

# The Telegraph

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Wed, 20 May-15; Telegraph - Kolkata; Size : 72 sq.cm.; Page : 7

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## GM mustard trials

**New Delhi, May 19** (Reuters): Indian scientists have completed final trials of a genetically modified (GM) variety of mustard and will submit a report to the government in a month, hoping to win over stiff opposition to make it the country's first commercial transgenic food crop.

The Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, which is affiliated to the BJP, is one of the biggest critics of GM crops and wants the government to stop all field trials saying they "will destroy the entire agrarian economy".

Allowing GM crops is critical to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's goal of boosting farm productivity in India.

India imports about 60 per cent of its edible oil needs at an annual cost of up to \$10 billion — its third-biggest import item after crude oil and gold. The new GM mustard offers the country a chance to substantially reduce this import bill as it would be the highest-yielding oilseed in India, with yields 26-34 per cent higher than the national average, said Delhi University's Deepak Pental, leading the research on the GM mustard.

Pental said recently concluded bio-safety studies did not show any adverse allergenic, toxic or environmental impact.