

WASHINGTON, DC 20460

March 13, 2017

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES

Christina E. Cobb Attorney-Advisor U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Mail Code 2843 Washington, DC 20460 Email: cobb.christina@epa.gov

RE: Invitation to participate in mediation for settlement of case In the Matter of Syngenta Seeds LLC, d/b/a Syngenta Hawaii, LLC Docket No. FIFRA-09-2017-0001

Dear Ms. Cobb:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Administrative Law Judges ("Office") offers an Alternative Dispute Resolution ("ADR") process to facilitate the settlement of administrative enforcement cases. Please inform an Attorney-Advisor for this Tribunal, Jennifer Almase, by **March 27, 2017**, as directed later in this letter, as to whether you accept or decline this offer to participate in the ADR process in an effort to settle the above-cited case. The ADR process is conducted pursuant to the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996, as amended, 5 U.S.C. §§ 571–584, by a judge of this Office serving as a neutral. The process is entirely voluntary and completely confidential; these points, together with general procedures, are reviewed below.

<u>Voluntary</u>. Both the Agency and the respondent(s) must elect to participate in the ADR process. The choice to accept or decline the offer to participate does not prejudice either party. If the parties do elect to participate, either party may terminate the ADR process at any time for any reason.

<u>Confidential</u>. The ADR process will be conducted in a confidential manner, in accordance with Section 574 of the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996. The judge who serves as the neutral will not disclose to anyone the contents of any of the parties' confidential communications during the ADR process.

<u>Initial Procedures and Method</u>. A judge in this Office will serve as a neutral. The ADR judge will ordinarily begin by arranging a telephone conference with all of the parties to establish procedures. The parties are encouraged to discuss their expectations of the ADR process with the ADR judge. As a general practice, the Office offers mediation by telephone as the method of ADR. As mediator, the ADR judge hears each party's position and arguments,

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<u>Authorization to Commit</u>. For the ADR process to be effective, the persons communicating with the ADR judge must either have authority to commit his or her side to a settlement, or have ready access to a person with such authority.

<u>Method of Communication</u>. All ADR discussions and conferences are held by telephone, except where the parties can demonstrate, and the ADR judge agrees, that an in-person or video settlement conference, or a visit to a particular location by the parties and the ADR judge, is necessary.

<u>Non-Binding</u>. The ADR judge has no authority to impose a decision or settlement of the case on the parties. The purpose of ADR is to assist the parties in reaching a settlement on their own terms.

Impartial. The ADR judges, like all judges in this Office, render their decisions and opinions independent of any supervision or direction by any prosecuting or investigating employee or agent of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and independent of the influence of any interested person outside the Agency, pursuant to Sections 554(d) and 557 of the Administrative Procedure Act. The judges are certified as Administrative Law Judges by the Office of Personnel Management and are appointed in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 3105. The judges are not subject to evaluation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or by any component or employee of the Agency. These measures ensure the fair and impartial resolution of proceedings before this Office.

<u>Duration</u>. Unless terminated earlier by either party, the ADR process will continue for 60 days from the date the case is assigned to the ADR judge. After that time, if no settlement has been reached, the case will be assigned to another judge to commence the litigation process.

<u>Follow-Up</u>. At the termination of the ADR process, I will send the parties a questionnaire to elicit their views and experience with the process. The contents of individual questionnaires will be kept confidential, except that the information will be put into a composite format for use by this Office.

Again, please inform Jennifer Almase by March 27, 2017, as to whether you elect to participate in the ADR process that I have described above. It is preferred that you notify Ms. Almase by email at almase.jennifer@epa.gov. However, you may also inform Ms. Almase by calling her at (202) 564-1170, by sending a facsimile to (202) 565-0044, or by sending a letter

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If you have another party convey your choice regarding ADR, then you should confirm, on or before the response deadline stated herein, that this Office has received the message.

Susan L. Bird

Chief Administrative Law Judge

cc: John D. Conner, Jr., counsel for Respondent Peter L. Gray, counsel for Respondent Amy Symonds, counsel for Respondent Mary Angeles, Headquarters Hearing Clerk



WASHINGTON, DC 20460

March 13, 2017

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES

John D. Conner, Jr. Dentons US LLP 1900 K Street NW, Suite 100 Washington, DC 20006 Email: john.conner@dentons.com

RE: Invitation to participate in mediation for settlement of case In the Matter of Syngenta Seeds LLC, d/b/a Syngenta Hawaii, LLC Docket No. FIFRA-09-2017-0001

Dear Mr. Conner:

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Susan L. Biro

Chief Administrative Law Judge

cc: Christina E. Cobb, counsel for Complainant Peter L. Gray, counsel for Respondent Amy Symonds, counsel for Respondent Mary Angeles, Headquarters Hearing Clerk



WASHINGTON, DC 20460

March 13, 2017

Peter L. Gray, Jr. Dentons US LLP 1900 K Street NW, Suite 100 Washington, DC 20006 Email: peter.gray@dentons.com

RE: Invitation to participate in mediation for settlement of case In the Matter of *Syngenta Seeds LLC, d/b/a Syngenta Hawaii, LLC* Docket No. FIFRA-09-2017-0001

Dear Mr. Gray:

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WASHINGTON, DC 20460

March 13, 2017

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES

Amy Symonds Dentons US LLP 1900 K Street NW, Suite 100 Washington, DC 20006 Email: amy.symonds@dentons.com

RE: Invitation to participate in mediation for settlement of case In the Matter of Syngenta Seeds LLC, d/b/a Syngenta Hawaii, LLC Docket No. FIFRA-09-2017-0001

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