

## Anti-GMO activists move to block Bt insect-resistant eggplant field trials in India

Ten years after imposing a moratorium on commercial release of genetically modified Bt Brinjal, the [federal government] has now allowed biosafety research field trials of two new transgenic [GMO] varieties of indigenously developed Bt Brinjal [eggplant] in eight states during 2020-23.

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The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)— a central regulator which allowed confined field trials of new varieties of Bt Brinjal— has, however, asked the applicant to begin it only after taking no-objection certificate (NOC) from states concerned ....

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These indigenous transgenic varieties of brinjal hybrids .... are developed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research's (ICAR) National Research Center on Plant Biotechnology (NRCPB).

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Opposing the GEAC's order, the .... farmers' body, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS), has written to chief ministers of [the] concerned states, requesting [they don't approve the] field trials of two transgenic Bt Brinjal varieties.

The BKS representatives .... have also met Union environment minister Prakash Javadekar, requesting him to revoke the GEAC's order.

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