

Trade complicates handling of GMO crops, GM labeling could, too

The use of biotechnology has made things more complicated for seed companies, grain handlers and farmers.

Charles Hurburgh, Iowa State University grain-handling specialist, says handling biotech and non-biotech commodity crops has gotten more complicated.

He says it is hard to keep a biotech trait out of the commodity grain handling system. Separate facilities are necessary. In addition, grain buyers have to be more aware of what traits are approved for import around the world.

The National Grain and Feed Association released a study showing U.S. corn farmers had \$2.9 billion in economic losses due to the Viptera trait showing up in U.S. export shipments to China before it was approved.

The group also had a study showing U.S. growers could face up to \$3.4 billion in economic losses during the marketing year with the Duracade trait, which has not been approved for import into China yet.

Hurburgh says those penalties for traits could come back to the farmer in the form of basis, storage or transportation costs.

That means there is more responsibility on the farmer's part and at the first point of sale to make sure the GMO traits are properly channeled.

Hurburgh says GMO-labeling proposals will create more grain-handling issues, if they go into effect.

Food costs will likely go up 15-20 percent as many companies will likely reformulate their foods without corn and soybeans to make sure they don't have GMO traits in them.

Read full, original article: Traits complicate grain handling, trade