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**BIO Supports Modernization of USDA Plant Biotech Regs**  
*Administration Proposes Much-Anticipated Revisions to 7 CFR Part 340 Regulations*

Washington, D.C. (October 6, 2008) – As part of the process to update its regulations for plant biotechnology, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) released today a proposed rule to revise its regulations (7 CFR Part 340) governing agricultural biotechnology.

Sharon Bomer Lauritsen, executive vice president, food and agriculture for the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), issued the following statement in response to the USDA proposal:

“Rigorous science-based regulations provide the best environment for the development of valuable agricultural biotechnology products. Revision of these rules in a timely and transparent manner will enable ag biotech companies to continue to provide solutions to a number of challenges facing both farmers and consumers.

“Biotech plant products are safe, and the existing regulatory process for regulating, permitting and approving these products is effective. But it's essential to ensure that the regulatory system reflects the latest technological advances within the biotechnology industry as well as the wealth of scientific knowledge gained over the years about the safe development and use of agricultural biotech products. We look forward to reviewing the proposed rule with this in mind and providing our input.

“The original regulations for plant biotechnology were promulgated by USDA-APHIS in 1987, and the rules underwent minor revisions in 1993 and 1997. In late 2003, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy directed USDA-APHIS to undertake a major revision of its rules governing biotechnology, and the department announced its intent to revise the regulations after completion of a programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS). It is anticipated that the final EIS will be published together with a final rule.

“Since the release of the EIS in July of last year, plant biotechnology has continued to advance, biotech industries have grown to become a major force in the U.S. economy, and hundreds of scientific studies have been published, documenting both the safety of the current technologies and the promise of technologies under development.

“BIO and its member companies are reviewing the agency’s proposed revisions and will submit comments. Science-based regulations, implemented in a timely and transparent manner with adequate input from stakeholders, will help farmers use agriculture biotechnology to produce high quality crops to provide solutions for the world’s growing population.”

### **About BIO**

BIO represents more than 1,200 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. BIO members are involved in the research and development of innovative healthcare, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products. BIO also produces the BIO International Convention, the world’s largest gathering of the biotechnology industry, along with industry-leading investor and partnering meetings held around the world.

### **Upcoming BIO Events**

- [Pacific Rim Summit on Industrial Biotechnology and Bioenergy](#)  
Sept. 10-12, 2008  
Vancouver, B.C., Canada
- [BIO Investor Forum 2008](#)  
October 29-31, 2008  
San Francisco, CA
- [BIO-Europe 2008](#)  
November 17-19, 2008  
Mannheim/Heidelberg, Germany,

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