

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:930  
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2002  
USE OF BT COTTON  
KAILASH MEGHWAL

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the hybrid of BT cotton developed with the help of genetic engineering is being viewed as a safe alternative for traditional Narma cotton;
- (b) whether research has proved that farmers can increase their yield by 1/3 through BT cotton with less amount of pesticides;
- (c) whether the Government have not given approval to the production of BT cotton in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, while permission has been granted for the production of BT cotton in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh during Kharif season 2002-2003; and
- (d) if so, the time by which the Government is likely to give permission to the farmers of Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab to use BT cotton?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) to (d): The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) of the Ministry of Environment & Forests has, so far, approved the environmental release of three Bt. Cotton hybrids. These hybrids are suitable for cultivation in the Central & Southern parts of the country. In the All India Coordinated Cotton Improvement Programme of ICAR, the three Bt. Cotton hybrids registered increased seed yield to the tune of 61,47 and 51% whereas in the South zone these Bt. Cotton hybrids recorded more than 100% increase in seed cotton yield over their non-Bt. counterparts. The traditional 'Bikaneri Narma' cotton variety is a variety for North India.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research has been directed by GEAC to conduct trials for agro-nomic evaluation of Bt. Cotton hybrids suitable for northern States including Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab during Kharif 2002-03. The decision for release of Bt. Cotton hybrids will be taken by GEAC on the basis of the performance of Bt. hybrids in the trials.