

BRAG Biobased Products Blog: June 14, 2019

Friday, June 14, 2019

APHIS Proposes Revised Regulatory Framework Regarding The Movement Of Certain Genetically Engineered

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) issued a [proposed rule](#) on June 6, 2019, on the movement of certain genetically engineered (GE) organisms. 84 Fed. Reg. 26514. The proposed rule would revise the regulations regarding the movement, including the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of certain GE organisms in response to advances in genetic engineering and APHIS' understanding of the plant pest risk posed by them, "thereby reducing regulatory burden for developers of organisms that are unlikely to pose plant pest risks." APHIS notes that the proposed rule "would mark the first comprehensive revision of the regulations since they were established in 1987." It would provide "a clear, predictable, and efficient regulatory pathway for innovators, facilitating the development of new and novel [GE] organisms that are unlikely to pose plant pest risks." Comments on the proposed rule are due by **August 5, 2019**. For further details, see the Bergeson & Campbell, P.C. (B&C) memorandum [here](#).

DOE BETO Announces Upcoming Webinars In Honor Of Renewable Biomass Feedstocks Month

On June 5, 2019, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Bioenergy Technologies Office (BETO) [announced the Conversion-Ready Feedstock Webinar Series](#). These webinars will be primarily educational to showcase research strategies that enable biomass feedstock management variability and supply chain improvements in biomass quality and consistency. Two webinar sessions will be part of this series. The first webinar was held on June 13, 2019, and the second webinar will be held on **June 20, 2019, at 11:00 a.m. (MDT)**. Interested parties may register by accessing DOE BETO's notice [here](#).

Members Of Congress Submit Letter On Biofuel Tax Credits To Speaker Of The House And Chair Of The House Committee On Ways & Means

On June 3, 2019, 19 members of Congress submitted a letter to U.S. Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means, Richard Neal (D-MA), [addressing the expired Second-Generation Biofuel Producer Tax Credit, the Special Depreciation Allowance for Second-Generation Biofuel Plant Property, and the Alternative Fuel Vehicle Refueling Property Credits](#). Urging Congress to take action on the extension of these tax credits, the letter emphasizes the importance of these credits in stabilizing capital intensive, higher-risk technology projects and in allowing more time to plan for longer-term policy around alternative fuels and infrastructure. The extension request proposes that the House Ways & Means Committee consider a multi-year extension of these credits to reassure the second-generation biofuels, the rural economy, and the refueling infrastructure industry.



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GAO Publishes Report On RFS' Impact On Gasoline Prices And GHG Emissions

On June 3, 2019, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report to the U.S. Senate on [the Renewable Fuel Standard's \(RFS\) program effects on gas prices and greenhouse gas \(GHG\) emissions](#). Titled *Renewable Fuel Standard: Information on Likely Program Effects on Gasoline Prices and Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the report suggests that increases in gas prices outside of the Midwest (which have now diminished) were associated with the nationwide RFS, and that variations in gas prices likely depended on state-by-state transport and storage of ethanol costs. In addition, price increases occurred in states that did not have the initial infrastructure to blend and store ethanol. Regarding GHG emissions, the report states that RFS has had a limited effect, if any. GAO provided two reasons for this limited effect: (1) RFS relies on conventional corn-starch ethanol, which has smaller potential to reduce GHG emissions; and (2) most corn-starch ethanol has been produced in plants that are exempt from emission reduction requirements. In addition, GAO reports concerns that RFS will not meet the GHG emissions reduction goals that it envisioned by **2020**. Lastly, GAO reports that the renewable identification numbers (RIN) had a small effect on prices. EPA analysis identified areas of concern within RINs, which included possible fraud in the market, price volatility, and concerns about the impact they have on small refiners

DOE EERE Soliciting Members For The Biomass R&D Technical Advisory Committee

On June 7, 2019, DOE's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Office published in the *Federal Register* a [notice requesting the nomination for candidates to fill vacancies on the Biomass Research and Development \(R&D\) Technical Advisory Committee](#). Nominations are being accepted until **June 30, 2019**, and require the nominee's name, resume, biography, and any letters of support available. The Committee advises DOE and USDA points of contact with respect to the Biomass R&D Initiative and priority technical biomass R&D needs, and makes written recommendations to the Biomass R&D Board.

FPS Publishes "Clean Growth Future Vision"

On May 31, 2019, the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers (FPS) launched [Clean Growth Future Vision](#), a document outlining FPS' vision for cutting carbon through the development of biofuels. FPS is a trade association for the liquid fuels distribution industry and ancillary interests in the United Kingdom (UK) and the Republic of Ireland. FPS urges the government to be technology neutral and to consider options other than electrification. Guy Pulham, FPS' Chief Executive, commented that in the short-term, consumer encouragement to make energy efficiency changes are necessary to reduce carbon emissions. In the long-term, Pulham stated that FPS intends to work with relevant bodies and consumer groups to ensure various solutions can be found for different homes and budgets. FPS will also work on testing low-carbon fuels and working with the supply chain to reduce fossil fuel content in liquid fuels. The goal is to reach zero fossil fuel content by the Paris Agreement deadline.

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