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VENEMAN ANNOUNCES PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION BOARD APPOINTMENTS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 17, 2004 — Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced 14 appointments to the Plant Variety Protection Board. Appointees will serve 2-year terms.

"I am pleased that these individuals have agreed to provide their time and expertise to serve on this board," said Veneman.

The board is mandated by section 7 of the Plant Variety Protection Act to advise the secretary of agriculture on the adoption of new rules and regulations, make advisory decisions on appeals from applicants and advise on declaring a protected variety open to public use during emergencies. The board was established by Congress in 1970 and includes farmers, representatives of the seed industry and public and private plant breeders.

Appointed members are: Kelly Book, Austin, Texas; Richard Crowder, Alexandria, Va.; Carl Johnson, Biggs, Calif.; Jorge Mosjidis, Auburn, Ala.; Larry Svajgr, Lafayette, Ind.; and Katherine White, Detroit, Mich.

Re-appointed members are: Peter Bretting, Beltsville, Md.; Leticia Cabrera, Maryville, Mo.; Harry Collins, Scott, Miss.; Salomon Montaño, Bosque, N.M.; Bruce Morrissey, Wilmington, Del.; Renee Rockwell, Johnston, Iowa; Gary Whiteaker, Morgan Hill, Calif.; and Walter Wiles, Baton Rouge, La.

The Plant Variety Protection Act is administered by the Plant Variety Protection Office, which grants certificates of intellectual property rights protection to developers of new varieties of plants that are reproduced sexually by seed or are tuber-propagated. This protection enables the breeder to market the variety exclusively for a fixed time period and, in doing so, creates an incentive to invest in the development of new plant varieties. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service monitors operation of the board.

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