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CICR to support TNAU's indigenous Bt cotton research

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Tamil Nadu Agriculture University (TNAU) and Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR) have entered into agreement for developing indigenous Bt Cotton.

According to the press release, TNAU has already developed a potent Bt gene and using this gene, cotton that is resistant to the boll worms were produced. TNAU in collaboration with CICR in Nagpur will further work on the development of this indigenous Bt cotton.

The MoU was signed by Dr. S. Ayyappan, Secretary (DARE) & Director General, ICAR, New Delhi; Professor K. Ramasamy, Member, State Planning Commission; Dr. C. R. Anandakumar, Acting Vice-Chancellor, TNAU and Dr. N. Gopalakrishnan, Principal Scientist, CICR Regional Station, Coimbatore.

The scientists explained that Bollworm infestation is a serious problem causing enormous yield loss in cotton. Farmers are forced to take up frequent insecticidal sprays. Conventional breeding to develop bollworm resistant cotton is difficult due to non-availability of resistance source in cultivated cotton. With the advent of recombinant DNA and genetic transformation technology, it is possible to introduce a specific gene from a soil bacterium into cotton plant. This gene expresses a Bt protein which has insecticidal activity against the bollworms.