

A bitter-tasting repellent to keep pink bollworms away from cotton

Nichem Solutions offers taste-based pesticides to ward off pests

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Thane-based speciality chemical firm Nichem Solutions has launched a repellent to tackle the pink bollworm in cotton, a menace that is proving to be a big headache for the growers, its Chief Executive Officer Rajan Raje, has said.

"The repellent is bitter-tasting which results in the bollworm going off the plant. As the leaves turn bitter due to the spraying of repellent, the bollworms cannot survive on them. This helps the plant to grow better," he said.

The company has sold 100 kilolitres of the repellent this

year and the results have been good.

"We expect a huge improvement next year. The repellent was sold primarily in Maharashtra's Vidharba region," the Nichem Solutions CEO said.

Lack of infrastructure

The repellent is sold through its distributor which has its network in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

"We have no infrastructure to market the repellent in Haryana and Punjab," he said on whether the product was tried in the northern States where pink bollworm was re-

ported this year. The repellent to tackle pink bollworm in cotton is part of Nichem Solutions' offerings that are perfume- and taste-based to keep harmful insects and pests away from plants, mainly horticulture crops, Raje said.

Cutting pesticide use

"Once these products are sprayed on plants, they remain there and drive away the pests and insects. This reduces the need for insecticide or pesticide drastically on plants," the Nichem (derived from niche chemicals) Solutions CEO said.

Nichem, which has six verticals starting from water purification to polymer additives to consumer products, is focussing on



Rajan Raje, CEO,
Nuchem Solutions

Cropsil, repellants and Plantsil products. The firm offers pre-harvest biocides and fungicides, which are non-toxic and non-conventional. It also offers post-harvest preservation solutions, the company's CEO said.

"Our fungicides are based on hydrogen peroxide and silver. They are very strong ox-

idising agents which dissolve into water and oxygen. The low concentration of silver left behind acts as a protective agent of the plant. Our products do not leave any harmful residues on plants," Raje said.

The company also offers insecticides and pesticides that are non-toxic under Gomite brand. "Then, we have nutritional products, which per se help plants overcome water and heat stress. They also improve the immunity of the plant. The product is based on ortho-silicic acid (OSA)," he said.

Improving productivity

Many of the company's products are based on natural ingredients. "Many are eco certified or certified for

organic farming. Keeping that in mind, we ensure there is no toxicity in any at all, be it on soil or water," he said.

Nichem offers Plantsil, a mixture of OSA with seaweed, and Cropsil, which helps the plant's immunity and improves its yield. "Once the plant's immunity improves, automatically it gives a better yield. We have seen the productivity getting better by 10 per cent to 100 per cent," the Nichem Solutions CEO said.

Cropsil is a generic product used in horticulture or floriculture or regular plants. "The use of OSA optimises the uptake of nutrients and fertilisers, making them resistant to stress. This also lowers the use of pesticide and insecticide," Raje said.