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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pacific Northwest wheat commissions statement on APHIS approval of genetically modified wheat trait

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced today its decision to deregulate the drought-tolerate HB4[®] trait in wheat. The wheat commissions of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, representing Pacific Northwest (PNW) wheat producers, provided the following statement to address some of the questions that may arise from this announcement, especially from our valued customers around the world:

"The PNW wheat industry supports and encourages new technologies that increase producer profitability and will help feed the growing world population. At the same time, we remain committed to providing our customers with the quality and reliability they have come to expect from PNW wheat.

"It is important to understand that the APHIS approval process is different than commercialization. This announcement provides a pathway to future commercialization of the HB4[®] trait in wheat in the United States, however the scientific process is lengthy, and it is unlikely that the trait will be commercially grown or available for at least three to five years. We can still confidently say that no genetically modified (GM) wheat is currently being cultivated commercially in the United States.

"The PNW wheat industry has always been a global leader in wheat quality by focusing on the high standards for end-use characteristics driven by our export customers. PNW wheat breeding has been acutely focused on, and responsive to, the needs of our export markets. The region will continue to provide a reliable supply of high-quality grains and wheat foods that customers know and expect."

From the U.S. Wheat Associates

"The farmer leaders of USW are confident that the HB4[®] trait has the potential to deliver significant producer and consumer benefits," wrote the U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) in a statement released earlier today. USW is the export market organization for the U.S. wheat industry. USW believes in using a science-based approach for wheat breeding technologies while meeting the specific needs of importing customers.

"Our organization has established a productive dialogue with Bioceres, and we appreciate that the company understands the importance of our joint wheat industry principles," said USW Director of Trade Policy Peter Laudeman. "I have traveled with growers to Argentina to see HB4 wheat in the field

and they were impressed by its performance. We believe the trait represents good science with positive potential to improve food security in a more sustainable way.”

USW is supportive of science-based regulatory approval for biotechnology wheat products in the United States in line with its joint [Wheat Industry Principles for Biotechnology Commercialization](#) with the National Association of Wheat Growers.

Read the full statement from USW here: <https://www.uswheat.org/u-s-wheat-associates-statement-on-usda-approval-of-hb4-drought-tolerant-wheat-trait/>

More about HB4[®] wheat

HB4[®] wheat is a transgenic wheat trait owned and sold by the Argentine company, Bioceres Crop Solutions. The trait incorporates drought tolerance transferred through a sunflower gene. According to results reported by the company in the drought conditions experienced by Argentina in 2022, HB4[®] wheat demonstrated up to a 43% yield improvement in targeted environments.

Bioceres Crop Solutions applied to the USDA in September 2022 for cultivation approval. USDA’s APHIS approved the import of HB4[®] grain for food and feed use in 2022. Prior to today’s APHIS announcement, transgenic traits in wheat were not approved for cultivation within the U.S.

According to USW, there is no known HB4[®] wheat present in the United States in any capacity at this time.

The regulatory status review from APHIS can be found online here:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/biotech-regulatory-status/regulatory-status-review-table>

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