

GM Crops: What does the industry say?

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Dr Ram Kaundinya, chairman, Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE-AG)

"I don't regard it as a change in government's stance vis-a-vis thorough testing of genetically modified crops. What is important is the emphasis on research and development. While the funding to public research institutes continues, the regulations are still not clear. Trials by public institutes have come down in past few years which is contrary to what previous UPA the regime had promised. Yet we feel that this mention of GM hybrids by present government is a strong statement. It is good that government is changing its approach. We are optimistic about future."

Prof. M Mahadevappa, director, JSS Rural Development Foundation, Mysore

"It is a positive development and I welcome the decision. I was disappointed when the GM field trials were put on hold in July this year. Now I am happy that the government is thinking positively on this matter and I urge state governments and NGOs to educate farmers about the benefits of GM technology and adoption."

Mr Swapan Kumar Datta, deputy director general, ICAR

"Modi's support to GM crops is his long standing understanding, appreciation of science-based application for crop improvement strategy. As the CM of Gujarat, he allowed GM hybrid cotton first in India. Farmers from Gujarat and India benefitted from this endeavor. Scientists from India and abroad will welcome his visionary leadership. It is wonderful to see this positive move. Innovative science driven new activities will emerge and will boost in genetic gains for agricultural crop improvement. This raises the expectation that BRAI bill soon would be placed in Parliament for further action towards approval."

Dr TM Manjunath, prominent agri expert and consultant, former director, Monsanto Research Center

"I am much happy about this development. It is good that the Modi government is instilling confidence in investors for agri technology among others. But we have been witnessing pressure from various quarters including activists on the government which otherwise was perceived as business friendly. The conflicting reports on GM trials have made us to keep our fingers crossed. While in principle, the GEAC's recommendations should have been accepted, the previous government too couldn't do so. And now we see that this government too couldn't go ahead. There is a need for hard decisions and I am sure that Mr Modi will do that in favor of agri-biotech industry.