

OPINION DIVIDED

GM crops: Panel seeks ban on trials

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New Delhi: Castigating the Union government processes for clearing genetically modified (GM) crops without proper scientific scrutiny of their impacts, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture said it was more than convinced that there are better options available for increasing food production and productivity than transgenic crops. It asked for a ban on field trials of GM crops till a much better monitoring, oversight and surveillance mechanism replaces the existing defunct processes and all concerns of the panel are addressed.

The committee, which is headed by Basudeb Acharia and includes 11 Congress MPs, presented its report on GM crops on Thursday slamming the clearance and monitoring system of the government spanning various ministries. "The entire system reflects a pro-industry tilt which is best avoided," the report said.

It said the system was grossly inadequate and antiquated.

