Ready Reference

Unique Identification RR11

This summary is intended as a guide only. For full details of the process for allocating a unique identifier under the OECD Guidelines, please consult ENV/JM/MONO/2002/7 Guidance for the Designation of a Unique Identifier for Transgenic Plants, Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation (OECD), October 2004 available at http://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/displaydocumentpdf?cote=env/jm/mono(2002)7&doclanguage=en

Use of Unique Identifiers in the BCH

The BCH uses unique identification systems for living modified organisms to facilitate searching and retrieval of information. Currently, the only existing unique identification system in international use is the OECD Unique Identifier for Transgenic Plants. This system assigns a simple alphanumeric code to each living modified plant that is approved for commercial use, including for use as food or feed, similar to the ISBN code used to identify a book. Identifiers are generated by the developers of a new transgenic plant, and included in the dossiers that they forward to national authorities during the safety assessment process. Once approved, national authorities can then forward the unique identifier to the OECD Secretariat for inclusion in the OECD's product database, from which the information is automatically shared with the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Under the Protocol, provision of any unique identification information is expected for living modified organisms intended for direct use as food or feed, or for processing (i.e. decisions taken under Article 11), since it is assumed that most of these will have been approved for commercial use. The third meeting of the Parties to the Protocol also requested governments to provide information relating to unique identification when registering decisions under the Advance Informed Agreement procedure, where available.

The OECD unique identification system examined here applies only to living modified plants. Work is ongoing to develop a unique identification naming convention for other types of organisms.

For a list of all LMOs registered with the BCH and their unique identifiers, visit the LMO Registry: http://bch.cbd.int/database/lmo-registry/

Understanding the Code

The unique identifier is a nine-digit code, composed of three elements that are separated by dashes (-). These elements are outlined below:

- 2 or 3 alphanumeric digits to designate the applicant
- 5 or 6 alphanumeric digits to designate the transformation event

- One numerical digit for verification (this is intended to reduce errors by ensuring the integrity of the alphanumeric code)

Two approaches are possible for products created with more than one transformation event (often referred to as "stacked" transformation **events), where these transformation events have been previously approved for commercialization. An applicant may choose to generate a novel unique identifier for such products, or they may choose to use a combination of the unique identifiers from products previously approved for commercialization.** Commonly Used Applicant Codes

Code	Applicant
ACS	Bayer CropScience (Aventis (AgrEvo (Plant Genetic Systems)))
AVE	BASF Plant Science GmbH
BCS	Bayer CropScience K.K.
BPS	Amylogen HB
CDC	University of Saskatchewan
CGN	Calgene (Monsanto)
CUH	Cornell University and University of Hawaii
DAS	Dow AgroSciences and Pioneer Hi-Bred
DD	Pioneer Hi-Bred and DuPont
DP	Pioneer Hi-Bred
DKB	DeKalb (Monsanto)
FLO	Florigene
IFD	Suntory
KM	KWS and Monsanto
MON	Monsanto
NMK	NatureMark (Monsanto)
PH	Pioneer Hi-Bred

REN	Renessen LLC Netherlands
SEM	Seminis Vegetable Seeds and Monsanto
SYN	Syngenta
VCO	Groupe Limagrain Holding S.A.