

Indian scientists vehemently support GM technology

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New Delhi: A recent event held by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to discuss about the cultivation of genetically modified crops, concluded with the participating scientists expressing their support for GM technology.

The event brought together several departments of the Government of India, including the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Department of Environment and Forests (DoEF), and Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC), and saw participation of over 40 senior eminent scientists, technocrats and bureaucrats.

The group felt that there is a need to produce more food owing to the limited soil and water resources, and with the burgeoning population expecting to reach 1.5 billion by 2025. The group also felt the necessity of jointly facing all the challenges being witnessed by Indian agriculture. It appreciated taking into cognizance all kinds of new sciences and technologies to meet the challenges, using traits such as tolerance to various biotic and abiotic stresses, improved nitrogen uptake and its efficient use and enhanced nutritional status of grains to address malnutrition in developing countries like India.

The group emphasized that such new technologies will help farmers to produce more and conserve their valuable natural resources leading to the practice of sustainable agriculture in the truest sense. It was emphasized that the success of Bt cotton technology in India should be an eye opener for all stakeholders to move forward in addressing the needs of future agriculture.

The meeting resolved to make use of the collective wisdom of the stakeholders from different backgrounds in addressing the issues being faced in nurturing science-led agriculture development in India.