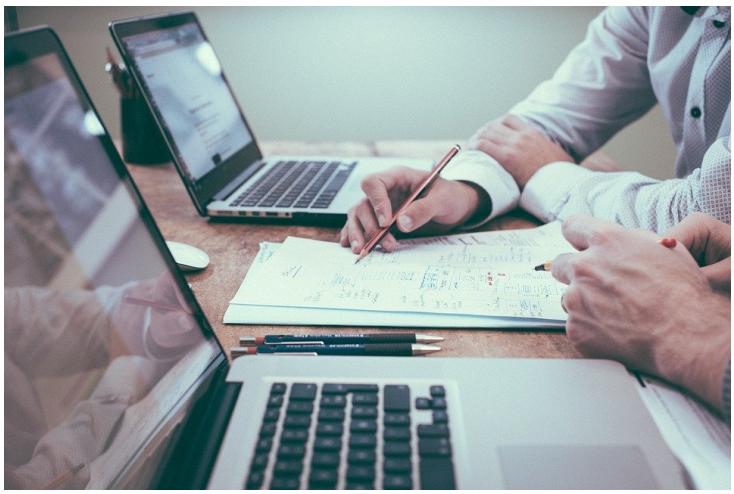
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China to evaluate U.S. agricultural biotechnology product

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Under the new deal, Chinaâ??s National Biosafety Committee will meet to assess the safety of eight products made by four major U.S. agrochemical companies.



China will evaluate eight pending U.S. agricultural biotechnology product applications, potentially opening the door for sales by Dow AgroSciences, DuPont Pioneer, Monsanto, and Syngenta.

According to a news source, China agreed to conduct the evaluations as part of an agreement unveiled by the White House on May 12. The two countries reached the trade deal after a meeting in April between U.S. President Donald J. Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

U.S. officials have prodded China for years to speed up its lengthy process for deciding whether to approve the import of new genetically modified (GM) crops. It typically takes six years to win Chinese clearance of a GM variety, twice as long as other major nations take.

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Dow AgroSciences is seeking approval for its corn and soybean seeds, while Syngenta and DuPont Pioneer have each applied to sell a GM corn variety in China. Monsanto makes four of the products pending approval, including herbicide-tolerant corn, soybeans, and two alfalfa varieties that have been under review for nearly six years.

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), an industry trade group, wants to make sure China lives up to its commitment.

"The ultimate test of success will be for China to follow its process and quickly approve the eight pending biotechnology applications and establish a synchronized, timely, and predictable process going forward," says Joseph Damond, senior vice president for international affairs at BIO.