

Pest scenario and appropriate management for Bt cotton in Belgaum Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

Prior to introduction of Bt cotton the Belgaum district had more area under short staple and very less area under extra long staple cotton. After the introduction of Bt cotton in 2003-2004 in Belgaum district, the area under cotton decreased however, yield levels increased drastically. Bt cotton suppressed bollworms which were major threat but at the same time minor sucking pests such as mealy bug and mirid bug emerged as major pests, with the regularly occurring jassids, thrips, white flies and natural enemies, disease and disorders. The increased length of cropping period for extra long Bt hybrids was the reason for more occurrence for pest and diseases. The unscientific follow up of general recommendations with more number of sprays, lowered the interest of farmers in taking up Bt cotton. However, the study area followed scientific and appropriate management practices with minimum dosage and less number of sprays for control of pests. This resulted in acceptance of Bt cotton in and around project area. The project was carried out in Belgaum district of Karnataka state covering 42 villages for consecutive years till 2014. The study carried out over the years at selected locations has demonstrated avoidable losses due to important pests and diseases on cotton.

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