

S.N. 60/061,378, "Unique Whitefly Ketose Reductase/Sorbitol Dehydrogenase Enzyme"

June Blalock,

Technology Licensing Coordinator.

[FR Doc. 98-13303 Filed 5-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

Notice of Intent To Grant Exclusive License

AGENCY: Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, intends to grant to Southern States Cooperative, Inc., of Richmond, Virginia, an exclusive license to Plant Variety Protection Certificate Application No. 9800029, Soybean, "Tyrone" filed November 19, 1997. "Tyrone" is a forage soybean cultivar recommended for forage production in the southern states and is not intended for grain production. "Tyrone's" Notice of Availability was published in the **Federal Register** on January 8, 1998.

DATES: **Federal Register** comments must be received on or before July 20, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to: USDA, ARS, Office of Technology Transfer, Room 415, Building 005, BARC-West, Beltsville, Maryland 20705-2350.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: June Blalock of the Office of Technology Transfer at the Beltsville address given above; telephone: 301-504-5989.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Government's patent rights to this invention are assigned to the United States of America, as represented by the Secretary of Agriculture. It is in the public interest to so license this invention as Southern States Cooperative submitted a complete and sufficient application for a license. The prospective exclusive license will be royalty-bearing and will comply with the terms and conditions of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. The prospective exclusive license may be granted unless, within sixty (60) days from the date of this published Notice, the Agricultural Research Service receives written evidence and argument which establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the

requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

Richard M. Parry, Jr.,

Assistant Administrator.

[FR Doc. 98-13302 Filed 5-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 98-026N]

Meeting on the Browning of Ground Beef Patties

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is holding a public meeting to discuss safe handling measures consumers should take in cooking hamburgers. The results of a study on the browning of ground beef patties before they reach an internal temperature of 160 °F will be presented. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the food safety issues presented by premature browning, including the question whether color is an appropriate indicator that ground beef is cooked to a safe internal temperature.

DATES: The meeting will be held on May 27, 1998, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Arlington Hilton & Towers, 950 North Stafford Street, Arlington, VA, 22203. The hotel is immediately adjacent to the Ballston Metro Station.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To register for the meeting and to obtain a copy of the study results on premature browning of ground beef patties, contact Ms. Jennifer Callahan of the FSIS Planning Office at (202) 501-7136 or FAX (202) 501-7642. Participants who require a sign language interpreter or other special accommodation should contact Ms. Callahan at the above numbers by May 22, 1998.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A study was commissioned by FSIS in 1997 to examine laboratory techniques for cooking and color evaluation and to test logistics for ground beef patties. A previous meeting was held to seek public comment on the study design from consumers, public health officials, and other interested persons. The May 27 meeting announced in this notice will focus on the results of the study and other public and private research efforts on premature browning. FSIS is particularly interested in discussing options for educating consumers about the safe cooking of these products.

The meeting is open to the public on a space-available basis. Transcripts of this meeting will be available in the FSIS Docket Office, Room 102, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-3700.

Done in Washington, DC, on May 11, 1998.

Thomas J. Billy,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 98-13165 Filed 5-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Grazing Permit Reissuance, Sheep Grazing on the Ash Mountain and Iron Mountain Allotments, Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, Gallatin National Forest, Park County, MT

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The USDA, Forest Service, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to disclose the environmental effects of reissuing a 10-year term grazing permit to continue authorizing sheep grazing in the Ash Mountain and Iron Mountain Allotments, located in the Hellroaring Creek and Buffalo Creek drainages in the southwest corner of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, Gallatin National Forest, Gardiner Ranger District, Park County, Montana. The permit reissuance would authorize the continued use of a three-unit rest-rotation grazing system for grazing 1200 ewe/lamb pairs for a 60-day grazing season. Also, the proposed action includes incorporation grizzly bear and riparian habitat protection standards into the new grazing permit, where they had only been implemented via the Annual Operating Plan in the past. The purpose of the proposed action is (1) to continue achieving Gallatin National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) objectives for domestic livestock production on the Ash Mountain and Iron Mountain Allotments, and in a manner that protects other resources including vegetation, wildlife, and riparian habitat.

The Forest Plan provides overall guidance for land management activities, including livestock grazing, within the area. This EIS will tier to the Gallatin Forest Plan Final EIS (September, 1987).

DATES: Written comments and suggestions should be received on or before July 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments and suggestions on the proposed management activities or a request to be placed on the project mailing list to John R. Logan, District Ranger, Gardiner Ranger District, Gallatin National Forest, P.O. Box 5, Gardiner, Montana, 59030.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Pat Hoppe, EIS Team Leader, Gardiner Ranger District, Gallatin National Forest, Phone (406) 848-7375.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Reissuance of a 10-year term grazing permit is proposed on the Ash Mountain and Iron Mountain Allotments. These allotments would be combined and managed as one allotment called the Ash/Iron Mountain Allotment. It would consist of approximately 74,000 acres, of which about 14,000 acres are classified as suitable for livestock grazing. The proposed action includes continuing the use of a three-unit rest-rotation grazing system for 2400 sheep months (1200 ewe/lamb pairs would be grazed July 15 through September 15 each year). This system allows the sheep to graze one unit (pasture) one summer every three years. The other two units would not be grazed two out of the three years. Also, the proposed action includes incorporating grizzly bear and riparian habitat protection standards into the new grazing permit, where they had only been implemented via the Annual Operating Plan in the past.

The Gallatin National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) provides the overall guidance for management activities in the potentially affected area through its goals, objectives, standards and guidelines, and management area direction. The purposes of the proposed action are to: (1) continue achieving Gallatin Forest Plan objectives for domestic livestock production on the Ash Mountain and Iron Mountain Allotments, (2) continue providing flexibility in the grazing schedule and better protect vegetation and wildlife habitat by continuing the three-unit rest-rotation system for 2400 sheep months of grazing, and (3) provide stronger administrative control over permitted grazing activities to better assure protection of riparian areas and grizzly bears and to bring the permit into compliance with the Forest Plan. The decision to be made is "should sheep grazing be allowed to continue in the Ash Mountain and Iron Mountain Allotments, and under what conditions."

The project area consists of approximately 74,000 acres of National Forest land located in T7S, R10-12E; T8S, R10-12E; and T9S, R10-11E, P.M.

MT. This area is located entirely within the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness.

The area of the proposed continuation of grazing would occur within Management Areas 4 and 7. Grazing would occur only on suitable grazing land. Below is a brief description of the applicable management area direction.

Management Area 4—This area includes the Gallatin National Forest portions of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and Lee Metcalf Wilderness. Occupied grizzly bear habitat is present in much of the area. Livestock grazing is allowed within this management area so long as it is conducted in accordance with wilderness values and grizzly bear standards and guidelines.

Management Area 7—These are riparian zones or areas where vegetation is present that requires either free or unbounded water or soil moistures in excess of what is normally found in the area. Lands within this management area are suitable for livestock grazing as long as soil, water, vegetation, fish, and dependent wildlife species are protected.

The Forest Service will consider a range of alternatives. One of these will be the "no action" alternative, in which none of the proposed activities would be implemented. Additional grazing alternatives will be considered in response to issues and other resource values.

The EIS will analyze the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects of the alternatives. Past, present, and projected activities on both private and National Forest lands will be considered. The EIS will disclose the analysis of site-specific mitigation measures and their effectiveness.

Public participation is an important part of the analysis, commencing with the initial scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7), which began in October, 1997. In addition to this scoping, the public may visit Forest Service officials at any time during the analysis and prior to the decision. The Forest Service is seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. No public meeting are scheduled at this time.

Comments from the public and other agencies will be used in preparation of the Draft EIS. The scoping process will be used to:

1. Identify potential issues.
2. Identify issues to be analyzed in depth.
3. Eliminate insignificant issues or those which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental

analysis, such as the Gallatin Forest Plan EIS.

4. Identify alternatives to the proposed action.

5. Identify potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives (i.e., direct, indirect, and cumulative effects).

6. Determine potential cooperating agencies and task assignments.

Some public comments have already been received in conjunction with earlier scoping efforts on this project. The following principle issues have been identified so far:

1. Livestock grazing may affect sensitive plants.
2. Livestock grazing may adversely increase competition for forage between big game and domestic livestock.
3. Domestic sheep may affect the population of bighorn sheep by transmitting diseases.
4. Livestock grazing may cause conflicts with grizzly bears and indirectly increase bear mortalities.

Other issues commonly associated with livestock grazing include: effects on water quality, riparian habitat, and soils. This list will be verified, expanded, or modified based on public scoping for this proposal.

The Draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review in July of 1998. At that time, the EPA will publish a Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the Draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA's notice of availability appears in the **Federal Register**. It is very important that those interested in management of the Ash Mountain and Iron Mountain Allotments participate at that time. To be most helpful, comments on the Draft EIS should be as site-specific as possible. The Final EIS is scheduled to be completed by October, 1998.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be

waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45-day scoping comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in developing issues and alternatives. To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues on the proposed action, comments should be as specific as possible. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

John R. Logan, District Ranger, is the responsible official for this environmental impact statement. His address is U.S. Forest Service, Gardiner Ranger District, P.O. Box 5, Gardiner, MT 59030.

Dated: May 4, 1998.

David P. Garber,

Forest Supervisor, Gallatin National Forest.

[FR Doc. 98-13285 Filed 5-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Timber Harvest, Reforestation, Road Construction and Road Closure Near Buck Creek, Taylor Creek and Eldridge Creek Drainages; Gallatin National Forest, Gallatin County, Montana

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The USDA, Forest Service, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to disclose the environmental effects of timber harvest, reforestation, and road construction and closure in the vicinity of Buck Creek, Taylor Creek and Eldridge Creek drainages (herein referred to as the Taylor Fork Project), located in the Madison Mountain range, Gallatin National Forest, Hebgen Lake Ranger District, Gallatin County, Montana. The Taylor Fork project is one of several projects being proposed on the Gallatin National Forest to contribute timber volume to facilitate acquisition of approximately 54,000 acres of lands currently owned by Big Sky Lumber Company (BSL) located within the

proclamation boundary of the Gallatin National Forest. These lands are checkerboard inholdings that originate as part of the construction grants given to the Northern Pacific Railway Company by the Federal Government in the late 1800's and early 1900's. In addition, this project will contribute toward providing a flow of wood products from National Forest lands.

The Gallatin National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) provides overall guidance for land management activities, including timber and road management, within the area. The proposed actions of timber harvest, reforestation, road reconstruction, road construction, and road closures are being considered together because they represent either connected or cumulative actions as defined by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.25). This EIS will tier to the Gallatin Forest Plan Final EIS (September, 1987).

DATES: Written comments and suggestions should be on or before June 18, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments and suggestions on the proposed management activities or a request to be placed on the project mailing list to Stan Benes, District Ranger, Hebgen Lake Ranger District, Gallatin National Forest, P.O. Box 520, West Yellowstone, Montana 59758.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julie Shea, EIS Team Leader, Forest Ecology Group, Gallatin National Forest, Phone (406) 585-1655.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Timber harvest and reforestation is proposed on approximately 560 acres of forested land in the Taylor Fork project area, which has been designated as suitable for timber management by the Gallatin Forest Plan. The timber harvest operations and general administration of National Forest lands will require construction up to 3.0 miles of new roads and reconditioning up to 12.0 miles of existing road. The EIS will also analyze a proposal of restoring up to 50 miles of existing road that currently are not open to public use.

The Gallatin Forest Plan provides the overall guidance for management activities in the potentially affected area through its goals, objectives, standards and guidelines, and management area direction. The primary purpose of this project is to utilize available timber volume within the Taylor Fork area as one of several federal exchange assets to be used to facilitate acquisition of approximately 54,000 acres of lands currently owned by BSL located within the proclamation boundary of the

Gallatin National Forest. These lands are checkerboard inholdings that originate as part of the construction grants given to the Northern Pacific Railway Company by the Federal Government in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

Another purpose for the BSL/Taylor Fork Timber Sale proposal is to contribute toward providing a flow of wood products from National Forest lands identified as "suitable" for timber production, as directed in the Gallatin Forest Plan (Forest Plan, pg. II-1). The forested areas being considered for harvest are identified as productive Forest lands available for timber harvest provided grizzly bear habitat objectives are met. The purpose of road construction and reconstruction is to access stands of timber to be harvested. All new roads will be effectively closed to vehicle travel after completion of post-sale activities.

The purpose of closing roads is to minimize future road maintenance costs, reduce sedimentation, and to regulate overall open road density to maintain or improve big game habitat security.

The project area consists of approximately 560 acres of National Forest land located in T8S, R3E, Sec 22 and 26; and T9S, R3E, Sec 10, 11, 15 and 16, P.M. MT. Road work is proposed across private land in T8S, R3E, Sec 27 and 35. The majority of the harvesting would occur within the Taylor Creek and Eldridge Creek area, and south of Buck Creek located in the Madison Mountain range.

The areas of proposed timber harvest and reforestation would occur within Management Area 13. Timber harvest would occur only on suitable timber land. Road construction and reconstruction would occur in this management area plus Management Area 7 when crossing streams. Below is a brief description of the applicable management direction.

Management Area 13—This management area consists of forested, occupied grizzly bear habitat. The productive Forest lands area available for timber harvest provided grizzly bear habitat objectives are met. Management goals for MA 13 include: (1) managing vegetation to provide habitat necessary to recover the grizzly bear; (2) meet grizzly bear mortality reduction goals as established by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee; (3) allow a level of timber harvest compatible with Goal 1; and (4) meet State water quality standards and maintain stream channel stability.

Management Area 7—These are riparian zones or areas where vegetation