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Karnataka to allow GM field trials

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The Karnataka state minister for IT, BT and S&T has announced that the state would allow field trials of GM crops. No timeline or any other detail was mentioned.Â

The safety and efficacy of the usage of GM crops has been under discussion for quite a while now. A newspaper has recently reported that only 4 states have come forward to commercialize Bt Brinjal.Â

Mr Srivatsa Krisha, secretary, Department of IT, BT, Science and Technology, Government of Karnataka, mentioned, "Only Maharastra, AP, Punjab, and Delhi have allowed it. Globally agribiotech would be around a $50 billion market by 2020." He was speaking during theÂ Agribiotech inaugural session on the second day of the Bangalore India Bio 2015.

The Modi government which initially had said no to GM crops after overturning regulatory approval of 15 genetically modified crops, made a u-turn barely 2 months later. This was very obvious in the "Made in India" campagin where the govt's focus was on attracting investments India and Abroad.Â

In another session, conducted today morning at BIB, farmers cultivating Bt Cotton spoke about the increase in yield from using GM seeds as compared to hybrid or any other variety. With the Karnataka govt stepping forward, it would be interestinf to see if the trials actually happen in the state, benefitting the farmers.Â

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