

More farmers sue Syngenta, political flap over sales of GMO corn to China that it had not approved escalates

Farmers from the biggest U.S. corn-growing states have sued Syngenta AG over sales of genetically modified corn seed not approved by China, joining global exporters in pursuing damages from the Swiss-based company. In coordinated lawsuits filed on Friday in federal courts in Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri, farmers accused Syngenta of being reckless when it launched U.S. sales of Agrisure Viptera corn seed in 2011 without obtaining import approval from China, a major buyer.

The farmers, who did not plant seed containing the unapproved trait, claimed they suffered losses because the price of U.S. corn dropped when China began rejecting boatloads of crops containing Viptera corn last year. In April, the National Grain & Feed Association estimated that U.S. farmers had lost more than \$1 billion due to trade disruptions linked to the rejections.

The lawsuits seek to open the complaints to all U.S. farmers who grew non-Viptera corn since China began rejecting the trait in November 2013.

Viptera corn, known as MIR 162, was planted on about 3 percent of U.S. corn acres during the past two years, according to court documents. Still, industry members have said the trait can be found throughout the supply chain because it is difficult to segregate one variety from another. Last month, agribusiness company Cargill Inc [CARG.UL] and another exporter separately sued Syngenta for selling Viptera corn seed before Beijing approved imports. The companies said they suffered combined damages of more than \$131 million linked to China's rejections of U.S. crops containing the trait.

Read full, original article: U.S. farmers latest to sue Syngenta over GMO corn rejected by China