

Indian prime minister breaks silence, calls for introduction of GM crops

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday pushed for technology-driven agriculture, including genetically engineered crops such as pulses, to boost farmer earnings and meet increasing demand while launching the Doordarshan Kisan channel for farmers.

This is the first time the PM seems to have articulated the government's stand on GM crops, while calling for better research and higher productivity to boost farm earnings.

"Today, the country has to import pulses. Let's resolve that by 2022 we will no longer have to import pulses... I have been telling our universities... our agricultural universities should take up each variety of pulses... how to do research in it, how to do genetic engineering in it, how to increase productivity, how to increase protein content so that farmers get good prices," Modi said.

The PM called for increasing foodgrain productivity from 2 tonnes a hectare to 3 tonnes, along with a three-pronged farm approach that balanced farming, animal husbandry and tree plantation. "Our average farm productivity comes to two tonnes per hectare against the global average of three tonnes a hectare. We must strive to reach the global level," Modi said, saying this was necessary to ensure food security for the country's rising population.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: Genetically engineered crops can aid farmers: PM Modi