

Commercialise GM mustard crop, say farmer bodies

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A consortium of six farmer bodies today demanded commercialisation of GM mustard crop saying this will help in increasing yield and farmers' income in the country by more than ₹1,000 crore.

The representatives of consortium also submitted a petition in this regard to Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar and Minister of State for Agriculture Mohanbhai Kundariya.

"Through this petition, we demand the government to give us the right to choose the technology we wish to put in our farms. As farmers, we are of the opinion that the GM technology can successfully co-exist with conventional hybrid as well as organic

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farming," Consortium of Indian farmers Association Secretary General P Chengal Reddy told reporters here.

Reddy further said India imports huge quantities of edible oils which can also be extracted from GM crops.

"The commercialisation of GM mustard would help in a big way reducing the import of edible oils," he added.

Kisan Coordination Committee Chairman US Mann said that

GM mustard can easily repeat the success story of GM cotton.

"According to the initial studies, GM mustard has the potential to increase yield between 20 and 30 per cent which is significant enough for the commercial cultivation of any crop. The hybrid, if adopted, could bring a total additional benefit to farmers between ₹162 crore and ₹1,118 crore during the peak cultivation season," Mann said.

The other farmer bodies, which are part of the consortium, are Sir Choudhary Choturam Bhartiya Kisan Samiti, Consortium of Indian Farmers Association, Kisan Coordination Committee, Shetkari Sanghataana Trust, United Farmers Empowerment Initiative and Confederation of NGOs of Rural India.