

## INDIA'S ENVIRONMENT MINISTER GIVES GREEN SIGNAL TO FIELD TRIALS OF GM CROPS

India's environment minister Mr. Prakash Javadekar said that there is no scientific evidence that genetically modified (GM) crops are bad for health or environment. In a written response in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Parliament of India, over the queries of the recent decision of GEAC granting approval to field trials, the minister quoted, "GM crops have beneficial traits such as insect resistance and herbicide tolerance, stress tolerance, fungal resistance, disease resistance, salt tolerance, drought tolerance, enhanced yield and nutrition that may help in food security." The minister said that GM crops particularly



GM corn, canola, soybean, and cotton are being cultivated and consumed by humans as well as animals in many countries of the world as food, feed and processed products.

"There is no scientific evidence to prove that GM crops would harm soil, human health and environment," he said. "In view of various concerns related to the safety, efficacy and agronomic performance of transgenic seeds, extensive evaluation and regulatory approval process takes place before any GM plant is approved for commercial cultivation," he added.

He informed that the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) recently approved 12 GM crops - cotton, rice, castor, wheat, maize, groundnut, potato, sorghum, brinjal, mustard, sugarcane, and chickpea - for experimental field trials for the purpose of generating biosafety data.

For more details visit [http://www.ptinews.com/news/5423713\\_No-scientific-evidence-to-prove-GM-crops-harmful--Govt-.html](http://www.ptinews.com/news/5423713_No-scientific-evidence-to-prove-GM-crops-harmful--Govt-.html).