

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1115

ANSWERED ON:03.03.2010

CONTAMINATION OF SOIL AND CROPS BY GM CROPS

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**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether field trials of GM vegetables and crops are contaminating the soil and other traditional crops in the country;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether the Hon'ble Supreme Court has also given any direction or sought clarification in this regard;
- (e) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto;
- (f) whether the Government proposes to ban the field trials and research on GM crops in the country; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (c) All field trials are subject to stringent norms such as maintaining

(i) a crop specific isolation distance from the periphery of the experimental site to other sexually compatible fields as prescribed under the Indian Minimum Seed Certification Standards;

(ii) biological barrier by planting border rows all around the experimental plot;

(iii) submission of a validated event specific test protocol of 0.01% before undertaking the trials; and

(iv) post harvest restrictions. The prescribed stipulations are adequate to minimize contamination of soil and other traditional crops due to gene flow, if any.

(d) to (e) The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 07.10.2009 had sought clarifications on whether further field trials in respect of genetically modified plants can only be conducted in greenhouses. It was clarified that field trials form an integral part of research and development of GM crops and are necessary to;

(i) evaluate the agronomic potential of novel-plant trait combinations in open environment;

(ii) measure the level of protein expression to assess its efficacy in the open environment and impact on the target and non target organisms consuming the genetically modified plant;

(iii) collect agronomic and ecological data required to complete the environment safety assessment of genetically modified plant; and

(iii) generate sufficient quantities of plant material for food safety assessment

(f) to (g) There is no proposal to ban the field trials and research of GM crops in the country as the prescribed stipulations are adequate to avoid contamination of soil and traditional crops.