

## **Performance of Bt. Cotton Cultivation in Tamil Nadu**

### **Report of State Department of Agriculture**

The Genetically Engineering Approval Committee of Government of India have permitted commercial cultivation of 2 transgenic Bt. Cotton hybrids viz. MECH 184 and MECH 162 Mahyco - Monsanto for three years from 2002 - 2005 for Southern India.

The district of Coimbatore, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Erode, Madurai, Perambalur, Salem, Theni, Tirunelveli, Tuticoin, Trichy, Villupuram, Virudhunagar have been selected by the firm and as against the allotment of 12610 packets, 784 packets were distributed, through the firm. The cost of 1 packet is Rs. 1600 which contain 450gm of Bt. Cotton hybrid and 120 gm of non-Bt. seed of the same hybrid along with literature about the cultivation. Harvest is yet to be completed fully. However, it has been ascertained that pesticide spray has been reduced in Bt. plots for lepidoptera pests than in non Bt. plots. But there is no yield difference. Spraying continues for sucking pests and prodenia. It is also a fact that due to severe drought, pest incidence was also low in 2002-2003.

#### **OBSERVATION ON BT. COTTON CROP FURNISHED BY DISTRICT JOINT DIRECTORS OF AGRICULTURE:**

1. Erode:

46 packets distributed. Crop is in the harvest stage. The incidence of Stem weevil attack was more. Crop dried in severe stage. Condition of the crop is not satisfactory.

2. Madurai:

No distribution under Bt. The allotted seeds for Madurai were distributed to Dindigul, Theni, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli and Tuticorin districts by the Madurai dealers.

3. Theni:

Sucking pests incidence was there in Bt. But it was below ETL. Pesticide spray has been reduced

4. Dindigul:

There are fewer incidences of Boll worms. The pesticides spray for bollworms has been reduced. Only one spray has been applied for bollworms. But there is no yield variation in comparison to non-Bt. varieties

5. Tirunelveli:

Number of bolls was more in Bt. plots and incidence of bollworms is less.

6. Coimbatore:

Due to inadequate rainfall and scarcity of water in the wells, only 3 farmers have raised the crop (MECH 162). The incidence of bollworms has been reduced in Bt. plots than in non Bt. plots. Number of bolls was more in Bt. Boll weight is also more. The lint weight was also on the higher side.

7. Salem:

(i) Farmers are of the opinion that Bt. hybrids have given more yield than non-Bt. hybrids and incidence of bollworms was also less in Bt.

(ii) However it was also observed that, the incidence of bollworms was minimum in non-Bt. plots also.

There is no difference between Bt. and non Bt. cotton this year. It may be observed for two more years before a judgment is pronounced.

For Commissioner of Agriculture  
Government of Tamil Nadu