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Russian Federation

Biotechnology

Annual Agricultural Biotechnology Report

2005

Approved by:
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Report Highlights:
Russia's agricultural biotechnology policy is in transition, and the future is not clear. After more than a year of suspension of all activities in the field of biotechnology regulation, in May 2005 Russia re-established the Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering. Two fundamental technical regulations on biotech plants and foodstuff are in the process of development to be made federal laws in 2006. At present Russia does not produce biotechnology crops. Registration of imported biotech crops for food has restarted, but registration for feeds is still pending.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Annual Report
Moscow [RS1]
[RS]

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Executive Summary

Russia's attitude towards agricultural biotechnology is inconsistent. Russian President Vladimir Putin listed biotechnology in general as one of mainstreams of Russian science. The official position of the Russian Minister of Agriculture is also supportive of scientific innovations and the benefits that biotechnology can bring to Russian agriculture. However, only very limited federal financing is available for basic research in the field of genetic engineering, primarily in the field of biological means of plant protection. Meantime, both application of international research in the field of agricultural biotechnology and use of commercialized GMO crops are lagging far behind the experience of most of other countries of the world. Opposition to development of agricultural biotechnology in Russia is driven by several beliefs, including the official concept of the Ministry of Agriculture of possible extensive development of "organic" Russian agriculture, based on the availability of vast expanses of arable land. To this influence are added fear of technology, the expense of reverting to modern, intensive crop cultivation requiring massive capital investment and ongoing high input costs, particularly for agricultural chemicals, and the concept that genetic modification of crops is an unknown and unpredictable danger to the health of people, animals and environment. The last source of opposition is widely supported and financed by Greenpeace Russia.

Legislative bases for research, testing, study, approval, and registration of genetically engineered agricultural and food products were developed by 2003 and several biotech events and crops were registered for import and use in foods. A smaller number of events and crops was also registered for import and use in feeds.

Registrations for food and feed use have been separated in Russia, and have been conducted by different agencies. However administrative and legislative reforms of the last two years suspended these processes. This report provides a snapshot of the present status of agricultural biotechnology production and trade, but the future is not clear. Much will depend on the two basic technical regulations concerning agricultural and food biotechnology that are been drafted now, and are unlikely to be approved until 2006.

Biotechnology Trade and Production

Status of Products Approvals

The following crops have been approved and registered in Russia in 1999 – 2003:

Crop	Applicant	Year and period of registration		
		For Food Use	For Feed Use	Biosafety approval
Bt potato Russet Burbank NL	Monsanto	2002, ext. 2003 - 2008		2002-2007
Bt Potato Superior NL	Monsanto	2002, ext. 2003 - 2008		2002-2007
Roundup Ready® corn GA 21	Monsanto	2000, ext. 2004 - 2009	2003 - 2008	
Bt corn MON 810	Monsanto	2000, ext. 2003 - 2008	2003 - 2008	
Roundup Ready® corn NK 603	Monsanto	2002 – 2007	2003 - 2008	
Bt corn MON 863	Monsanto	2003 - 2008	2003 - 2008	

Corn Bt 11 Glyphosate-resistant, Insect Resistant	Syngenta Seeds S.A.	2003 - 2008		
LL Corn T25 Glyphosate-resistant	Bayer Crop Science	2001 - 2007	Submitted 2004, expected 2005	
Roundup Ready® soybeans 40-3-2	Monsanto	1999, ext. 2002 - 2007	2003 - 2008	
Liberty Link® Soybeans A2704-12 Glyphosate-resistant	Bayer Crop Sciences	2002 - 2007		
Liberty Link® Soybeans A5547-127, Glyphosate-resistant	Bayer Crop Sciences	2002 - 2007		
Roundup Ready® sugar beet #77	Monsanto/Syngenta	2001 - 2006		
Sugar derived from Roundup Ready® sugar beet #77	Monsanto/Syngenta	2001 - 2006		
Rice LL62, Glyphosate-resistant	Bayer Crop Sciences	2003 - 2008		

Applications waiting for approval and expected applications.

Crop	Applicant	Time of submission for approval	
		Food/import	Feeds
Corn MON 88017 High starch content – Roundup Ready® and resistant to corn root worm (Diabrotica sp.)	Monsanto	January 2005	Expected December 2005
Roundup Ready® sugar beet H7-1	Monsanto/ German company KWS	May 2005	Expected submission Dec. 2005

Source: Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation

Production and Development

At present Russia officially does not produce any biotechnology crop commercially. Only two biotechnology potato varieties, Bt potato Russet Burbank NL (Monsanto) and Bt potato Superior NL (Monsanto), have undergone all field tests, including tests on biosafety, and received the biosafety registration in 2002 for 5 years. However, the Federal Law of 2002 on Protection of Environment made biosafety registration practically impossible, as this law stipulated insurmountable requirements for environmental protection (Article 50 “Protection of Environment from Negative Biological Impact” of the Federal Law). These requirements are still in force as no amendments to this Federal Law have been made to date.

In addition, due to the restructuring of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and suspension of registration of new varieties in the Federal Register of varieties and hybrids allowed for planting on the territory of the Russian Federation, these two biotech potato varieties have not been included in the Register and cannot be used commercially. The biosafety registration of these varieties expires in 2007. For more information on the existent

procedure of registration of all new planting seeds in Russia see GAIN Report RS2004 sent January 31, 2002.

Looking forward to better times, two biotechnology crops are undergoing field trials now: field trials of Monsanto's Roundup Ready® soybean 40-3-2 (glyphosate tolerant) and Monsanto's Roundup Ready® corn NK 603 (glyphosate tolerant) are being conducted on the isolated certified fields at the All-Russian Scientific Research Institute of Phyto-pathology (Moscow oblast) and at the All-Russian Scientific Research Institute of Biological Plant Protection (Krasnodar kray). However, none of the crops is expected to be approved for commercial use in the near future, and certainly will not be in the market in the coming year.

As long as the present biosafety requirements stipulated in the Federal Law on Protection of Environment exist, registration of lines of genetically modified crops for production will be practically impossible. Obtaining a Biosafety Certificate would take at least two additional years and would cost, according to experts' estimates, about $450,000. No firms producing bioengineered crops considers that expense justifiable at this time. The requirement for biosafety certification actually results in a de facto prohibition of importing not only seeds of bioengineered crops, but also hampers importation of GMO grain and oilseeds as well (corn and soybeans), because the kernels and seeds "remain reproductively capable."

The requirement that a Biosafety Certificate be obtained has been the main reason that, so far, bioengineered crops in Russia have been registered only for imports for processing into food and for imports in the form of feed meal. In the course of the administrative reform of the Russian Federation government begun in Spring 2004, the Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology was dismissed, the Biosafety Commission of this Ministry disappeared, and all biosafety registration was stopped. Up to now the Biosafety Commission has not been reestablished, and possibly will not be, as Russia is developing a new structure of safety standards: technical regulations that will determine the basic safety requirements (for more information on the status of development of technical regulations see GAIN Report #RS4062 "Russia to Start WTO Inspired Legislative Revamp", sent 11/17/2004)

Trade

Russia imports both food and feed containing products of biotechnology, but specific trade data on imports of products containing such products are not collected. Most imported products containing bio-engineered varieties are produced from either corn or soybeans or have corn or soybean components. Products made of soybean and corn are imported from various countries, including Brazil, Argentina, the Netherlands and United States. Most products imported from the Netherlands and some other E.U. countries are processed in these countries from U.S.-origin soybeans and corn. Phytosanitary restrictions imposed by the Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (VPSS) on imports of plant products from E.U. member states in 2004-2005 (see GAIN Report RS5052, sent 07/11/2005) also affected imports of products made from soybeans, whether or not bioengineered.

All imported products may contain only registered biotech crops. The product itself also shall be registered and certified based on the registered crop. Registration of products and certification are required both for foods and for feeds, but procedures for registration of GMO food and GMO feeds are different.

Food Aid

Russia is not a food aid beneficiary except for World Food Program operations in Chechnya, which involve delivery of wheat and wheat flour, and is not likely to be a food aid recipient in

the near future. However, practices of state or parastatal procurement of agricultural products abroad for domestic food or feed supply still exist, and in these cases imports of products are said to be made based on special temporary permits. It is possible that these permits could circumvent the framework requirements for imports of products containing biotech crops.

Biotechnology Policy

By 2002 Russia had adopted several laws that directly and indirectly influence agricultural biotechnology, including the framework Law "On Sanitary and Epidemiological Well-Being of the Population" of 1999 as amended in 2001, 2003 and 2004; the Federal Law "On the State Regulation in the Sphere of Genetic Engineering Activities " and the Federal Law "On Protection of the Environment". These laws did not specify the criteria, methods and directions of development of agricultural and food biotechnology.

The regulatory basis for testing, examining and registration of GMO events, food products and feeds was developed based on these laws by different ministries and was put in force by a number of resolutions of the Russian Government and by ministerial decrees issued by 2003. However, in 2003 - 2004 the following drastic legislative changes actually stopped for more than a year any further development of agricultural biotechnology in Russia. First, the government administrative reform of 2004 liquidated all previously existing registration bodies, and along with reorganization of all ministries and agencies their previous orders and regulations lost force.

Second, the Federal "Law on Technical Regulation" of December 2002, which went into force in July 2003, revised principles of standardization, and mandated that in 10 years Russian safety requirements would be adjusted to international patterns. Instead of numerous standards a few basic technical regulations should govern and guarantee the safety of people, animals, and the environment in Russia. The process of drafting basic technical regulations started in 2004 and will continue through 2006.

Status of Technical Regulations Concerning Biotechnology.

In November 2004 the government of the Russian Federation approved a program of development of technical regulations (see GAIN Report RS4062, sent 11/17/2004). Of the total seventy-four technical regulations that will create the framework for safety of people, animals and environment in Russia, two concern biotech crops. The first is called "Requirements for the Biological Safety and Harmlessness of Genetically Modified Plants". The timeframe for completion of draft regulation is November 2005, and the federal bodies participating in the development of the draft are the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health and Social Development, and Ministry of Industry and Energy.

The contractor for writing this regulation is a non-governmental organization, the Russian Grain Union, and specialists engaged by the Grain Union. The draft has not yet been published on the technical regulation website, but publication is expected in the near future. The second regulation is called "Requirements for the safety of food products that have been produced from raw materials that are from genetically modified plants or animals". The timeframe for completion of draft regulation is November 2005, and the federal bodies in its drafting are the Ministry of Health and Social Development, Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation, and Ministry of Industry and Energy. The contractor for drafting this regulation is the Nutrition Institute of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, and the draft is already on the website of this institute for discussion.

Present Regulatory Framework for Agricultural Biotechnology

After a hiatus in regulatory activity that started simultaneously with administrative reform in Spring 2004 and as a result of the disappearance of several Ministries, the total restructuring of all other administrative bodies, and the disbanding of previous commissions, the framework Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering was reestablished. The new Russian Ministry of Education and Science was appointed to be in charge of coordination of research and development in the field of bioengineering and thus authorized to create this commission. Order #154 of the Ministry of Education and Science of May 27, 2005 approves the bylaws and membership (attached). The new Commission has yet to meet to discuss any issues.

The Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering is the main policymaking and regulatory body for genetic engineering in Russia. The Minister of Education and Science serves as chair. The Chairman has four deputy chairs, of which two represent human and animal health and safety surveillance authorities: the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (Rosselkhoznadzor) at the Ministry of Agriculture, and Federal Service for Surveillance in the Sphere of Protection of Consumer Rights and Well-being of People (Rospotrebnadzor) at the Ministry of Health and Social Development. Two other deputies represent research and development: the Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for Science and Innovation at the Ministry of Education and Science, and Director of the Bioengineering Center of the Academy of Sciences of the Russian Federation. Members of the Commission represent the majority of federal agencies and research institutes, and several of the NGOs, involved in biotechnology and biotech-policy in Russia.

The Commission will participate in the development of government policy for genetic engineering and biotechnology, will coordinate government regulatory activity in the field of genetic engineering and biotechnology, and will "coordinate issues of implementation and further development of the licensing-and-information system for genetic engineering and biotechnology including the issues related to the improvement of Russian law for biotechnology and development of scientific bases for the assessment and management of potential risks related to biotechnology" (point 3.3 of the Guidelines). The Commission will also participate in international collaboration in genetic engineering, and will improve information available to the population on the range of use of biotech products.

Most commission functions were inherited from the previous InterAgency Commission on Genetic Engineering at the now defunct Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. The commission does not approve or register new biotech events, but develops strategy and policy for registration and in this sense remains the main decisionmaking and permitting body on biotechnology in the Russian Federation.

If the authorities of the Interagency Commission remain the same as its predecessor's, then all initiatives and undertakings in the field of bioengineering in the Russian Federation, starting from imports of samples for field trials, and extending to laboratory testing and registration of events and products, will be authorized by the commission in writing with the signature of its several members, with the authorization prepared based on the minutes of the meetings of the Commission. These authorities are not specified in the commission's bylaws, but are implied.

Responsible Government Ministries and Their Roles

Registration for Food Use

All imported food products may contain only registered biotech events. On July 1, 1999 the Russian Ministry of Health implemented a regulation outlining the procedures required to register food products derived from genetically modified sources. It applies to all foodstuffs sold through retail channels, whether imported or produced domestically. In the previous Government the Ministry of Health was responsible for registration of events and biotechnology products for food consumption. Food safety (food risk assessment) tests of these events and products (separately) were conducted in the Nutrition Institute of the Academy of Medical Sciences, with results going through the office of the Chief Sanitary Physician of the Russian Federation for his approval before the event or product was finally registered and approved by the Ministry of Health.

The new system remains almost identical – the new events and products undergo food risk assessment tests and are examined in the Institute of Nutrition, but approval and registration is now given directly by the new service, Rospotrebnadzor, headed by the Chief Sanitary Physician of the Russian Federation. The general registration procedures require interested parties to submit an application accompanied by required, supporting scientific documentation and samples. Review of the data and samples will determine if further testing is required or if a registration certificate can be issued based on the submitted information. All data and technical information must be submitted in the Russian language. Registration is initially valid for three years, but renewals may be issued for five years.

Under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Physician of the Russian Federation, a system of monitoring of food products in the trade system has been developed in order to detect biotechnology events. In June-September 2002, the first attempt to monitor content of products of biotechnology in food products were made in Moscow. Since that time, more examinations have been conducted to make sure only properly registered products are on grocery store shelves.

The list of bioengineered food products registered before 2002 is available on the website of Rospotrebnadzor (www.gsen.ru). Recent updates have not been posted.

Registration for Feed Use

Registration for feed use has been discontinued along with liquidation of the Expert Council for this registration at the Ministry of Agriculture in the course of administrative reform. There are rumors the council or an equivalent body will be reestablished soon at Rosselkhoznadzor. The procedure for registration is likely to be the same as before: the applicant will submit the same package of materials as for the food registration, then after everything is examined the event and product will be approved for feed use, and a registration certificate issued. The certificates were signed previously by the First Deputy Minister of Agriculture who oversaw veterinary issues, while in the new structure, certificates most likely will be signed by the the same individual, but in a new positions as head of Rosselkhoznadzor.

Registering lines of genetically modified whole grains and oilseeds (corn and soybeans) for feed has been a much more difficult process than registering meal, because a Biosafety Certificate from the Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology was required as both corn and soybeans “remain reproductive”. It is not quite clear what the new procedure for registration of GMO feeds and GMO grain for feed will be.

Role and Membership of Biosafety Committee (if any)

The Biosafety Commission previously housed at the Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology has been disbanded. Information on the possible reestablishment of this commission or transfer of its functions to any other agency is not available yet.

Policy on Co-existence Between Biotechnology and Non-biotechnology Crops

There are no commercialized biotechnology crops. Tests are done on the isolated and strictly controlled fields in the research institutes. On sample plots in these institutes and laboratories researchers are studying co-existence, but this is all at the laboratory level. One of the arguments of opponents of biotech crops is that in Russia it is not possible (or will be too expensive) to provide for necessary isolation of GMO and non-GMO crops.

Food Labeling

At the end of 2004 the Russian Federation Committee on Standards and Metrology published standards to be used for food labeling in Russia (National Standard of the Russian Federation GOST R 51074-2003 "Food Products. Information for Consumers. General requirements," 2004). These labeling standards apply to both domestically produced and imported food products, and are presumed to have gone into effect officially on July 1, 2005. Many food processing companies have announced that they started using these standards in January 2005.

The requirement for labeling products of biotechnology is one of most controversial in the new standard. The standard stipulates,

> "Information on genetically modified food products, food products manufactured of genetically modified products, or food products containing components from genetically modified sources is mandatory. For food products containing components from genetically modified sources, the information is indicated if content of such components is higher than the rate set by a regulatory legal act (technical regulations). Consumer information on food products manufactured of genetically modified sources or containing genetically modified sources shall be stated on the label in the form of the following inscriptions: 'genetically modified … (product name) …,' or '… (product name) manufactured of genetically modified sources', or '… (product name) contains ingredients manufactured of genetically modified sources'. Information on use of genetically modified sources shall not be stated for products that do not contain protein (DNA) obtained from genetically modified sources."

(For information on voluntary food labeling requirements see GAIN Report #RS4065 "New Voluntary Russian Food Labeling Requirements", sent 12/07/2004.)

On December 20, 2004, Russian President signed "Amendments to the Law of the Russian Federation "On Protection of Consumer Rights". The new edition of the Law adds "information on the presence in food products of components from genetically modified sources" to the mandatory information about the main consumer characteristics of food products. In accordance with the new edition of the Federal Law "On Protection of Consumer Rights", the information about any commodity (work, service) shall start with the "Name of technical regulation or name of other document certifying the conformity of commodity in accordance with the law of the Russian Federation on technical regulation" (Article 10 "Information about commodities (works, services)", item 2)

Unfortunately, however, the regulatory act (technical regulation) setting the threshold for declaring presence of genetically modified sources in food products has not yet developed, and, although at least drafted, is not expected to be adopted before 2006. In the meantime, the Chief Sanitary Physician of the Russian Federation decreased the threshold from non-labeled presence of biotechnology-based raw material in food products from 5 percent to 0.9 percent by his Order of April 6, 2004. The Order was not registered by the Russian Ministry of Justice, and does not have force outside the authority of the agency of the Chief Sanitary Physician, which is now the "Federal Service for Surveillance in the Sphere of Protection of Consumers' Rights and Well-being of People" (Rospotrebnadzor) at the Ministry of Health and Social Development. Not formally being a legal requirement, then, but nonetheless constituting an instruction of the primary public health authority of the Russian government, the 0.9 percent threshold is a threat to Russian food processors since the inspectors of Rospotrebnadzor follow it as an internal instruction.

The situation has been exacerbated by the Greenpeace Russia that has declared products of biotechnology to be the worst of all universal threats to the health and well-being of the Russian people now and into the future. In order to avoid hardships, most of the largest Russian food processors have completely stopped buying raw materials and ingredients where the presence of GMO traces in the final products may exceed the 0.9 percent threshold.

In addition, testing procedures have not yet been regularized, and two testing methods are acknowledged as valid, which contributes to unwelcome disputes. Trade in soybean products was affected most of all by these decisions. Corn and soybean traders believe that if the 0.9 percent GMO labeling requirement is included in the technical regulation, all food products processed from imported corn and soybeans will have to be labeled. Given the present anti-GMO publicity campaign of Greenpeace and other "environmental" NGOs, this labeling will affect competitiveness of products of and thus penalize the most transparent (i.e., law-abiding) food producers.

The 0.9 labeling threshold for GMO content remains in the draft of the technical regulation "Requirements for the safety of food products that have been produced from raw materials that are from genetically modified plants or animals". In part this is motivated by a desire to harmonize with European Union regulations in the belief that Russian can become an exporter of "organic" foods to the European Union.

Labeling for Feeds

Consumer labeling of feed is not required.

Status of Ratification of Biosafety Protocol

Russia has not signed or ratified the Biosafety Protocol. The Russian Customs Service is not aware of and does not require any document on the conformity of the shipped samples with the Biosafety Protocol.

Marketing Issues

The Russian consumer is presently aware of agricultural biotechnology, and largely in a negative light due to a combination of widespread yellow journalism and fear campaigns orchestrated by scaremongering anti-biotechnology NGOs. As a result the imposition of labeling requirements, particularly of products, which may have an adventitious presence, is causing some retailers and many processors to shy away from products and ingredients that may contain products of biotechnology.

Moscow, the biggest consumer market in Russia, has been affected by these fears to the greatest extent, as "organic food" finds more and more supporters among the richest strata of Moscow citizens, who determine the Moscow food market preferences. Several sausage processors heavily dependent on extenders have begun to advertise their products as "GMO-free" in order to attract customers. The Moscow City Government also pursues an anti-biotechnology policy, and in March 2005 established the Coordination Council on Safety of Food Products Derived from GMO, significantly influenced by the NGO "National Association for Genetic Safety," and gave this Council the authority to monitor presence of GMO in food products. The National Association for Genetic Safety, although it does not have any legal authority, goes as far as calling for criminal liability for those producers who do not label the presence of GMO in their food products.

Provincial politicians have also warned their citizens to avoid U.S. products, including U.S. poultry meat, which they claim are "carriers" of genetically modified material since the birds are fed meal from bioengineered soybeans and corn. Belgorod oblast Governor Yevgeniy Savchenko has declared his province a GMO-free zone and publicly vowed to prohibit application of agricultural biotechnology there, while calling for a total ban on imports of products of biotechnology.

At the regulatory level, the inability for all practical purposes to register seeds for planting of biotechnology varieties has closed the market to U.S. seeds for bioengineered varieties.

Capacity Building and Outreach

Compared to the resources employed by anti-biotechnology NGOs, the resources of pro-biotechnology forces in Russia are meager when it comes to outreach. A Bioengineering Center of the Academy of Sciences exists, and features a website with information on biotechnology in Russia, but otherwise little action is visible.

Agricultural science in Russia is in a state of decline with federal funding for basic research, even in the hard biological sciences, practically gone, according to the president of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences. Russian biotechnology researchers publish less than one-tenth the number of publications their American counterparts do. The research institutes cannot compete with private firms and laboratories for young scientific workers and researchers, with the result that the population of scientifically well grounded experts in biotechnology is not only shockingly limited, it is aging and thus declining over time. The result is a level of scientific illiteracy surrounding biotechnology that increases the fears and doubts of what is viewed as an "American" innovation, and which will get worse before it can possible hope to get better.

Reference Materials

Decree on Creation of the Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering, Guidelines and List of Members of Commission

Unofficial translation

D E C R E E

27.05.2005 Moscow N 154

On the Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering

In compliance with the Guidelines on the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of June 15, 2004 No. 280, I hereby **decree:**

1. Establish the Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission").

2. Approve:
2.1 Regulations on the Commission (Appendix 1)
2.2 Member of the Commission (Appendix 2)

3. The Federal Agency for Science and Innovations (S.N. Mazurenko) to be responsible for the organizational and administrative issues related to the activity of the Commission.

4. Supervision over the execution of this Decree shall be provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation (A. Fursenko)

Minister A. Fursenko

Appendix 1
Approved
by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation
of May 27, 2005 N 154

GUIDELINES
on Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering

1. The Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission") is a coordinating agency established to coordinate the activity of the federal executive authorities [letters of the Russian Ministry of Health (of February 24, 2005 N 806-??), Russian Ministry of Agriculture (of February 24, 2005 N ?? -13/644), Russian Ministry of Industry (of March 10, 2005 N 03-12- 38/1754)] in order to develop genetic engineering and biotechnology, and provide necessary safety in these fields of industry.

2. The Commission shall work in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal constitutional law, federal laws, Decrees and Resolutions of the President of the Russian Federation, Decrees and Resolutions of the Russian government, legislative documents of the Russian Ministry of Education and Science, and these Guidelines.

3. Main objectives of the Commission:

3.1 Participate in the development of proposals for the establishment and implementation of state policy for genetic engineering and biotechnology

3.2 Cooperation with federal executive authorities, local authorities, scientific, educational and other organizations to provide coordinated activity for state regulation in the field of genetic engineering and biotechnology.

3.3 Coordinate issues of implementation and further development of the licensing-and-information system for genetic engineering and biotechnology including the issues related to the improvement of Russian law for biotechnology and development of scientific basis for the assessment and management of potential risks related to biotechnology.

3.4 Participate in international collaboration in genetic engineering.

3.5 Improve information for the population on the range of use of biotech products.

3.6 Submit to the Russian Government in due form an annual report on the Commission's activity.

4. In order to fulfill its obligations, the Commission shall consider proposals and if necessary shall issue the following recommendations:

4.1 On working out measures aimed at the support and development of priority directions for genetic engineering and biotechnology in the Russian Federation.

4.2 On drafts of legislative acts related to the development and improvement of infrastructure and control system for biotechnology safety, including the development of scheme for the safe development, use and transfer of genetically modified organisms, or their fractions, or genetic engineering technologies.

4.3 On the expediency of issuing specific approvals (notices) valid in the Russian Federation in order to secure safety related to genetic engineering and biotechnology.

4.4 On the organization, conducting and participation in conferences and seminars including international events, with subjects related to the Commission activity.

4.5 On preparation and publication of scientific, methodological and information materials related to the Commission activity.

5. The Commission shall be authorized to:

5.1 Conduct hearings at the Commission's meetings on reports of the Commission members on subjects covered by the Commission.

5.2 Request in proper order materials related to the Commission's activity from the federal executive authorities, local authorities, scientific, educational, and other organizations.

5.3 Take decisions within the scope of the Commission's competence required for coordination of steps taken by federal executive authorities, local authorities, scientific, educational and other organizations in the field of genetic engineering and biotechnology and safety of such.

5.4 Invite as appropriate representatives of interested federal executive authorities, scientific, educational and other organizations, leading scientists and experts to assist in effective fulfillment of a specific task or suggestion, and execute necessary procedure.

5.5 Prepare as appropriate corresponding proposals for submission to the Government of the Russian Federation.

6. The Commission is to be headed by the Minister of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

The Commission shall include representatives of federal executive authorities. Members of the Commission can represent a legislative body, scientific, educational or other organizations, or public associations, the activity of which is related to biotechnology or genetic engineering. Such members of the Commission shall have the right to vote.

The Guidelines and members of the Commission to be approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

7. To be effective, the Commission can set up sections, among them a scientific and information-and-analytical section, as well as temporary or standing working groups.

The list of sections, temporary or standing working groups and members of such to be discussed at the Commission meetings and approved by the Chairman.

8. The Commission shall be working on the basis of an annual plan approved by the Chairman.

Meetings of the Commission shall be held when necessary but not less than three times a year.

Members of the Commission shall participate in Commission sessions without the right of proxy.

Sessions of the Commission to be considered to have a quorum if not fewer than 50% of the Commission members are present. Decisions of the Commission are to be taken by a simple majority vote and legalized by minutes of the meeting signed by the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Commission, chair of the meeting, and Executive Secretary of the Commission.

If a member of the Commission is not in a position to attend the meeting, he can submit his opinion in writing. In this case, such a statement shall be read out at the meeting and attached to the minutes.

Representatives of the federal executive authorities, local executive authorities, legislative body, scientific or other organizations, scientists, experts or public activists who are not members of the Commission may be invited to participate in the Commission meetings.

Decisions taken by the Commission within its competence are binding to all authorities and organizations represented in the Commission as well as to all companies and institutions under such authorities, who shall be notified accordingly by extracts from the minutes.

9. Organizational and logistical support for the Commission shall be provided by the Federal Agency for Science and Innovation on the basis of an instruction from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

Appendix 2
Approved
by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation
of May 27, 2005 N 154

MEMBERS
of Interagency Commission for Genetic Engineering

Andrey A. Fursenko (Chairman)	Minister of Education and Science of the Russian Federation
Inna P. Bilenkina (Deputy Chairman)	Deputy, Head of the Federal Agency for Science and Innovation
Sergey A. Dankvert (Deputy Chairman)	Head, Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance, Ministry of Agriculture
Gennadiy G. Onishchenko (Deputy Chairman)	Head, Federal Service for Consumer Rights and Human Welfare, Chief State Sanitary Physician of the Russian Federation, full member of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences
Konstantin G. Skryabin (Deputy Chairman)	Director, Center "Bioengineering" RAS, full member of the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences
Yevgeniy N. Oreshkin (Executive Secretary)	Head of Department, Federal Agency for Science and Innovations
Amirkhan M. Amirkhanov	Deputy Director, Department for State Policy in Environmental Protection, Ministry of Natural Recourses of Russia
Iosif G. Atabekov	Head, Faculty of Virology, Biological Department, Moscow State University, full member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and full member of the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences
Nikolay P. Bochkov	Vice-president, Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, full member of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences
Elena V. Budaeva	Deputy Head, Main Administration for Trade Nomenclature and Trade Restrictions, Federal Customs Service
Mikhail S. Bunin	Deputy Director, Department of Scientific-and-Technical Policy and Education, Ministry of Agriculture of Russia
Nikifor T. Vasiliyev	Head of Administration, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Military Units for Radiological, Chemical and Biological Protection, Ministry of Defense of Russia

Nikolay N. Volodin	Director, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Human Welfare, Science and Education, Ministry of Health and Social Development of Russia, full member of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences
Anatoliy I. Grigoriyev	Academic Secretary of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Director, Institute of Medical and Biological Issues, full member of the Russian Academy of Sciences
Arkadiy L. Zlochevskiy	President, Non-commercial Association "Russian Grain Union"
Vadim T. Ivanov	Director, Shemyakin & Ovchnnikov Institute of Bio-organical Chemistry, full member of the Russian Academy of Sciences
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