

India s Prime Minister calls for a second Green Revolution

By ACSH Staff — July 6, 2015



Despite the miraculous success of the Green Revolution, which was

sparked by Dr. Norman Borlaug s agronomic research in the 1950s and 1960s, people who are malnourished the prime beneficiaries of Borlaug s work are nonetheless falling behind because of population growth and a limited supply of land and water resources. Borlaug s work saved many millions from starvation and earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970. Yet, current food production in India is still badly lagging behind that of the U.S. and China countries where genetically-engineered crops are producing ever-higher amounts of food crops per acre.

Now, India s Prime Minister Modi has spoken out on the subject, aware that the technology of GMO agriculture is [not popular in his country](#) [1]:

Calling for a second Green Revolution, Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Sunday asked farmers to adopt scientific methods to enhance foodgrain production and reduce imports...He was in Jharkhand to lay the foundation of the Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI).

Commenting on this new direction being urged upon Indian agriculture from on-high, two experts in the field [published these comments](#) [2] in *The New Indian Express*:

...in spite of Green Revolution, we have not been able to sustain the growth of agriculture production to match our requirements and limitations of inputs, and sadly there has hardly been any remarkable research by agriculture scientists to achieve it.

The last mentioned factor holds the key to solving the problem. Time has come to launch a second Green Revolution to provide long-term food security to the nation, and it is the direction in which agriculture scientists and institutions need to focus... What we really need now is to accept that some crucial inputs of traditional agriculture are getting scarcer after and as a consequence of first revolution and we have to reduce our dependence on them and research on increasing productivity with this handicap. These inputs are very basic in nature, they are land and water. Their shortage will pose the real challenge to another Green Revolution !.

In the present scenario not only is cultivable land shrinking, water availability is also on premium. We have almost dried our rivers and are emptying groundwater reservoirs by reckless extraction !.It sounds a paradox, but agriculture is now creating an unprecedented crisis for environment. This trend has to be reversed.

The road map for the next Green Revolution is, therefore, quite clear. We will have to develop techniques which would deliver more crop for each drop of irrigation as well as more yield per field of cultivated land. Although land available for agriculture is declining there is still scope to increase productivity from it, mainly because we are far behind most countries in per hectare yield. ...Genetically improved seeds, which are being scoffed at due to lack of proper education and information can enhance productivity greatly.

Dr. Gil Ross, Senior Director of Medicine and Public Health at the [American Council on Science and Health](#) [3] had this comment: The authors of the above piece, Yogendra Narain and S.K.Kumar, both have vast experience in agronomics and government. They should be listened to, as the Indian regulators have been loathe to approve GMO products heretofore. It seems the authorities are in the grip of demagogues such as Vandana Shiva, who spreads her false messages of fear and suspicion about GMO crops based upon nothing other than her desire to get attention and adherents. Her mission is detrimental to the health and nutritional status of poor Indians, and hopefully the Prime Minister s message will at last be heeded.

Anyone seeking valid science-based information on GMO agriculture should read ACSH [publications](#) [4] on the [subject here](#) [5].

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[2] <http://www.newindianexpress.com/columns/Time-for-a-Second-Green-Revolution/2015/06/26/article2886092.ece>

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