

## The Curious Case of Cocktails, Weedicides, and Tonics

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This study uses primary survey data collected from Vidarbha, Maharashtra, to analyse pest attacks and pest management practices among cotton farmers who are at the risk of long-term exposure to toxic pesticides. We find that despite a reduction in bollworm infestations, secondary pest pressure is high. Farmers use pesticides indiscriminately and there is widespread practice of using “pesticide cocktails.” Farmers also mix pesticides with fertilisers. The use of weedicides and “tonics” is also widely prevalent. Farmers who perceive pesticides as yield-enhancing input spent more per acre on them. These findings raise concerns about the role of agricultural input dealers in filling up the agricultural information void for pest management.

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