

Enhance America's Ability to Develop and Trade Agricultural Products Derived from New Technologies

ACHIEVEMENTS: The Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) implemented changes to its petition review process for genetically engineered organisms with the goal of reducing the review time. In FY 2015, APHIS made 8 determinations of regulatory status for biotechnology petitions bringing the total of deregulations to 117. Additionally, APHIS authorized 1,500 notifications and permits throughout the United States and conducted more than 650 site inspections. In FY 2015, using the improved petition process, APHIS reduced the time to prepare a plant risk assessment from three to five years to 1.8 years (on average), while simultaneously almost eliminating the backlog of petitions.

CHALLENGES: As new scientific advances open up new approaches for the field of biotechnology, these advances may challenge USDA to determine its role in the regulation of technologies that were not anticipated when its current regulatory system was established.