

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Colombia Releases Low Level Presence Policy

Country: Colombia

Post: Bogota

Report Category: Biotechnology and Other New Production Technologies, Biotechnology and Other New Production Technologies Addendum, Biotechnology - Plants and Animals, Cloning

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Report Highlights:

On October 23, 2024, the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA) issued a resolution establishing a 3 percent threshold allowance for unapproved genetically engineered (GE) seed events, and a 5 percent threshold for animal feed. These thresholds will minimize the risk of disruptions to trade resulting from unintended low-level presence (LLP) of GE material approved in at least one country but not yet in Colombia.

Report Overview

In 2023, Colombia imported approximately \$2.2 billion of GE-derived agricultural products from the United States, including corn, cotton, dried distillers grains, soybeans, and soybean products (e.g., meal, oil). Industry and commodity exporters have expressed concern that not all commonly traded GE-events have been approved in Colombia, which could delay shipments because of asynchronous approvals and potentially disrupt trade.

As approval times for food, feed and environmental release are not parallel, the Government of Colombia began to address the issue. As a result, on October 23, 2024, ICA, Colombia's national agricultural authority¹ issued [Resolution 00015141](#)² (see attached) establishing low level and adventitious presence threshold allowances for unapproved GE seed events and for animal feed as per the definitions below. According to the Global Alliance for Agricultural Biotech Trade, international trade experience confirms that 5 percent levels can be achieved with minimal cost impact within the global handling and transportation system.

Low Level Presence: Accidental presence of recombinant Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA), at low levels, in seeds or grains where the event is authorized in at least one country for planting or consumption but is not authorized in the importing country.

LLP Thresholds (in Percentage)	
Seeds (% per Number of Seeds)	Grain for Animal Consumption (%/Kg)
3%	5%

Adventitious Presence (AP): Accidental presence DNA in seeds or grains, where the event is not authorized.

AP Thresholds	
Seeds (% per Number of Seeds)	Grain for Animal Consumption (%/Kg)
0.05% (limit of detection)	0.05% (limit of detection)

Detecting Unauthorized Events:

- If a shipment/batch contains unapproved GE events not exceeding allowable thresholds, it will be released.
- If a shipment/batch contains unapproved events exceeding the allowable thresholds, the interested party may request ICA for a counter-sample analysis of said batch/shipment, within the following five (5) calendar days. If the result of the analysis falls below the thresholds, it will be released.
- If the result of the analysis continues to be above the thresholds, the shipment/batch will not be released/commercialized, and the importer will have to keep it under custody until

¹ ICA is the equivalent to the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

² Available only in Spanish.

the event is approved following the process established by the CTN Bio, the Colombian interagency committee responsible for the evaluation of biotechnology products intended for feed or environmental release. In case a request for approval of the unapproved event may not be submitted to subject committee, within fifteen (15) business days following the result of the counter sample, the shipment must be re-exported or be subject to any other technical measure that ICA deems necessary, at the expense of the importer.

Attachments:

[Resolucion ICA -00015141-del-23-de-octubre-2024.pdf](#)