

After escape from field trials, Oregon wants USDA to keep a lid on GMO bentgrass

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

Although we generally support the development and use of genetically modified crops, we think USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service should rethink its plan to deregulate glyphosate-resistant creeping bentgrass.

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Last year, USDA reached an agreement with Scotts Miracle-Gro, which developed the glyphosate-resistant biotech creeping bentgrass, to lift federal regulations on the crop as long as it's not commercialized.

The problem is that in 2010 the bentgrass was found growing in several miles of irrigation canals in Oregon's Malheur County.

Oregon State University experts speculated the plants originated from seed that spread from a seed field planted to the grass in 2005 near Parma, Idaho, just across the river from Malheur County.

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The Oregon Department of Agriculture has asked APHIS to hold off on deregulating the crop.

The ODA claims the biotech bentgrass doesn't meet the federal requirements for deregulation because it "clearly falls into the category of a plant pest and noxious weed," according to a letter sent to USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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We agree on this one. After all, the GMO bentgrass first escaped while under regulated field trials. It seems that danger only will increase when the regulators aren't watching.

Scotts says it won't leave Oregon farmers and irrigation districts to their own devices, and we'll take them at their word. But deregulating now and finding a management solution later seems like putting the cart before the horse.

Read full, original post: [APHIS should hold off on deregulating GMO bentgrass](#)