

## **Biosafety News**

### **Bt Cotton Falling To Pest, Maharashtra Tense**

Genetically modified or Bt cotton is no longer resistant to pink bollworm--a major pest--in Maharashtra, prompting the state government to write to the Union government to seek its intervention. A research report by Dr K R Kranthi, former director of Central Institute of Cotton Research (CICR), shows that pink bollworm has developed resistance to Bollgard-II Bt cotton not only in Maharashtra but other cotton-growing states as well. Bollgard-II is the Bt hybrid variety that was introduced in 2010.



“There are only two benefits of Bt cotton. One, it controls bollworm, due to which the yield is protected. Two, it reduces use of insecticides meant for bollworm control. Currently, cotton growers do not get either benefit,” Dr Kranthi told TOI via email.

Bijay Kumar, principal secretary, agriculture department, said, “There are nearly 85 private Bt cotton seed-producing companies in the state and we have been getting several complaints of crop failure from farmers. In most cases, we cannot do much to help affected farmers. We want the Central government to come up with a clear set of guidelines for us in this situation.”

The issue assumes significance given that Maharashtra is the largest cotton-growing state in the country.

Read more details from [Times of India](#) Ahmedabad Edition.

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