

Profiles - Rasi Seeds

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Thriving with technology

Having a market share of over 15%, Rasi is now looking to explore virus resistant and abiotic stress tolerant varieties of cotton

In the last fiscal year, Rasi Seeds kept its position as one of the leading Bt cotton seed producer, commanding a market share of more than 15 percent with revenues of ₹392 crore in FY 2011-12. Rasi consolidated its position as the second largest bioagri company and is now looking at aggressively developing newer varieties of cotton to enable further growth.

Currently, Rasi markets 18 cotton hybrids of BG I and 27 hybrids of BG II. The top performing brands include RCH 134 and RCH 650 in the North and RCH2, RCH530 and RCH 578 in Central India.

The Bt cotton earnings contribute to over 85 percent of the total revenues. However, apart from cotton, Rasi also continues to focus on other crops such as maize, rice and pearl millet, all of which saw new generation hybrid seeds being released last year. Rasi also markets its array of vegetable seeds under the HyVeg brand.

Rasi is now moving into developing new virus resistant varieties in different crops including cotton. This includes virus resistant cotton using RNAi technology, and virus-resistant cassava in partnership with Tamil

Nadu Agricultural University. The latter project, involving the development of Indian cassava mosaic virus-resistant cassava, is jointly funded by the DBT and Rasi under a SBIRI scheme. Madurai Kamaraj University has provided the virus resistant gene. Rasi has other collaborations with Madurai Kamaraj University for Yellow Vein Mosaic virus resistant okra and with Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) for Bt brinjal.

Other projects, currently in advanced stages of development include insect resistant rice varieties such as yellow stem borer resistant variety, being developed in collaboration with University of Ottawa, Canada, and marker assisted molecular breeding of crops. Work on developing drought and salt tolerant crops is underway in collaboration with international organizations. Last year, Rasi entered into a partnership with International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines for developing abiotic stress tolerance in rice.

Rasi plans to increase its reach, beyond the four million farmers that the company is currently serving. Along with increasing their R&D expenditure to eight percent in the next few years, Rasi hopes to create an impact with newer hybrids in rice, corn and vegetable seeds. Future growth is estimated to primarily come from providing better genetic varieties of cotton and further acquisition of technologies from across the globe.

Rasi's ambition is to grow at the rate of 20-30 percent in the course of the next few years, fueled by the introduction of new varieties into the market, that are currently under research. The company hopes to become a ₹1,000 crore company in the next five years.

Key Achievements	Performance highlights	Key strategy initiatives	Future plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched two Bt cotton hybrids in North India, RCH 650 and RCH 653 and two in Central India, RCH 656 and RCH 659. Involved in development of Indian cassava mosaic virus-resistant cassava under SBIRI scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rasi Seeds sold 50 lakh packets of Bt cotton last year. Registers 5.41 percent growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has decided to focus on developing virus resistant cotton varieties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rasi aims to grow at 20-30%. Hopes to be a ₹1,000 crore company in the next five years.