Data Transportability of GM corn and cotton for familiar traits in Japan

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Abstract

In the case of field cultivation of genetically modified (GM) plants whose characteristics are not clear from a scientific point of view when grown under natural conditions in Japan, it is necessary to collect information on their use in similar environments and clarify the characteristics of the GM crop. For this purpose, Confined Field Trials (CFT) have been usually conducted in Japan even in the case for import approval. However, since December 2014, the Japanese government has decided to exempt GM maize with familiar traits from CFT in Japan and allow the use of test data conducted in other countries for safety assessment, i.e., data transportability (DT). In order to accept DT, the following requirements need to be met:

1. The mechanism of action is recognized to be clear through the peer-reviewed scientific publication or general recognition by multiple experts.

2. The degree of biodiversity impact that the transferred nucleic acid or its replication may cause or the properties of the transferred nucleic acid or its replication is recognized to be equal to or less than the biodiversity impact of the already approved GM plant with the same host.

In Mar.2019, Japanese government has decided to include GM cotton into the scope of DT due to the accumulated scientific evidence that meet these DT requirements, but GM soybean has not been allowed to be include to the scope of DT due to the presence of wild plants that may cross-pollinate with soybean. In this session, the current status and background of the DT on environmental risk assessment of GM crops in Japan will be explained, and future prospects will be discussed.

Key words: data transportability, genetically modified crops, corn, cotton, soybean