Fall Army Worm Newsletter

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Eritrea: Crops are safe from Fall Army Worm infestation

All Eritrean regions have reported summer crops are in good condition and are very few FAW incidences. It was anticipated that FAW infestation would be very low thanks to the rigorous, decisive and instant mechanical measures taken by the government and farmers prior to the main rainy season.

"Had the government of Eritrea failed to take these measures, almost no crop harvest would have been expected, regardless of the good rainy season." said Mr. Tedros Sium, Migratory pests unit head at the Ministry of Agriculture.

He continued, "Nowadays, insignificant FAW infestations are detected in some agricultural plots in various parts of the country. However, since all Eritrean farmers are now highly aware of the nature of the pest and the immediate measures to be taken, our summer crops are fairing very well."

To strengthen the FAW monitoring process, additional 1,188 pheromone traps were distributed to all regions in the month of July. Average male moths being caught per trap per week in the country are still low.

FAW situation by regions;

Debub Region

Some FAW infestations were reported during June in sub regions of Adikeyih, Segeneyti, Tsorona and Dekemhare. Whereas in July, reports witnessed the infestation was very insignificant and the maize crops, the FAW favorite crop, started to tassel without significant damage. In the month of July, only 6 male moths were caught per pheromone trap per week in Debub region.

The Ministry of agriculture along with its development partner, FAO, provided additional 300 FAW pheromone traps with their accessories to the region in July 2018. These additional traps will enable the region strengthen its monitoring capacity and alertness.

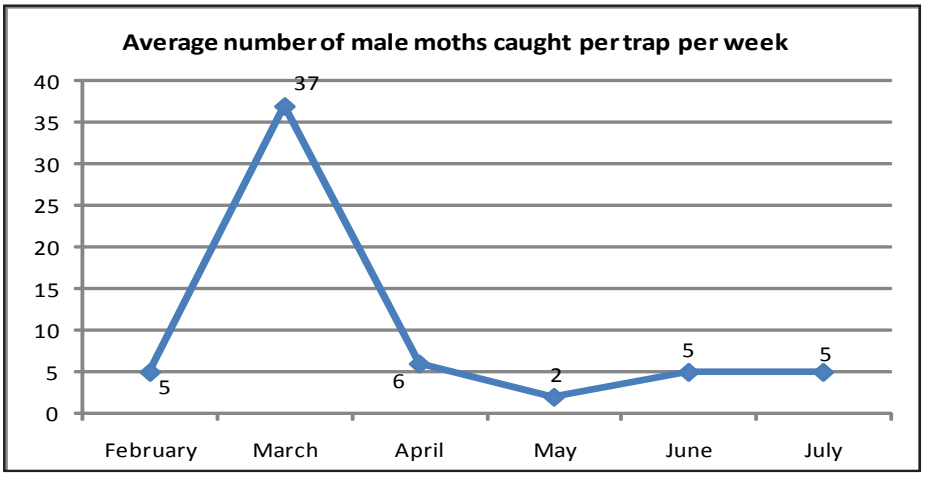
Anseba Region

FAW infestation was only reported in the sub region of Elabered in July 2018. Awareness of farmers really helped in tackling the infestation. They uprooted and burned the FAW infected plants and saved the majority of their field crops. As a result, the infestation got minimized below threshold level. On average, only 6 male moths were caught per trap per week in the region, a bit higher than the country's average. This region was also supplied with additional 200 FAW pheromone traps with their accessories.

Gash-Barka Region

FAW infestation was reported in some farms in the sub-region of Logo Anseba during the month of July. Just like the Anseba region farmers, they did extraordinary job of eliminating the infestation. No FAW incidence was reported in the rest of the region.

Since this region comprises the largest crop land, there was a fear of significant FAW infestation. However, farmers, administrative personnel and agricultural experts made this agricultural hub region



safe from infestation. Surprisingly, in this region, regardless of its size, only 2 male moths were caught per trap per week. The region also took its pheromone trap share, 300, from the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO. However, since the main rainy and cropping season of the region is still early, farmers' and experts' highest vigilance is expected.

Moreover, Gash Barka region conducted a training to 170 of the Ministry's staff. The training focused on FAW management practices and FAW reporting through mobile application.

Northern Red Sea Region

No infestation was reported in July in this region. Around 5 male moths were caught per trap per week in this region. It is to be recalled that in June the number was 11. But the average number of moths caught in Nakfa sub region was exceptionally high, that is 30. This indicates intensive scouting should be conducted in the coming month. Northern red sea region received 288 FAW pheromone traps with all their accessories in the month of July.

Maekel Region

No infestation report was received during the month of July and the infestation reported during the month of June was tolerable. In this reporting month, only 4 male moths were caught per trap per week in the region, the same to that of the last month. Maekel region also received additional 100 FAW pheromone traps.

Southern Red Sea Region

No FAW incidence has ever been reported from this region. The FAW pheromone traps distributed in the region also never caught any male moth.

News update Fall Armyworm Tech Prize

African finalists and their models

Part I

On March 28, 2018, Feed the Future and its partners, Land O'Lakes International Development and the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research launched the Fall Armyworm Tech Prize. The prize received more than 225 applications from across the world, 81% of which were from the African continent.

Among many high quality applications, the Judging Panel selected 20 finalists from Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, Taiwan, Israel, South Africa, Kenya, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Here we present the first part of African short listed applications

Limitless Apps Studios (Ghana) - "Boa Me" ("Help Me" in Twi)

"Boa Me" is an artificial intelligence-powered, web-based application with a predictive analysis algorithm that provides actionable insights to users. The app combines past data, satellite data, and user information about fall armyworm and translates it into insights that farmers can access through local voice systems, SMS alerts, or a public announcement system.

Africa Rising (South Africa)

Africa Rising is a multi-faceted platform that helps farmers understand when outbreaks of fall armyworm might occur, provides advice on best practices, and directly answers farmers' questions. This is a two-way communication network utilizing chatbots to deliver SMS, interactive voice recordings (IVR), or messages through other popular communications tools such as WhatsApp.

echnoplus IT Solutions (Uganda) -Agri-Poll: A Smart Survey System data

Agri-Poll is a smart survey platform that allows extension workers and key stakeholders to gather, analyze, and disseminate images (of pests and crops), location, time, weather, and environments in which the pests have been detected via feature phones, smart phones, and web platforms. The information is analyzed to aggregate and provide actionable information.

Farmerline Limited (Ghana) - CdPAS Mobile: Crop Disease Prediction and Advisory Services on Any Mobile Phone

CdPAS Mobile combines innovative digital technologies and participatory engagements of stakeholders to predict, identify, monitor, and mitigate the outbreak of fall armyworm across Africa, providing crop disease prediction and advisory services on any mobile phone. Education and awareness through interactive voice response (IVR) messaging in local languages is an important feature of this solution.

eHealth Systems Africa Foundation (eHA) (Nigeria) - CornBot: Farmers' Everyday Virtual Assistant for Sustainable Maize Production

CornBot is a maize disease diagnostic tool using image-based interactive mechanisms in local languages to help farmers identify, track, map, and treat fall armyworm. It's an everyday virtual assistant for sustainable maize production.

Akorion Company LTD (Uganda) -EzyAgric

The EzyArmyWorm (EAW) is an enhancement of the pest and disease diagnostic in the EzyAgric app, using proprietary artificial intelligence. EAW allows smallholder farmers to detect the moth, larva, and eggs of fall armyworm across all possible affected crops. EAW can differentiate fall armyworm from other pests, establish the stage of maturity, and share the estimated yield damage.

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