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The mortality was as high as 25 per cent against the usual 5-10 per cent for this

season.

Children's Health

Oversight Board

International Science

Genetic Engineering

- * rBGH
- GE-Free Zones
- Millions Against Monsanto
- Cloning & Patenting
- Nanotechnology

Food Safety

- Mad Cow
- Irradiation
- Perchlorate

Fair Trade/Social Justice

- Buy Local Movement
- Protest Starbucks

Farm Issues

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- Breaking the Chains
- GE Free Zones
- Mad Cow USA
- Children's Environmental Health
- Coming Clean
- Millions Against Monsanto
- Clothes for a Change
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Resources

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"They took one or two sheep from the dead animals. Doctors conducted postmortem but could not find viral, bacterial or fungal problem with that," said Ramprasad, scientist, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture.

In Warangal, about 11 hectares was on cotton this year and 20 per cent of that officially on Bt cotton.

But the unofficial figure puts that at upto 50 per cent. In January this year, following rains and some irrigation, there was fresh foliage but few bolls, so the fields were let out for grazing.

"Animals that have been grazing on non-Bt cotton also, shepherds are reporting that on such fields even if they grazed for 15 days, there was no problem reported. Whereas on Bt cotton, with 3-4 successive days of grazing, they started showing symptoms," said Kavita Kurungati, Researcher.

When contacted, Monsanto, which has released Bt cotton commercially in India, said safety studies on goats, cows, buffaloes, chicken and fish have been conducted as part of the regulatory process to get Bollgard approved.

"We conducted goat-feeding stury with Bt cotton seed and found it to be safe," said Dr Vishwanathan, Industrial Toxicology Research Center, Lucknow.

Critics point out that there was no bio safety study on Bt cotton leaves, which is consume cattle during open grazing.

But Monsanto says Bt protein is present in miniscule amounts in cotton leaves and a goal have to eat over 24 tonnes of old leaves to reach the upper safe limit of 4300 mg/kg bod of Cry 1Ac toxin present in the Bt plant.

The company says the deaths could have been due to pesticide residues.

Inquiry ordered

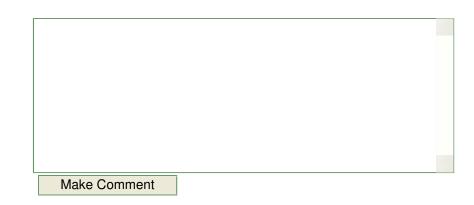
The state government has ordered an investigation by the animal husbandry department

"We have immediately alerted animal husbandry dept to give us the details of villages whas happened and what are their findings regarding this. We are certainly going to pursufurther with the research institutes genetic research institutes, which can analyse the whand yes, it is a cause of concern," said Poonam Malakondaiah, Agriculture Commissione Pradesh.

Only a detailed scientific investigation may be able to establish whether at all there is a libetween Bt cotton and the mortality in sheep and goat.

Even otherwise it would be wise to go for much more comprehensive bio safety testing n Bt cotton but the whole range of genetically modified food crops that may soon be part o

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