

Seminar Interim Report

The Seminar

Biosafety refers to the need to protect the environment including human and animal health from the possible adverse effects of the Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and products thereof derived from the use of modern biotechnology. Genetically Modification Technique may be the hope for the challenges emerging in the agriculture field. Modern Biotechnology is recognized as having great potential for the promotion of human well-being, particularly in meeting critical needs for food & agriculture.

Biosafety issues have been treated as most crucial in the evolution of biotech products. To address the health and environmental concerns of GMOs, nationally and internationally, Governments and organizations have developed biosafety guidelines and rules. In India, GMOs and products thereof are regulated as per the “Rules for the manufacture, use / import / export and storage of hazardous microorganisms / genetically engineered organisms or cells, 1989” (commonly referred as Rules, 1989).

Objective of the Seminar

Biosafety Guidelines provided practical guidance on biosafety techniques for use on fields. But unfortunately not much has been known by the farmers on the fields. There is a gap between the policy maker and the worker working on the ground level. During the trials and after post release of GM crop there are lots of guidelines which has to be followed and hence this workshop will give insight to all the ground level workers (farmers) about the guidelines.

Also the objective of the seminar is to spread the knowledge about biosafety. Farmer must have a knowledge of what is going on in the word through biotechnology and what are the ways these biotechnology crop are govern in around the world. They must also be aware of the Indian approval system so that they have more faith on the system.

Since farmers play a crucial role in approving and using any new Genetically Modified plant in our country, its perspective about the status of biosafety in the state will be important, through this seminar for farmers we want to generate or know:

- Awareness about the Biosafety Guidelines.
- Knowing the problems faced by the farmers, specifically related to biosafety.
- Wanted to teach farmers the importance of buffer zone while cultivating Bt-cotton.

Approach/Strategy

A Seminars – christened as ‘Biosafety & GM crop trials’ in all Bt-cotton growing area of Gujarat with an aim of addressing all of the gaps that have been identified, has been envisaged. The One-day seminar would attempt to give a brief picture regarding the present rules & regulations on Biosafety and the role of farmers in biosafety.

The Seminars aim at participation from the Bt-Cotton growing farmers of that area, State agriculture departments, Govt. Officials of related area & any other professionals from the same & allied fields, etc.

Bhavnagar

Date & day: 14th November, 2014. Friday

Venue: Chamber of Commerce, Bhavnagar

Inauguration:

The seminar was inaugurated by **Shri. H. B. Suthar** IAS, **District Development Officer** Bhavnagar. He stated the importance of such seminar and congratulated the state government for conducting such a program for the welfare of the farmer community.

Eminent Speakers:

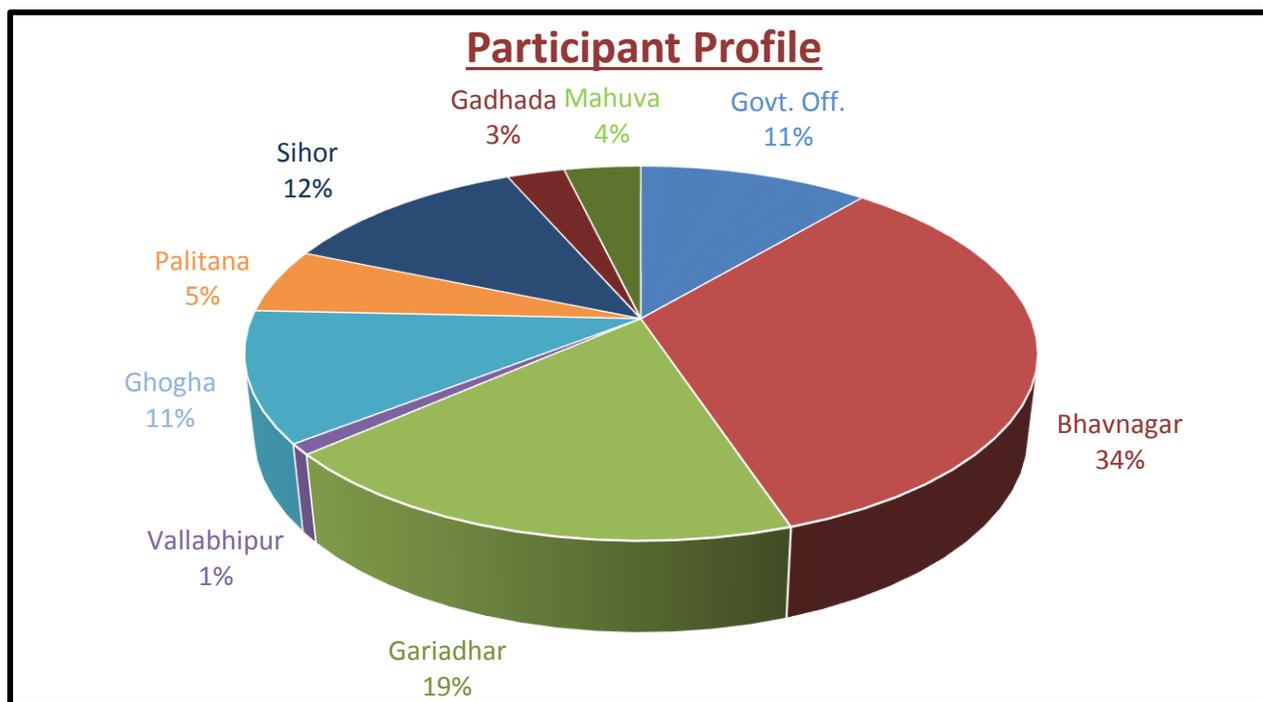
- 1. Dr. Vijay Kumar, Ex-Principal Scientist, Navsari Agriculture University:** - Dr. Vijay Kumar delivered a talk on the details of Biosafety Trials. He started his talk with the role played by Bt Cotton in economic growth of Gujarat farmers. He then briefed the different guidelines which have to be followed at the time of trial of GM crops. He said that, no doubt that the trails are conducted under the inspection of senior researcher but there is equal need of informed farmers who are part of these trials. He explained the crucial role of the farmers in biosafety trials and also talked about the different options of risk mitigation.
- 2. Ms. Anasuya Lahiry Bhadalkar, Sector Specialist Environment, GSBTM:** - Ms. Anasuya Bhadalkar delivered a talk on the status of GM crops globally and the environmental issues related to their trials. She briefed the gathering about different case studies and the importance of guidelines and role of farmers in these trials. She also put forward the Indian system of approvals a GM crop and emphasized on the need of making informed choices on conducting trials of GM crops. Giving a comparative account of the guidelines in different countries she brought out that the Indian guidelines are robust and their proper implementation is of great concern.

Photo Gallery



Profile of Participants

The program was attended by 95 participants, ranging from different area of Bhavnagar,



Organizers

1. Gujarat State Biotechnology Mission
Dept. of Sci. & tech., Govt. of Gujarat
2. Shri Sardar Patel Institute of Development
Bhavnagar



Gujarat State Biotechnology Mission
Department of Science & Technology, Government of Gujarat
11th Block, 9th Floor- Udyog Bhavan, Gandhinagar, Gujarat