

On the state of GM maize seeds in China

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Key new facts

- On Jan. 21st 2020, China MOA gave two approvals (safety certificates).
 - Dabeinong company's DBN9936, which has the genes of Cry1Ab and Epsps. An insect and herbicide tolerance event.
 - Ruieng company and Zhejiang University's Ruifeng 125, which has Cry1Ab/Cry2Aj and G10evo-epsps genes. An insect and herbicide tolerance event.
- This was the first GMO approval for local producing maize since 2009. A phytase GMO event was approved in 2009. But it was not commercialized.
- On Jul 15th 2020, another event DBN9858 from Dabeinong got the safety certificate. It contains Epsps and Pat genes. It is targeting at refuge field for Bt corn.
- All genes' approved region is north spring corn area. China's total corn area is 42 million ha. Northern spring corn is 16.4 million ha, 39% of country total. It produces 43% of total corn.
- The certificates are valid for five years.

How far is it from the planting?

- According to the regulations, the maize varieties containing the approved genes need to get the variety registration for commercialization.
- Current variety registration process needs 3 years. It is still not clear how long it will take to get the GM version variety registration from a registered non-GMO variety.
- The expectation from the industry is that only one year needed. That means the GMO maize will be grown in the spring of 2021.

Who will be next?

- The approval sequence is very clear, local first, then multinational.
- Syngenta (wholly-owned by Sino-chem) is anticipated to get the approval in 2021.
- Bayer (Monsanto), Corteva will be the last step.

Current GM maize planting

- The non-approved GM maize has been planted as early as 2009. The area was quickly expanded since 2012.
- Personal opinion, the current area is at least 5 million ha., 30% of total north spring corn area.
- The key two GM varieties are SB338 and JQ707.
- The farmer price was dropped from 80RMB/mu to 40RMB/mu. The illegal GM corn seeds price even does not have premium over non-GM seeds.
- The illegal GM maize seeds have been widely produced by many companies and individuals.

Value for GM maize seeds companies

- The business will be multi genes providers with licensing model.
- The bargain power is more on seeds companies side.
- Due to the illegal planting, the royalty fee will be low and is not comparable to other markets.

Thanks and questions