

2,300

According to the International Herald Tribune (April 19, 2006), more than 2,300 cotton farmers in India have committed suicide in the last six years.

It is estimated that one conventional cotton farmer in Vidarbha, India commits suicide every 8 hours.

Why are Indian cotton farmers taking their lives in such alarming rates?

Cotton covers five percent of India's farmland, but uses 54 percent of all pesticides.

Diseases and pests became immune to the poisons, which mean new, more expensive chemicals are needed. As a result, the costs for cotton farmers continues to rise—while the quality of the soil and harvest declines. Nearly 2.8 million cotton farmers (of the 3.2 million) in Vidarbha India are default on their loans.

One cotton farmer was so deep in debt that she swallowed a mouthful of monocrotophos, an insecticide so poisonous it is banned in Europe and the United States.

Most of the organic (grown without chemicals) cotton fabric scraps you see here are grown and woven in India. They are part of a growing organic cotton movement that returns the soil to its naturally healthy state and also reduces the financial burden chemical companies have imposed for the last 30 years.

These 2,300 knots of organic cotton scraps each represent a life lost and also hope that another life will be saved.

Special thanks to:

Ode Magazine's "Desperately Seeking Solutions"

Daily News and Analysis India: "One Suicide Every 8 Hours".

Sus - for helping me tie the knots (the best decision I ever made)

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