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CALIFORNIA RICE TESTS NEGATIVE FOR LIBERTY LINK 601

California Rice Experiment Station releases the results of independent lab testing on foundation and basic seed samples at annual Rice Field Day

(SACRAMENTO, CA) – The California Rice Experiment Station (RES) released the results of testing conducted on samples of foundation seed supplied for testing by an independent lab. The results reveal that Liberty Link 601 (LLRICE601) is not present in the foundation or basic seed supplied by the RES to California rice farmers.

The results were released this morning during the Station's annual Rice Field Day, a day featuring field tours of the research nurseries focusing on breeding, disease resistance, weed control, and entomology for the state's rice industry and the broader community. The RES facilities comprise 478 acres of land, greenhouses, laboratories and equipment that are used for rice improvement research and seed production.

Samples of 24 varieties of foundation and basic seed from the RES were analyzed by using DNA marker technology at an independent, validated laboratory, BioDiagnostics Inc. The LLRICE601 event was not detected in high-resolution tests in any of the samples.

This Liberty Link event has never been used or tested at the Rice Experiment Station in California, and no field trials of this event have occurred in California. The foundation seed samples were sent at the request of the USDA and in coordination with Bayer Crop Science.

The testing results affirm that this LLRICE601 event does not affect medium or short-grain rice in California. The trace amounts in question have only been identified in long grain rice, in a variety not grown in California.

California is the largest producer of short and medium grain japonica rice in the United States. Over 95 percent of the total crop produced in 2004 was a medium or short grain rice variety.

On August 18, 2006, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that trace amounts of regulated, genetically engineered (GE) rice were found in samples taken from commercially produced long grain rice. The USDA / Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) office is currently conducting an investigation to determine whether any violations occurred.

USDA and the FDA have reviewed the available scientific data provided by Bayer CropScience, and have not found any human health, food safety or environmental concerns associated with the rice in question.

The California rice industry is based in the Sacramento Valley. Each year, California rice producers plant and harvest over 500,000 acres of rice, contributing a half-billion dollars to the economy and providing habitat and fodder for 235 species of wildlife along the Pacific Flyway.

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