



■ Chief minister Vasundhara Raje and her Gujarat counterpart Anandiben Patel are welcomed with a garland of organic vegetables and fruits at Kisan Agriculture Expo in Jaipur on Thursday. PRAHAKAR SHARMA/HT

Raje shuts doors on GM seeds

AGRICULTURE EXPO Chief minister appeals to farmers to give up chemical fertilisers and adopt organic farming

HT Correspondent

■ htraj@hindustantimes.com

JAIPUR: Chief minister Vasundhara Raje on Thursday emphatically ruled out the use of genetically modified (GM) seeds in Rajasthan.

Raje urged farmers to opt for organic farming, which is being done on 60,000 hectares.

"If we want to stop spread of cancer and other diseases due to the use of chemical fertilisers, then we have to shift to organic farming," she told farmers after inaugurating the five-day Kisan Agriculture Expo-2016 in Jaipur.

When Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS) national president Anna Murkute raised the debate over introduction of GM seeds, Raje said her state was never in favour of genetically modified crops.

"The previous Congress government had tried to introduce GM crop and an expert team was

RAJASTHAN WILL HOST GLOBAL AGRITECH 2016 IN NOVEMBER FOR ATTRACTING INVESTMENT TO THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

sent to three places for study (and) BJP (had) opposed it then," Raje said.

"BJP had opposed the move then and now my government will not allow it because farmers are more inclined towards organic farming."

Farmers welcomed Raje and her Gujarat counterpart Anandi Ben with a huge garland made of organic vegetables and fruits.

Progressive farmers from the state will be sent to places in India and abroad to learn new techniques and share their experience with others, she added.

Raje thanked Anandi Ben for releasing Narmada water

to Rajasthan.

"Drip irrigation is being encouraged especially in these areas where the Narmada water will reach... This form of irrigation is already implemented in Ganganagar for growing sugarcanes..." she said

Rajasthan will host Global Agritech 2016 in November for attracting investment to the agriculture sector, Raje said. "We have adopted some success ideas from Gujarat and vice-versa."

The Gujarat chief minister praised the water management plan of Rajasthan. "In Gujarat's Banaskantha district, farmers have adopted drip irrigation system due to which they are saving 25% water. Use of fertilisers has come down too..." she said.

At the event, Union minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore spoke on the insurance schemes recently launched by the Centre for farmers.