

CAMSON - FOR SECURE AND SAFE FOOD



Dhirendra Kumar,
Managing Director,
Camson Bio Technologies Limited

Camson Bio Technologies Limited is a leading agricultural biotechnology company. Camson delivers innovative products to maximize agricultural productivity and sustainability while reducing the environmental impact. Founded in 1993, Camson combines traditional knowledge in agriculture with latest advances in safety and protection to market a wide range of products. These include hybrid seeds, bio-fertilizers and biocides that are non-poisonous, eco-friendly and residue-free. "Camson has got two manufacturing units at present and adopts the best technology and machinery to produce world class products at a reasonable price for farmers. Our products have been certified as organic by Control Union an international body of great repute," says Mr. Dhirendra Kumar, Managing Director, Camson Bio Technologies Limited.

Headquartered in Bangalore, Camson employs the best talent in the field to address the demand for constant innovation. From discovery to development, Camson has the defining science and multi-product manufacturing capabilities to bring innovative biotechnologies to farmers. "Camson's R&D is recognized by DSIR. Our investments / expenses on R&D are amongst the highest compared to other agri-input companies. This has led to the development of path breaking products such as Natural Fertilizers, a first in the world and a unique range of high yielding hybrid seeds", says Mr. Kumar.

Innovations are a routine in Camson. Recently, Camson launched two very unique hybrid seeds - Palar- The Button Capsicum and Kali - The Anthocyanin enriched black chilly. "Palar is a unique small sized capsicum ideal for being used as stuffed capsicum.

The yield from this variety is significantly higher than normal capsicum besides other savings like transport costs resulting in higher income for farmers. Both these products have won awards at the SIAL meet held recently in the middle-east. Our range of natural fertilizers is undergoing extensive trials in India, USA and other countries in the Asia Pacific region," informs Mr. Kumar.

According to Kumar, the Indian seed market has a huge potential and hence is attracting many big names in the seed industry from around the world. The potential at present is about USD 2.5 billion and is growing at a robust 25-30% per annum which is one of the fastest in the world. Mr. Kumar is confident that with the awareness of high yielding hybrids and growth in socio economic standards, farmers will increasingly adopt new hybrids. "The India seed industry is poised for better times," he says.

Having been in the industry for long, he understands his customers - the farmers. Mr. Kumar said that adaptability of hybrid seeds to the geo-climatic factors, disease tolerance and high yield are the needs to be focused upon while creating products for the rural farmers as it encourages acceptance by the consumers at large. Camson partners farmers in all stages. "The farmers in India have been struggling to find the right market for their produce due to lack of infrastructure, information and accessibility to the markets. Camson has been able to bridge this gap by launching Camson Agri Ventures which promotes Zero Residue Farming. The Zero Residue produce is in great demand in international markets and hence delivers better returns. Camson provides the complete solution for cultivation as well as buy back of produce to help the farmer," tells Mr. Kumar.

Govt. policy plays a very important role for any industry, particularly agriculture. The govt's pro-active participation will immensely benefit the farmer. Mr. Kumar has several suggestions to improve the policy environment in India, "In vegetable seeds industry, insistence on domestic research and cost effective

seeds grown domestically will help the farmer to realize better returns on his land as compared to the use of expensive imported seeds & technology. This will also help the country save on the outflow of precious foreign exchange. Marketing permissions should be granted seamlessly for products which are certified by leading certifying agencies. This will expand the reach of such good quality seeds. Government should extend the same subsidy to natural fertilizers which it extends to synthetic fertilizers. This will make the product competitive and provide a level playing field between industry participants. Government is morally obliged to do so as these products help soil, the water table and improve the overall health of its people".

At the same time, he is also aware about the constraints limiting the seed industry. "The major constraints for the seeds industry are the lack of proper monitoring between spurious operators and genuine companies engaged in meaningful work. Productivity in agriculture is one of the lowest in the world. This can be easily enhanced by allowing contract and corporate farming. The scale of operations and the scientific methodology followed by corporates would aid the introduction of advanced technology in agriculture. Uniformity should be maintained across all states while issuing marketing permission. Poor spread of banking system across rural India constrains the availability of affordable finance and forces the farmer to seek expensive unregulated private options. This raises the cost of agriculture and prohibits additional investments by farmers".

Camson has made many plans for its seeds business for the future. Camson is one of the few companies to achieve substantial progress in the field of intragenics. "We are working on disease tolerant and early maturity crops. The products in the pipeline are not only targeted at farmers but pharmaceutical companies as well. The future of agriculture and the Indian seed industry is bright and Camson looks forward to ride this wave," beams Mr. Kumar.