

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4235

ANSWERED ON:29.08.2011

USE OF GM SEEDS

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

- (a) whether use of Genetically Modified (GM) seeds is permitted in the country;
- (b) if so, the details regarding the varieties of such GM seeds as well as the permission granted in this regard;
- (c) whether there are many shortcomings in the process of grant of permission for the use of such seeds;
- (d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to remove the said shortcoming;
- (e) whether the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) has decided to issue approval letter for field trial only after receiving an objection;
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the number of State Governments opposing the field trial of GM crops; and
- (g) the steps taken by the Government in this regard ?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) & (b) Bt Cotton is the only transgenic crop approved for commercial cultivation in the country. As of date, Bt Cotton hybrids expressing six events namely, Bt cotton hybrids expressing Cry 1 Ac gene (MON 531 event) and stacked genes Cry1 Ac and Cry 2Ab (MON 15985 event) – BG-II developed by M/s Mahyco, encoding fusion genes (cry 1Ab+Cry Ac) 'GFM developed by M/s Nath Seeds, cry 1Ac gene (Event-1) developed by M/s J. K. Agri Genetics Ltd, Cry 1AC gene (Dharwad event) developed by CICR and Cry 1C (event 9124) developed by M/s Metahelix Life Sciences have been approved by the GEAC based on prevailing biosafety assessment as prescribed under Rules 1989 notified under EPA 1986.

(c) & (d) It is recognized that regulation is a dynamic process and needs to be updated keeping in mind the technological advancement in the area of biotechnology. Accordingly, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is following a policy of case by case approval of GM crops even if these are approved for commercial cultivation in other countries. The Biosafety Guidelines for safety assessment are being regularly updated through a consultative approach and following the international norms prescribed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, CODEX Alimentarius Commission and International Plant Protection Convention. Further, as biotechnology is a relatively new and highly technical field, the Ministry has undertaken several capacity building activities to enhance the biosafety management system in India.

(e) to (g) The State Governments of Kerala, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh have informed that GM crop field trials will not be allowed in the State. Recognizing that agriculture is a State subject and the role of the State Government in monitoring the GM crop field trials, the GEAC has decided to issue the approval letters for field trials only on submission of NOC from the respective State Governments so as to avoid disruption of ongoing research trials.