

# GM technology alters too quickly in India

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A U.S. scientist has completed the first detailed anthropological study of how genetically modified crops affect, and are affected by, local culture.

Washington University Professor of anthropology and environmental studies Glenn Stone says the arrival of genetically modified crops has added another level of complexity to farming in the developing world.

Stone's study focused on cotton production in the Warangal District of Andhra Pradesh, India.

"There is a rapidity of change that the farmers just can't keep up with," Stone said. "In Warangal, the pattern of change is dizzying. From 2003 to 2005, more than 125 different brands of cottonseed had been sold. ... In 2005, there were 78 kinds being sold but only 24 of those were around in 2003.

"Many different brands are actually the same seed," he said. "Farmers can't recognize what they are getting. As a result, the farmers can't properly evaluate seeds. Instead, they ask their neighbors. Copying your neighbor isn't necessarily a bad thing; but in this case, everyone is copying everyone else, which results in fads, not testing.

His study appeared in the February issue of *Current Anthropology*.

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