



**Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra
Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:
*How true are stories of “sheep
death”
due to Bt cotton***

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Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

***Bt* Cotton is first and the only GM crop commercialized in India since 2002**



Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

Altogether 7 states of India Grow *Bt* Cotton



Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **The area for Bt cotton has reached 6.2 million hectare which is 66% of total cultivated area of 9.5 million hectares in 2007-08.**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- Cotton production has increased to 31 million bales in 2007-08 as compared to 15.3 million bales when Bt cotton hybrids were introduced first in 2002.



Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- Pervasive anti-GM propaganda
- Highly effective PR!!!

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **Google *Bt* cotton, India:**

- *More than 90% hits give you mostly Bt cotton failure stories along with other negative effects*

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

Negative stories:

- Bt cotton is a failure!!!
- Bt cotton failure responsible for farmer suicides
- Sheep deaths
- Cattle deaths
- Peacock deaths
- Does not increase yield
- Increase crop losses
- Biodiversity loss!

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

What did we see and hear?

- Could not confirm any death of sheep, cattle or peacock.
- Could not confirm yield loss.
- More than 95% Bt cotton.
- Pesticide consumption dramatically reduced!

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **Not a single recognized authority that investigated could authenticate the sheep death story.**
- **RCGM, GEAC, UAS-AP, State Veterinarian, and the State Agricultural Commissioner**
- **But, the story is very much in circulation even to this day!**



Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

AP NGOs in the forefront:

- **Center for Sustainable Agriculture**
- **Deccan Development Society**
- **GMO-Free India Campaign!**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

Tactics:

- 1. Repeated outreach via print media and internet!**
- 2. Coalition with GM Watch, Greenpeace, and Friends of the Earth.**
- 3. Coalition with other small grassroots NGOs**
- 4. Tagging with regional political parties – AIADMK, PMK and CPI.**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **They have a pan-India reach!**
- **Their NGO coalition works extremely well to invent and spread messages.**
- **Print media supports them very well and side with them.**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

Social beliefs:

(Sound/Reasonable Guessing!!!)

- **Anti-globalization**
- **Anti-MNC (MNC phobia!)**
- **Distrust of scientists!!!**
- **Go back to nature: ecological and organic farming and natural farming**
- **Reverting to old farmer's varieties**
- **Anti-Western science and technology!**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **Modern day scientists are public enemy No 1.**
- **They are corrupt – in the pocket books of MNCs.**
- **Modern (Western agriculture) is intensive and environmentally destructive**
- **GM crops are exploitative!**
- **MNCs and other seed companies exploit the poor; perpetuate poverty!**
- **Technology slaves!**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **These accusations are jingoistic and appeal to the masses and politicians and political parties.**
- **If it is hurting the poor farmer, every political party will jump into the fray to support them and preserve their vote bank.**
- **NGOs exploit the “poor farmer” sentiment in the country!**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **Borrow ideas for anti-GM campaigning from European NGOs.**
- **Most NGOs sustain themselves with funding from European NGOs and EU.**
- **It is rumored strongly that small time pesticide formulators also support these NGOs as their pesticide business has been hurt deeply.**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

The Anti-GM NGO Science:

- **Not a single peer reviewed publication.**
- **No standard empirical data.**
- **“Random sampling” survey?**
- **Mostly – “arbitrary” survey!**
- **Poor sampling size and unauthenticated and never published in any recognizable forum.**
- **Self-serving reports!**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

Cherry picking scientific publications!

- **Willfully ignore positive data**

They keep harping on “independent” study!!!

E. g:

- 1. Bambawale et al (2004) in Current Science.**
- 2. Kranthi et al (2006) in Current Science.**

Socio-Political Tactics of Andhra Pradesh Anti-GM Lobby:

- **Independent science for them means – the publication must support their beliefs and convictions which are ant-GMO.**
- **For sometime, Indian ant-GM NGOs wanted government scientists to do GM testing.**
- **But, when govt. scientists gave positive reports, they were decried saying even they have been bought by the biotech industry!!!**



Merci !!