

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:116
ANSWERED ON:24.02.2015
R D ON GM CROPS
Kumar Shri P.

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has undertaken research and development (R&D) work on GM crops the country;
- (b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether any research is being conducted on GM crops for the benefits of agriculture or otherwise;
- (d) whether the Government assessed the impact of GM crops on environment and the life of the people/animals in the country;
- (e) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (f) the measures taken by the Government to check the adverse impact of GM crops and to protect the traditional crops in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

(a) Yes, Madam.

(b) Indian Council of Agricultural Research launched a Plan Scheme entitled 'Network Project on Transgenics in Crops' during XI Five-Year Plan (2007-2012) with an outlay of Rs. 56.5 crores and also approved for the XII Plan period (2012-17) with an outlay of Rs.109.1 crores for research on genetically modified (GM) crops. In addition, Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology is promoting R&D activities in agriculture biotechnology by providing technical and financial support for crop improvement, identification of important genes and their utilization for developing GM crops with improved agronomic characters, herbicide tolerance, delayed fruit ripening, increased yield and oil content, enhanced nutrients and tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses.

Total of 19 contained field trials were conducted for evaluation of seed yield, insect, fungal and viral resistance, abiotic stress tolerance, reduction of cold-induced sweetening and delayed fruit ripening in cereals, oilseeds, pulses and vegetables.

(c) Yes, Madam.

(d) Yes, Madam.

(e) Bt. cotton is the only transgenic crop approved for cultivation in India after elaborate biosafety studies including its impact on human & animal health and environment. There are no credible scientific reports indicating that Bt cotton has any adverse impact on the environment, human health and livestock.

(f) GM crops are subjected to elaborate food and environmental safety assessment following regulatory guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures under Rules 1989 of Environmental Protection Act (1986). The environmental safety assessment includes studies on pollen escape, out-crossing, aggressiveness, weediness and effect of the gene on non-target organisms.