

SAY NO TO Bt Brinjal : SAY NO to Release of Genetically Modified Crops in India

Participate in the Public Consultation on Bt Brinjal

to be held by

Shri. Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests (i/c)

Monday, 25th January 2010, 10.30 am - 2.00 pm, *Good Shepherd Auditorium*, Prof. Ashirvatham Circle, Residency Road - Museum Road Junction, Opposite St. Joseph's PU College, Bangalore 560 025

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) include crops that are modified by inserting gene/s from any other organism - plant, animal or microorganism. Such modification is undertaken on the presumption that it would enhance desirable properties or create new favourable characteristics. In agriculture, a major part of this technology is deployed to evolve resistance to specific diseases or pests or allow greater use of chemical herbicides for weed control.

In India, GM technology has been employed in cultivation of Bt Cotton which claims enhanced resistance to attacks by bollworm. This has been done by using a gene of *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a soil bacterium, and inserting it into Cotton plant. Now a similar technique is promoted for Brinjal cultivation, where the inserted gene makes the genetically modified Bt Brinjal plant to produce a toxic protein to attack a specific pest – stem and fruit borer [*Leucinodes orbonalis* (Guen.)]. *In India, commercial release of Bt Brinjal has been approved following a controversial and unscientific decision on 14th October 2009 by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), the regulatory authority for transgenic crops set up by the Ministry of Environment and Forests.*

Release of GMOs is also a matter of litigation in the Supreme Court and Parliamentarians have warned of devastating consequences to farmers and consumers in India. As a result, the Indian Environment and Forests Minister Mr. Jairam Ramesh has been forced to withhold the approval subjecting a final decision to a series of public consultations across India.

These consultations will now form the basis to decide whether GMO foods, like Bt Brinjal, should at all be released into India. This would constitute the first ever release of GMO food in India.

There is extensive evidence demonstrating that GM crops and foods cause adverse impacts on human and animal health, and also on the environment. In addition, it seriously compromises farmers' and consumers' socio-political and economic rights and also cultural norms. Experts warn that Genetically Modified crops, especially of food, significantly increase health risks, cause crop failures, contribute to loss of agricultural and natural biodiversity, and seriously erode livelihood choices.

With such unprecedented risks before us, the Public Consultation to be held by India's Environment Minister is probably your only chance to voice your concern against the introduction of GMO foods - such as Bt Brinjal. Not only will this help you understand more about what will be your future menu, but also assess the risks that you and your family will expose you to.

Exercise your democratic right and assert your right to safe and wholesome food by taking part in this consultation.

Right to safe choices of what you eat lies with you.

This is your only chance to decide against allowing GMO foods in India.

Don't let Multinational Corporations control what you eat and thus your life itself.

Do come with your family and friends to the Public Consultation.

Tell as many people as you can—people you know or those you can reach out to—about Bt brinjal and its very significant risks to our health, environment and our economy.

For more information log on to: <http://www.indiagminfo.org/> - for All information on GM in India; <http://www.iamnolabrat.com/> - for all campaigns related information for GM free India; <http://gmfreekarnataka.wordpress.com/> - for information on GM Free activities in Karnataka; <http://myrighttosafefood.blogspot.com/> - for My Right to Safe food campaign ; <http://sumansahai-blog.blogspot.com> - for information on GM in India; <http://www.safefoodnow.org/> Resource on Safe Food

Endorsed by

Juli and Vivek Cariappa, Krac-a-Dawna Organic Farm, H.D.Kote Taluk 571121, Karnataka Nagar, Beach Road, Nagercoil. 629002 Tel: 04652-221235*, 220074(O), 09443482599 India.ph. +91-8221-210101, e-mail krac_a_dawna@yahoo.com, Or susslife@yahoo.co.in email: fedcot@yahoo.com

Kavitha Kuruganti, Kheta Virasat Mission, Jaitu, Faridkot dist., Punjab, Phone: +91-9393001550; kavitha.kuruganti@gmail.com

Usha and Sridhar Radhakrishnan, Thanal, H-3, Jawahar Nagar, Kowdiar, Thiruvananthapuram-3, Kerala Ph : 9447022775

G. Krishna Prasad, Sahaja Samrudha, www.sahajasamrudha.org, 'Nandana', No-7, 2nd Cross, 7th Main, Sulthanpalya, Bangalore-560 037. Phone: 080-23655302 / 9880862058

Sangeetha Sriram, SAFE FOOD ALLIANCE, c/o Dr. Natarajan 75, Paper Mills Road, Perambur, Chennai 600011 Ph: 94440-07649

Sangita Sharma, Director, Annadana Soil and Seed Savers, Ishana, Gopathi Farms, Village Singapura, Post Vidyanyapura Bangalore- 560097 Cell- +91 9448068347 myrighttosafefood@gmail.com www.annadana.com

R. Selvam, Pudu Nilavu Food Forest, Thalavu Malai, Arachalur, Erode District, Tamil nadu, 638 101 09443663562

Bhargavi S. Rao/Leo F. Saldanha, Environment Support Group, 1572, 36th Cross, Ring Road, Banashankari II Stage, Bangalore 560085. Tel: 91-80-26713559-61, Email: bhargavi@esgindia.org / leo@esgindia.org, Web: www.esgindia.org

Tamil nadu Organic Farmers Federation, Thalavumalai, Arachalur, Erode District, Tamil nadu. Contact: R. Selvam, organicerode@gmail.com, 09443663562

Nagesh Hegde, Mytri Grama, Sulikere Post, Kengeri Hobli Bangalore-560060, Cell 9901902402, WLL (080) 22739757 Beluru Sudarshana, Freelance Journalist, email: beluru@gmail.com

Sejal, Association for India's Development – Bangalore Chapter, <http://sejshwhirlpool.wordpress.com/>

Manjunath H, Programme Associate, Samvada - Baduku College, Bangalore Tel: 9480330652 <http://chemicalfreeagriculture.blogspot.com>

S. Kannaiyan, 9444989543. for South Indian Coordination Committee of Farmers' Movements. Panakahally post, Thalavady via, Sathyamangalam taluka, Erode district. 638 461

Ponnambalam, Create, Kanyakumari Jilla, Consumer Protection Center, 22, Pavalur

Rajesh Krishnan, Greenpeace – Bangalore.