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United States Senate

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June 15, 2015

Dr. Stephen Ostroff, M.D.
Acting Commissioner
Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002

Dear Dr. Ostroff:

In December 2013, the Chinese government rejected several shipments of U.S. dried distillers grains (DDGs) because they were said to contain traces of specific biotech grain traits that had not yet been approved by the Chinese government for import to China. The rejection of those DDG shipments caused a significant disruption to grain markets and the grain trade.

Biotechnology offers the world great promise, however we must have a predictable, transparent and science based regulatory framework throughout the world to limit economic disruptions from the trade of genetically modified food and grain. Farmers, grain merchandisers, seed companies and end users are all affected if another country rejects grain shipments because they identify non-approved biotech traits. As we work to limit biotechnology related trade interruptions, I would like to know more about the policies, if any exist, that the United States uses to identify biotechnology traits in products that are imported. Please respond to the following questions to further my understanding of this issue:

- 1) Has the United States ever received imports of food or grain products that contain biotechnology traits that have not yet been approved by the U.S. biotechnology regulatory process?
- 2) Does the United States have an official policy for an allowable threshold of presence of non-approved biotechnology traits in food or grain products?
- 3) How does the regulatory jurisdiction of the FDA and USDA differ regarding genetically modified food and grains?

Please number your responses according to their corresponding questions. If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Brandt of my staff at (202) 224-3744.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Grassley

Committee Assignments:

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JUDICIARY

AGRICULTURE
BUDGET
FINANCE

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