

GMO mustard developed in India cheaper, has higher yields, but activists claim it causes sterility

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Following news reports on the move of the application for approval of GM Mustard to the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee in the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (GEAC), farmer unions and citizen groups from the city and different parts of the country are urging the government to not jeopardise food, farming and environment by introducing the genetically modified varieties in the country.

“The GM mustard hybrid has been created mainly to facilitate the production of seed manufacturers. Farmers already have a choice of non-GM mustard hybrids in the market, apart from the high yielding mustard varieties. But by bringing this in, we will be losing out on seed sovereignty and the cost that will be borne by farmers in future will be alarming,” said Ananthoo an organic activist and member of the Safe Food Alliance, citing suicides of Bt Cotton farmers.

These GM mustard seeds were developed by Delhi University and were called the Dhara Mustard Hybrid 11. According to statements made by its developers, this transgenic mustard hybrid variety will provide a 30 per cent higher yield than other varieties and the costs for these seeds will be lower. However, activists claim that the non-transgenic seeds too provide higher productivity, and that the genetically modified seeds will pose severe health hazards like male sterility and other problems to both people and the environment.

“Once approved, it will provide a backdoor entry for various other GM crops in the regulatory pipeline. Many private players with seeds in their hands, from across the world would come in, causing chaos,” said Rajesh Krishnan, convener of coalition for a GM-Free India.

Read full, original post: [Farmers Cry Foul Over GM Mustard Cultivation](#)