

Genetic Engineering is NOT the answer

It's a decade since GE crops hit the world agriculture and the damage and havoc it has created is there for us to see. The hype weaved around GE crops caught up the poor vulnerable farmer who became an easy prey for the agro- chemical companies to sell their products. All through the years we have seen how GE crops have systematically debilitated the world agriculture and all the more the small and marginal farmers. Wide cases of farmer's suicides, genetic contamination, economic disasters, environmental damage and unexplained decline in fauna and many more are all the clear negative manifestations of GE crops.

Bt cotton- no real prescription to boll worm

Take the case of Bt cotton, the first GE crops which was promoted with much fanfare and hype was a catastrophe in itself. That Bt cotton will reduce the use of pesticide consumption against the dreaded boll worm came as a cropper and numerous studies have established this fact. In China, a study showed that, after seven years of cotton cultivation, populations of other insects -- such as mirids -- have increased so much that farmers now have to spray their crops up to 20 times a growing season to control them, according to the study of 481 Chinese farmers in five major cotton-producing provinces. Moreover, peculiar cases of wilting, root rot have been reported in Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh. Other threatening manifestations of Bt cotton is- the toll of lives on cattle. Cattle have been dying after consuming the Bt stalks, establishing that Bt cotton respects no one and claims the lives of humans and live stock alike.

Growing resistance

Over the years, it has become increasing evident that GE crops are being met with stiff resistance by the farming community, consumers and awareness is being spread on the disastrous affects of GE crops. In India, many panchayats and villages are declaring themselves as GE-Free villages. In Tamil Nadu farmers groups and organizations have expressed their anguish by uprooting the trial plants of Bt paddy. In Chattisgarh, the government ordered probe into Bt rice trials. These events are clear reflection of the ground situation and sending a loud and signal that GE is not acceptable at all and that the government should take a reality check and should forthright rescue the farming community from falling prey to the agro-chemical companies.

In US, huge uproar was raised when commercial long grain rice was contaminated by the unapproved GE rice variety LLRice601. The full impact of the incident was being felt among farmers, consumers, importers and the food industry.

Interestingly in US, one of the largest producers of GE crops, a survey showed that Americans are "still generally uncertain" about genetically modified and cloned foods". Farmers in many parts of the world are realizing and experience the threats of GE and are collectively rejecting GE in all its manifestations.

All the claims of the corporations are being busted, world wide and are lacking credibility in their claims and as a matter of fact insurance companies are not willing to insure GE crops! GE crops are a threat to lives, livelihoods and ecology. Researcher scholar's voices are gagged when they raise their voices over the ill affects of GE crops. Agro-chemical companies goes to the extent of bribing countries to allow commercial sale of their products or indulge in other arm-twisting tactics.

Hence GE crops are not a solution, as claimed by corporations who are hell bent in filling their coffers at the expense of poor farmer's life and livelihood. The panacea lies in totally rejecting genetic engineering and adopting ecological farming where agriculture is in sync with nature and ecology

Please read the fact sheet titled- global status of GE crops: Consumers and farmers still say NO! prepared by Green Peace International

Resist GE - adopt ecological farming!

In solidarity with Joint GM Opposition Month (JIGMOM)

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