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## **Mexico**

**Post:** Mexico

### **Mexico Publishes NOM to Establish Report Requirements for GE Crops**

**Report Categories:**

Biotechnology - GE Plants and Animals

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**Report Highlights:**

On January 3th, 2014, the Mexican Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food (SAGARPA) published an Official Mexican Norm (NOM-164-SEMARNAT/SAGARPA-2013) in Mexico's Federal Register. This NOM establishes the type of content and requirements that must be included in a "Report of Results" submission to the Secretariat as it relates to releases of genetically engineered organisms. According to Government of Mexico (GOM) officials, Report of Results submissions are required in order to raise awareness of any potential risk to the environment and biodiversity as well as to animal, plant and aquatic health.

## **General Information:**

**Disclaimer:** This summary is based on a cursory review of the subject announcement and therefore should not, under any circumstances, be viewed as a definitive reading of the resolution in question, or of its implications for U.S. agricultural export trade interests. In the event of a discrepancy or discrepancies between this summary and the complete resolution or announcement as published in Spanish, the latter shall prevail.

**Title of Notice:** Official Mexican Norm that establish characteristics and content of the report or results of releases of genetically modified organisms, in relation to the potential risks to the environment and biodiversity and, additionally, to animal, plant and aquatic health.

**Type of Resolution:** Final Assessment.

**Publication Date:** January 3, 2014

**Products Affected:** Corn, Soybean, Cotton and any other Genetically Engineered (GE) crops.

**Agency in Charge:** Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food (SAGARPA) and Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT).

**Background:** On January 3, 2014, the Mexican Secretariat of Environment and Natural resources (SEMARNAT) and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food (SAGARPA) published in Mexico's Federal Register an Official Mexican Norm (NOM-164-SEMARNAT/SAGARPA-2013). This NOM establishes the type of content and requirements that must be included in "Report of Results" submissions associated with releases of genetically modified organisms in relation to the potential risks to the environment and biodiversity as well as to animal, plant and aquatic health.

According to Provision 46 and 53 of the Biosafety Law on Genetically Modified Organisms it is necessary to determine in a NOM the type of information that the holder of permits for environmental release of GE crops on experimental and pilot phases must submit in a report to the Secretariat.

This NOM establishes more than 30 requirements that will need to be addressed in a Report of Results submission to GOM approving officials. According to some private industry sources this NOM could make the approval process for environmental release of GE crops such as cotton, corn, and soybeans even more cumbersome and restrictive for biotech companies. Reportedly, permit holders were hoping this NOM would clarify and address some of the industry's on-going concerns over transparency related to reporting requirements for approval of GE crops. As just one example, the report must contain an analysis of the water quality of superficial hydrology and identify several characteristics of subterranean water bodies. When in the judgment of the permit holder, considers that any of the content provided in this NOM do not apply to the report to be submitted, the permit holder must justify it scientifically and technically as well as consider results of its assessment of risks to the environment, biodiversity, and to animal, plant and aquatic health.

According to private sources, several biotech companies are working with GOM officials to organize workshops in order to better understand the new requirements as outlined under the new NOM.

This NOM is considered final and will enter into force on March 4, 2014.