

Decision on Commercialisation of Bt Brinjal

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Minister for Environment and Forests (I/C) today announced his decision on the production and use of BT Brinjal. He also made public a copy of his exhaustive report which relies on inputs received from stakeholders from all across the spectrum of scientists, civil society, academics, Chief Ministers of various states and others concerned. Following is an excerpt from the statement issued today:

“Based on all the information presented in the preceding paragraphs and when there is no clear consensus within the scientific community itself, when there is so much opposition from the state governments, when responsible civil society organisations and eminent scientists have raised many serious questions that have not been answered satisfactorily, when the public sentiment is negative and when Bt-brinjal will be the very first genetically-modified vegetable to be introduced anywhere in the world and when there is no over-riding urgency to introduce it here, it is my duty to adopt a cautious, precautionary principle-based approach and impose a moratorium on the release of Bt-brinjal, till such time independent scientific studies establish, to the satisfaction of both the public and professionals, the safety of the product from the point of view of its long-term impact on human health and environment, including the rich genetic wealth existing in brinjal in our country.

A moratorium implies rejection of this particular case of release for the time being; it does not, in any way, mean conditional acceptance. This should be clearly understood.”

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