

## FOR REVIEW: points for ACM for meeting with Mexico's de la Mora

---

**From:** "Yang, Leslie S. EOP/USTR" <leslie\_yang@ustr.eop.gov>  
**To:** "Bomer Lauritsen, Sharon E. EOP/USTR" <sharon\_e\_bomerlauritsen@ustr.eop.gov>  
**Date:** Mon, 13 Jan 2020 13:58:37 -0500  
**Attachments:** ACM mtg w de la Mora.docx (15.01 kB)

---

Dear Sharon,

Please see attached for short points and background for ACM's meeting with U/S de la Mora.

Given it is short and not breaking any new ground, I do not think AGD needs to review.

Thanks!  
Leslie

## **Biotech**

- Would appreciate an update on your efforts to work with COFEPRIS to ensure the approval procedure for agricultural biotechnology products is completed without undue delay and a transparent process is maintained.

**Background:** The Lopez Obrador Administration includes several vocal anti-biotechnology activists and President Lopez Obrador himself has made statements against genetically engineered corn. COFEPRIS (Federal Commission for Protection Against Sanitary Risks) has not made any decisions on applications for authorization of agricultural biotechnology products intended for use in food and feed since May 2018. Mexico's own Biosafety Law requires COFEPRIS to make a decision on a complete application within six months of receipt. When Undersecretary de la Mora received the letter from you and Ambassador Doud on November 7, she expressed appreciation and said she would make an appointment as quickly as possible with COFEPRIS Director Novelo to discuss the concerns outlined in the letter. Our Deputy Chief of Mission met with Director Novelo on December 6. Director Novelo laid blame on budget cuts and other agencies. COFEPRIS has not followed up on his commitment to provide an update or decision on pending applications within two weeks of the December 6 meeting. Because Mexico is such a large market for key U.S. exports (e.g., \$3.1 billion in corn in 2018, \$2.1 billion January-September 2019), U.S. companies are unlikely to commercialize agricultural biotechnology products until they are approved in Mexico.

## **Glyphosate**

- The United States is concerned by SEMARNAT's rejection of import permits for glyphosate without a clear scientific justification. Urge Economia to ensure Mexico fulfills its WTO obligations to notify and provide an opportunity for comment. USTR and USDA are ready to discuss any concerns with glyphosate.

**Background:** Glyphosate is the most widely used herbicide in Mexico, and 100 percent of the glyphosate used in Mexico is imported, mostly from the United States and China. Reports indicate that SEMARNAT (Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources) made its decision to reject import permits for glyphosate without discussion or consultation with other ministries. Scientific and regulatory authorities worldwide have reevaluated and reconfirmed the authorization status of glyphosate, making it not only one of the most widely used, but also one of the most rigorously evaluated and regulated, crop protection tools.