

## Field trials for 21 new varieties of GM crops, including rice and wheat, approved in India

The new government has approved field trials for 21 new varieties of genetically modified (GM) crops, including staples such as rice and wheat. The controversial move is considered crucial to feeding India's teeming millions but opposed by some activists as a health hazard.

Supporters of the modern technology say GM crops can help improve yield by re-engineering the genetic code and stabilise food prices. The government approval comes despite the fact that the Supreme Court is currently deliberating on the biosafety of GM crops. Other crops approved for the field trials include several varieties of maize and cotton. Another six were deferred for discussion because of want of sufficient information.

Newly-constituted Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee chairman Hem Pande, who is also additional secretary in the environment ministry, claimed that the committee could not meet for a year as there was "miscommunication" on part of the government that the SC had imposed a ban on GM crop field trials.

**Read the full, original article:** Govt approves field trials for varieties of GM crops