

## Farmer Story

# Giving Humanity - A Second Chance



Khushal Rambhau Rokade, a resident of Umri Village in Kalamb block of Nanded, Maharashtra farms cotton over 3 acres of land. He supports a family of 4, consisting of his wife and 2 children, a son and a daughter. Eager to learn and adapt better ways of cotton farming, he joined a Learning Group (LG) following the BCI Program managed by Spectrum International (SIPL) in his village. It was at one of these LG Meetings that he first heard about a variety of practises that he could do differently than at present, which could lead to a better quality and higher yielding cotton production on his farm.



*“After joining BCI project run by SIPL staff, my vision of cotton farming totally changed. And because of regularly attending the trainings and meetings by Spectrum’s trained staff on best practices and the new technology in cotton farming, I learnt a lot of new thing beneficial for me financially as well as least damaging to the environment as well as the crop.”*

Conventional cotton production methods have been causing damage to our planet because of high usage of chemical pesticides, fertilisers and tonnes of litres of water, which not only drains out resources, but leads to poor yields and lower incomes for the farmers, due to lack of understanding of good agricultural practices with social awareness.

Before joining the BCI project, Khushal Rambhau’s chemical pesticide and fertilizer use in cotton farming was unchecked with no awareness of cotton pests and no knowledge of which chemicals should be used and which not. After joining the BCI project and getting trained by the trainers at Spectrum International, he is not only able to successfully identify the type of pests but also uses the correct pesticides for their eradication. The training has enabled him to start using homemade bio-pesticides which has brought down his cost of cultivation to about 50% as compared the market bought conventional pesticides he used earlier.

This season he used bio-pesticides like neem oil and home-made Dasparni Ark extract and Amrut Pani as the first spray

instead of chemical pesticides, which has helped increase the number of beneficial insects and delayed attack of harmful pests. His total number of sprays have also reduced from 6 cycles to just 3 cycles.

Awareness of IPM practices like use of light trap, Pheromone trap, refuge, intercrop, crop rotation, yellow sticky card, aided him in growing a healthy crop and reduced the total cost of cultivation. He learnt the hazardous effects of



**Yellow Sticky Trap and Pheromone trap usage being shown in the farms by Spectrum International Experts**



**Kaushal Rambhau Rokade with his wife & daughter**

Monocrotophos, including the fact that it delays maturity of the cotton ball, which can attract pink bollworms and other harmful pests, destroying the crop.

“The BCI project is very useful to our farmer community and it is well designed to cover all issues regarding cotton farming. It has not only helped me financially but has also improved the life for my family and for our village community.” - Kaushal Rambhau Rokade.

