Examining claims GMO cotton causing Indian suicide epidemic

One major accusation of evil on the part of GMOs and Monsanto is forcing Indian farmers into debt through expensive seed that cannot be saved and fails to produce any substantial yields. Farmers in their desperation turn to suicide to escape the clutches of Monsanto.

There's a part of the story you won't read on any activist websites because it doesn't fit the narrative of poor farmers being exploited by agro-corporations. Stories about poor farmers smuggling and fighting for the right to use GM seed does not help groups like Greenpeace. Instead, the stories of these farmers are ignored and Monsanto is targeted in order to rally activists and urban elites

By 2008, Bt cotton had nearly doubled the nation's average yield per acre and turned India from a cotton importer to a major exporter. In 2005, a study by the University of Andhra found that Bt cotton farmers earned three times more than non-Bt cotton farmers in the Guntur district and eight times more in the Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh, India.

So why are farmers committing suicide? Studies have pointed to a variety of reasons, but generally agree on three main and interrelated factors: a predatory banking system, poor irrigation infrastructure, and a newly liberalized economy.

The disconnect between the overwhelming findings in studies and what is being reported by anti-GM critics is disappointing, to say the least. The reporting of this story has been irresponsible and a blatant attempt to create a narrative of corporate misconduct. This simultaneously diverts attention away from a genuine problem and trivializes real events of economic exploitation and the vulnerability of the poor – in this case, a predatory banking system and poorly developed irrigation that the vulnerable farmers of India rely on.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: Why is Monsanto killing Indian farmers? They're not.