

# THE SOLVENT EXTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

(Incorporated under S.25 of the Companies Act, 1956)

Premier Association of Vegetable Oil Industry & Trade - ISO 9001:2015 Organisation

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21<sup>st</sup> December, 2017

Dear Mr. Chengal Reddy,

**Reg: Parliamentary Committee Report on Genetically Modified crops and its impact on environment.**

In Rajya Sabha, on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec., placed on table a report on Genetically Modified crops and its impact on environment, a copy of the same is attached for your kind perusal. There are lots of ifs and buts and hurdles for GMO crop in the country and unlikely its introduction in the country.

The main observations are quoted below.

*84. The Committee notes that feeding trials of Bt Cotton on some animals have been of very short duration. The Committee is not at all convinced with the duration and the manner in which ICAR has conducted its trials to study the impact of GM crops on animal health. It is also surprising to note that these trials have been conducted on a very limited number of animals whereas the Committee feels that these trials should have been conducted on a large number of animals and for atleast 2-3 generations. The Committee is*

*also wary of the methodology opted by the ICAR for conducting these trials. The Committee, therefore, is of the considered view that the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries should chalk out guidelines for the purpose and then conduct these trials under its supervision so that the veracity of these claims can be established in the light of these studies.*

*85. The Committee is further a little bewildered to note that even after about 15 years of introduction of GM crop in India, the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries could not scientifically prove whether GM crops has any adverse impact on the health of an animal. The Committee, accordingly, is at a loss to understand that when the Department itself feels that long term feeding trials in all the species of livestock including fish must be undertaken then how come it should give a conclusive view that GM crop has no impact on animal health. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Department should get the desired scientific study done to give its conclusive recommendations in the matter.*

*86. The Committee observes that there are several animal studies indicating serious health risks associated with GM food including infertility, immune problems, accelerated aging, insulin regulation, and changes in major organs and the gastrointestinal system which should also be examined thoroughly before arriving this conclusion that there lies no negative impact on animal health on account of GM crops. The Committee, accordingly, recommends that necessary action in the matter may be taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in consultation with ICAR and Department of*

*Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries.*

*87. The Committee, further, learns that GEAC has given its approval for commercialisation of GM mustard inspite of the fact that the matter is pending for decision in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The Committee has been given to understand that GM mustard being a herbicide tolerant GMO, there is clear evidence on the adverse impacts of such GMOs from elsewhere in the world. In the case of GM mustard, from what one can gather from different quarters, there are serious unanswered questions. The Committee has also come to know that many State Governments in the country are opposed to its entry even in the form of field trials, leave alone commercial cultivation. The Committee strongly believes that unless the bio-safety and socio-economic desirability, taking into consideration long run effects, is evaluated by a participatory, independent and transparent process and a retrieval and accountability regime is put in place, no GM crop should be introduced in the country. The Committee, accordingly, recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should examine the impact of GM crops on environment thoroughly, in consultation with the concerned Government agencies, experts, environmentalists, civil society, and other stakeholders so that the nation is very clear about all its probable impacts before taking a call in the matter.*

**I would appreciate to receive your comments on the subject matter.**

Thanks & best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B V Mehta', is positioned in the upper left corner of the page. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. B V Mehta

Executive Director