

GIPSA Verifies Performance of StarLink™ Test Kit

Washington, DC (May 14, 2001)--The USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration announced today that it evaluated a test kit for the determination of StarLink™ corn in corn grain. GIPSA performed its evaluation on the Strategic Diagnostics, Inc. GMO TM Bt9 Maize Kit (Part No. 7110030) and concluded that the performance of the kit meets the manufacturer's claims of the identification of one StarLink™ corn kernel in 10,000 corn kernels.

GIPSA's verification of tests is performed on grain only as opposed to processed foods. GIPSA verified the test detects the presence of StarLink™; the quantitative claims by the manufacturer were not verified.

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 that have specific restrictions on the import of corn containing StarLink™ are fulfilled. 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's acting administrator David Shipman 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.

#

GIPSA Release #23-01
Dana Stewart (202) 720-5091
dstewart@gipsadc.usda.gov