

Allow Import of GM Soya from US, Industry Tells Govt

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Kolkata: India's soyabean processors and poultry industry have asked the Narendra Modi government to open the doors for genetically-modified soyabean from the United States so that they can produce soya oil as well as soyameal in the country and utilise the unused crushing capacities built up over the years.

This comes at a time when soyabean prices in India have shot up 32% since October 2015, when crops started arriving in the market. Soyameal prices have appreciated 46% since then, making poultry and cattle feed costlier, and pushing up chicken and dairy products prices for Indian consumers.

The US is keen to export soyabean to India to increase its earnings from agricultural exports to the country, which stood at \$1.33 billion in 2015.

Scott Sindelar, minister counsellor for agricultural affairs at the US Embassy in Delhi, on Thursday said that soyabean is one of the important agricultural products that the US is looking to export to India. "Soyabean has multiple uses and is an important protein food. The US now exports almonds, apples, cotton, walnuts and pulses to India," he said.

Sindelar was in Kolkata to attend a two-day programme organised by the US Department of Agriculture's office of agricultural affairs, together with the US Consulate General Kolkata, which brought about 15 American agriculture representative groups to Kolkata.