

Transgene Developer

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Nuziveedu Seeds is working on its own indigenous transgene to combat bollworms and these technologies are expected to be commercialized soon.

Business: Manufacturer of hybrid cotton seeds

CEO: M Prabhakar Rao

Biotech Revenue: Rs 226.42 crore

Start-up Year: 1973

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Secunderabad-based Nuziveedu Seeds Ltd (NSL) had the commercial release of two Bt hybrid cotton varieties following the approval from the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC). The two Bt hybrid cotton varieties, Bt Bunny and Bt Mallika, is being sold in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The economic benefits to the farmer is in the region of Rs 30,000 per hectare under irrigated conditions. Nuziveedu has sourced the technology from Monsanto-Mahyco to give superior bollworm-resistant cotton hybrids. It is also working on its own indigenous transgene to combat bollworms. These technologies are expected to be commercialized in one to two years resulting in healthy competition and price reduction. The company has produced five lakh packets of these Bt hybrid seeds for cultivation during kharif. Nearly 1.2-1.5 lakh packets was sold in Andhra Pradesh. The cost per packet works out to Rs 1,818 of which Rs 1,250 went to Monsanto, owner of the technology.

The nature of the contract with Monsanto-Mahyco was in perpetuity even as Nuziveedu works on its own technology to develop similar varieties. Nuziveedu also has a 15-strong cotton hybrid pipeline, two of which are undergoing last trials. Besides, it is also looking at Bt varieties in the crops of rice and brinjal.

To serve effectively a client base of 65 lakh farmers, NSL has a strong marketing network comprising 1,395 distributors and dealers and over 20000 sub-dealers spread across 12 states of the country. Keeping pace with the ever-growing demand for NSL products, NSL has set-up regional offices at Secunderabad, Delhi, Akola, Ahmedabad, Guntur, Davangere assisted by C&F Agents at Indore, Trichy, Bhatinda, Hissar and Patna.

Nuziveedu Seeds has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) to establish an IT/ITeS special economic zone at Shollinganallur, on Chennai's IT corridor, at an investment of Rs 1,500 crore (Rs 15 billion). The SEZ, which is to come up on a 66-acre site, will offer space for IT and ITeS services and biotech companies also. The approval for setting up the SEZ has already been obtained from the Center.

NSL has also made an entry into sugar industry. The SCM sugar project in Karnataka is of 3,500 TCD cane crushing capacity with a state of the art 26 MW cogeneration power plant to meet captive power requirements of the sugar plant and exports power to state grid.