

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:475
ANSWERED ON:07.07.2009
GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD CROPS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether various countries have preferred to buy food items from India as they are Genetically modified (GM) free;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether India's food crop exports could be severely hit if it allows GM food crops;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (e) whether the Ministry of Environment and the Planning Commission have opposed the introduction of GM crops;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the decision taken by the Government on the issue of allowing the cultivation of GM crops in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): Many countries specifically demand GM free food. During discussions of Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) with Russian authorities for lifting the restrictions on import of plant and plant products from India, especially rice, groundnut and sesame seeds, the Russian side sought official confirmation of non-GM status of these crops. Ministry of Environment and Forests has also received a request for issue of general letter stating that commercial production of soybean is only of non-GM seeds in connection with export to Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, China, Philippines, Middle East and European countries.

(c) & (d): Bt. cotton is only transgenic crop approved for commercial cultivation in India by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Therefore, the question of adverse impact on India's food crop export on this account does not arise.

(e) & (f): The Ministry of Environment and Forests has not opposed introduction of GM crops in India. The Planning Commission has earlier supported setting up of National Biotechnology Regulatory Authority.

(g): As on date, GEAC of the Ministry of Environment and Forests has approved the commercial cultivation of only one transgenic crop namely, Bt Cotton.