

Exclusive: Mexican official says US refuses to cooperate on GM corn studies

MEXICO CITY, Aug 3 (Reuters) - The United States has denied a request by Mexico to jointly conduct scientific research on the health impact of genetically-modified corn, a Mexican government official said, a sign the two sides could be inching closer to a formal trade dispute.

Mexico has repeatedly called on the U.S. to work together on scientific studies amid a conflict over the Latin American country's plans to limit the use of GM corn. Mexico buys about \$5 billion worth of corn from its trade partner annually, most of which is GM yellow corn used for livestock feed.

The U.S., however, denied this request and made it clear it will not participate in new scientific studies with Mexico, Mexican Deputy Agriculture Minister Victor Suarez said in an interview with Reuters.

The two countries discussed Mexico's request, including during a visit by U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, but the U.S. will not oblige, Suarez said.

"They did not want to establish a period in which the two parties agree to carry out impact studies on animal health and human health," Suarez said at his office on Wednesday.

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