

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2897
ANSWERED ON:03.09.2007
INCLUSION OF COTTON SEEDS IN ECA
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether inferior quality Bg I hybrid seeds were sold as Bg II in certain States;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has received requests from the States to include cotton seed in the list of Essential Commodities Act, 1955;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (d) the other steps proposed to be taken to check such fraudulent sale of seeds?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a): Bt. Cotton seeds are produced and marketed in the country by private sector seed companies. There are no reports from any State about sale of inferior quality Bollgard(BG) hybrid as Bollgard II (BG II).

(b) to (d): Government of Andhra Pradesh has made a reference to the Government of India regarding deletion of cotton seed from the list of essential commodities and has requested for restoration of cotton seeds as an essential commodity under The Essential Commodities Act, 1955, in view of the Interim Order issued by Andhra Pradesh High court in the case titled M/s Mahyco Seeds Limited and Others V/s State of Andhra Pradesh and Others ruling that cotton seeds are not an essential commodity as a result of the amendments carried out by The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2006, which came into force on 12th February, 2007. The Government of India has taken note of the request of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Further, to check fraudulent sale of Bt. Cotton seeds, Government has notified Central Institute of Cotton Research, Nagpur as referral laboratory for testing the presence of Bt. genes, State Governments have been provided funds to strengthen seed testing laboratories, awareness campaigns on various aspects of Bt. Cotton cultivation have been conducted in all Bt. cotton growing States and seed inspectors have been empowered to draw samples of Bt. cotton seeds under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to regulate quality. States have also been advised to take punitive action against persons selling spurious Bt. cotton seeds.