

Use of pesticide in India on rise

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DESPITE a decline of 7 per cent in pesticide consumption globally, in India, there is a 6-7 per cent increase in pesticide consumption, which can be attributed to Indian farmers' lack of knowledge on safer agricultural practices, said Dhirendra Kumar, managing director, Camson Biotechnologies.

Foreign countries are aware of the dangerous risks posed by pesticides and its impact on the environment, particularly in water contamination, he said.

Presently, the global market for agro-chemicals is valued at \$50 billion, of which herbicides account for 50 per cent, while the balance is shared between insecticides, fungicides and acaricides.

"In India, some farmers are embracing highly tolerant and super-strong seeds that will help withstand attacks from pests and other environmental factors. As years progress, we will see more farmers acknowledging the harmful effects brought about through the usage of chemical pesticides. Globally, there is a higher use of genetically modified seeds that require less pesticides," Kumar said. He further said that there are wild allegations floating around GM crops.

"The US has been using GM food for more than a decade now with no trace of consumer dissatisfaction. About 75 per cent of all processed foods in the US contain a GM ingredient, with soybeans and corn being the most popular GM food available in that country. This is the proof that GM crops are harmless and fit for human consumption," he said.

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