

Action Alert

Help Prevent the Approval of Illegal, Untested GM Rice!

“Risks should not be taken with public health for the convenience of companies or of government. It sets a very bad precedent to make safety assessments based on data that is incomplete.”—Doug Gurian-Sherman, former GM adviser to the U.S. FDA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has initiated fast-track commercial genetically-modified (GM) rice variety that has contaminated long-grain rice throughout the South, potentially harming human health and the environment. The variety, known as LibertyLink 601, was developed by Bayer CropScience, a division of the German pharmaceutical giant best known for its aspirin.

Despite scientific evidence that LL technology is toxic, the U.S. government has failed to recall the rice. Japan has banned all long-grain rice shipments from America, while Europe and other Asian countries have demanded strict verification that all incoming rice is GM-free.

Bayer is now asking the USDA to grant retroactive market approval of the illegal rice, even though it remains inadequately tested, and the company gave up plans to market it five years ago.

Consumers should not be asking the USDA to pay for Bayer’s mistake. USDA and other U.S. regulatory agencies should hold Bayer accountable: test and recall contaminated food products, make all test protocols and positive samples available to the public, destroy the contaminated rice and compensate farmers and food companies for their losses, not deregulate an illegal product after the fact.

A public comment period is open now through October 10. Tell the USDA not to approve this illegal, inadequately tested rice and to hold Bayer CropScience accountable!

Action Steps:

1. Go to the U.S. government web site and post your comment directly online. Go to www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main. Under Agency, select Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service from the agency drop-down menu and under Key Word or ID type 2006-0140 and click Submit. Then select Add Comments to submit your comment. You may also view supporting and related materials electronically.
2. If you do not have access to a computer or can’t navigate the U.S. government site (which is complex), send four copies of your comment (an original and 3 copies) to Docket No. APHIS-2006-0140, Regulatory Analysis and Development,

PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

3. Email a copy of your comments to Amberwaves: info@amberwaves.org or send a hard copy to Amberwaves, PO Box 487, Becket MA 01223, or fax it to (413) 623-6042.
4. Donations to the Amberwaves' Save Rice Campaign are urgently needed to carry on this campaign. Please make checks payable to "Amberwaves" or send Visa/MC number/expiration date/authorized signature to the above address. Amberwaves is a project of Planetary Health, Inc., a 501 3 (c) nonprofit educational organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.