

Bust myths on use of GM crops in aqua-feed: Experts

Our Bureau

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Fisheries and biotechnology experts have emphasised the need to bust the myths associated with the use of genetically modified (GM) crops as feed ingredients in India's aquaculture sector. They are of the view that GM crop-based products have huge scope in enhancing the supply of feed ingredients in aquaculture, promoting growth, disease resistance and reduction of input costs in aquaculture production.

They were speaking at an awareness workshop on the use of GM crops and their derivatives for the aqua-feed sector organised by the Biotech Consortium India Limited in association with ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. The

workshop highlighted that the introduction of GM crops in the aqua-feed sector would also help reduce the mounting pressure on fishmeal and fish oil and maintain a sustainable aquaculture industry.

Vibha Ahuja, Chief General Manager of BCIL said GM crops come with several desirable traits such as insect resistance, disease resistance, and herbicide tolerance. Hence, using these would be beneficial to boost the yield. Cost analysis showed that the use of dried distillers grains with solubles (DDGS), a co-product from cereals in the distillery industry, can help reduce shrimp feed prices, she said. Most of the DDGS produced in the world are, however, of GM-corn origin and Indian feed producers can capitalise on the economic benefits, if they are open to use them as feed ingredients.