

Did loss of pest resistance in GMO cotton prompt Indian government proposal to revoke patent?

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THE Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR) has confirmed that Bt cotton incorporating Monsanto's proprietary Bollgard-II technology has developed susceptibility to pink bollworm insect pests. This reported susceptibility is what has also apparently led the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion to serve notice to Mahyco Monsanto Biotech India Ltd (MMB) — the licensing arm of the US life sciences giant — calling upon it to explain why the patent for the technology should not be revoked.

Keshav Raj Kranthi, director of the Nagpur-based institute under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, said that he had been consulted by the Union Agriculture Ministry specifically on whether the pink bollworm (*Pectinophora gossypiella*) had developed resistance to Bt cotton grown in India — to which he had given an affirmative reply.

Bollgard-II technology, which involves introduction of Cry1Ac and Cry2Ab genes from *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a soil bacterium, into cotton plants, is claimed to confer resistance against three insect pests: American bollworm (*Helicoverpa armigera*), pink bollworm and spotted bollworm (*Earias vittella*).

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Section 64 of the Indian Patent Act 1970 provides for revocation of patents, including on grounds that “the invention, so far as claimed in any claim of the complete specification, is not useful”. It is not clear, however, whether such provisions can be extended to the diminished efficacy, if any, of an invention.

Read full, original post: [Monsanto patent under cloud as Bt cotton prone to pink bollworm](#)