART F: MARKETING

a) PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS: The issue of biotech-derived food product is controversial in Haiti. (See Plant Biotechnology above.)

b) MARKET ACCEPTANCE/STUDIES: None.

Attachments:

No Attachments