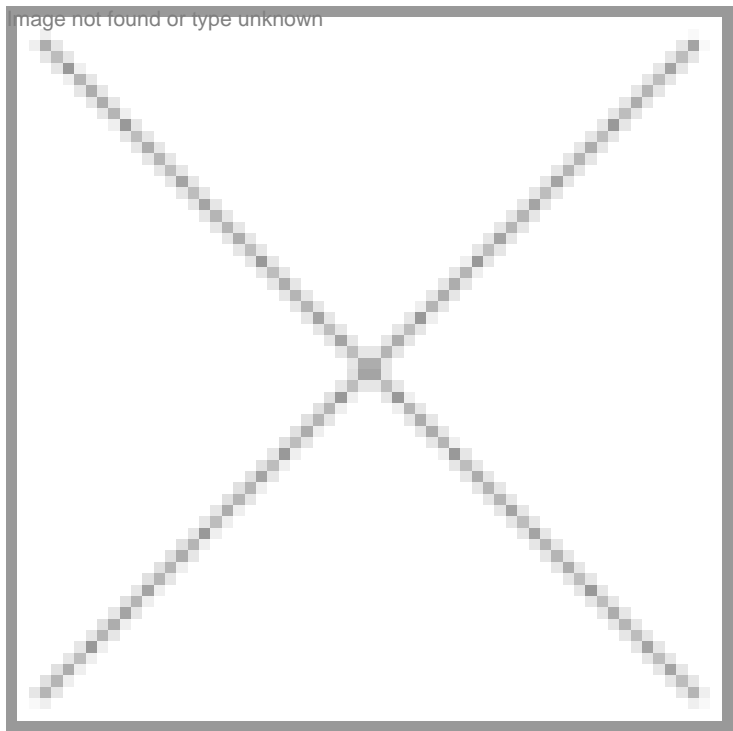


Transgenic crop market pioneer

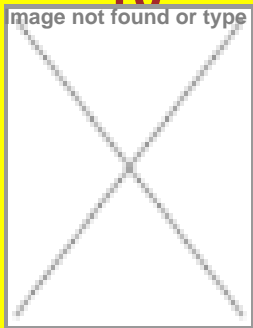
14 June 2010 | News

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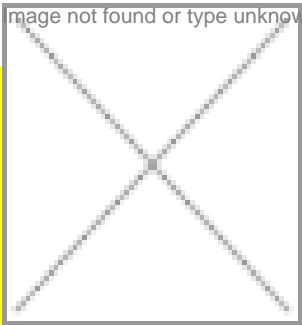


Head:

Dr BR Barwale (Chairman)

Business:

Diagnostic solutions for GM crop testing



Startup Year:
1964

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Post Box No: 76, Jalna-
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Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company (Mahyco) clocked an annual revenue of Rs 220 crore in FY 2009-10 as against Rs 211.12 crore in FY 2008-09. An ISO 9001-2000 company, Mahyco is the first company in India to commercially grow and market transgenic Bollgard (Bt) cotton in 2002, thus ushering in the Bt revolution in Indian

The company played a pioneering role in the use of hybrids during the Green Revolution in mid-1960s and 1970s. Worldwide, Mahyco was the first company to successfully commercialize F1 hybrid cotton-based on genetic and cytoplasmic male sterility systems. Mahyco was also the first company in India to produce and market hybrid sorghum, pearl millet and sunflower. The company is also developing genetically enhanced crops with the use of gene transfer technology and has a partnership with Monsanto as well as a multi-crop, multi-licensing agreement with several research organizations for bringing eminent technologies to South Asia.

Mahyco is awaiting the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) decision on environmental release of insect-resistant Bt brinjal. "We look forward to a positive decision because it will help lakhs of our brinjal farmers who have been suffering from the havoc caused by the brinjal fruit and shoot borer (FSB). Bt brinjal will help them tackle this pest in an environment-friendly manner and increase yields and farm income," said the managing director, Mahyco.

Bt brinjal, expressing the cry1Ac gene, has been in development and testing since 2000. Mahyco has completed a biosafety dossier encompassing environmental and food/feed safety tests on a variety of animal models including rats, rabbits, chicken, fish, goats and

The company has invested Rs 46.42 crore (\$10 mn) on the R&D infrastructure and spends Rs 11.60 crore (\$2.5 mn) annually for research. Herbicide-tolerant (HT) cotton has also been a focus of Mahyco R&D in the past few years. Cotton farmers face significant difficulty in obtaining farm labour in a timely manner for weeding, which is a major problem.

Application of post-emergence herbicides is presently the common mode of control of weeds. HT cotton reduces the dependence of the farmer on weeding as the herbicide can be sprayed over the top of the cotton crop that is genetically engineered to be able to tolerate the herbicide.

Mahyco is conducting biosafety related trials on its HT cotton hybrids in the various agro-

This apart other investments include, the bioinformatics initiative, wherein investments to the tune of Rs 20-25 crore has been pumped in and this has been done in a limited way for a number of years like in molecular markers.