

## **GIPSA Verifies Performance of StarLink Test Kits**

Washington, DC (January 11, 2001)--The USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) announced today that it performed evaluations of two rapid test kits for determination of StarLink corn in corn grain. GIPSA performed its evaluations on Envirologix Inc. QuickStix kit and Strategic Diagnostics Inc. Trait Bt9 kit. GIPSA concluded that the performance of both kits meets the manufacturer's claims of identification of 1 StarLink corn kernel in 800 corn kernels. GIPSA's verification of tests is performed on grain only as opposed to processed foods.

GIPSA began offering official testing service for StarLink on November 15, 2000, after the grain markets expressed the need for government backed testing and to ensure that corn export markets to Japan were supplied with corn free of StarLink. StarLink is a variety of corn developed by Aventis Crop Science that incorporates biotechnical modification to control insect damage. StarLink is approved for animal feed and industrial use only and is no longer available as seed for production.

GIPSA Administrator James Baker stated that GIPSA's evaluation of rapid test kits helps grain markets make more informed decisions about the grain being bought and sold.

For more information on StarLink testing services, see GIPSA's web site at <http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/biotech/starlink/starlink.htm>. For information on test kit performance evaluation and laboratory accreditation services, visit <http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/biotech/evalaccredit.htm>. Information contact: Steve Tanner, director, GIPSA Technical Services Division, 816-891-0401.

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