

Order on Cotton Seed Pricing Opposed

Express News Service

Bengaluru: The Association of Biotech-Led Enterprises - Agriculture focused Group (ABLE-AG), a non-profit organisation to promote research and development of agriculture biotechnology in India, on Monday expressed serious concern with regards to the recent decision by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare to regulate the maximum sale price of cotton seeds in the country.

The order also aims to control the licence fee, royalty trait fee and licensing terms on which technology providers make available innovative technologies for the benefit of Indian cotton farmers through cotton seed companies on terms in bilateral private contracts.

In a statement, Ram Kaundinya, Director General, ABLE-AG, said, "While a part of the order seeks to determine the maximum sale price of cotton seed under the Essential Commodities Act, it extends to fixing a component thereof associated with innovation... We believe such a step hampers confidence in making investments in innovative R&D and is contrary to the government's 'Make in India' campaign and impacts ease of doing business."

With introduction of BT cotton in India from 2002, today India has become the world's second largest exporter of cotton from the second largest importer at the time of technology introduction. India produces cotton worth \$10 billion annually of which \$2.5 billion is exported.