



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA RELEASE

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The detection of Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) in the Western Cape - near Clanwilliam area

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries hereby announces that larvae of the Fall Armyworm (FAW) were detected for the first time in late March 2019 on sweetcorn in the Western Cape, near Clanwilliam area. The FAW moths were detected in several areas in the Western Cape between June and August in 2018.

FAW is a quarantine pest in terms of the Control Measures Relating to Fall Armyworm R. 449 of 26 May 2017 of the Agricultural Pests Act of 1983 (Act No. 36 of 1983). It is therefore compulsory that any individual or organisation that has detected the FAW shall immediately report it to the nearest agricultural office and/or executive officer of the Act. The FAW preferentially attacks maize, sweetcorn and sorghum in South Africa, but it may feed on other crops in the vicinity if maize plants or its primary food source is not available. FAW is currently present in all the provinces in South Africa and the level of FAW infestation varies locally in terms of the climate and host availability.

Farmers and community members are advised to take precautionary control measures such as scouting and trapping to ensure early detection and effective control of FAW. It is best to apply agricultural chemicals while the caterpillars are smaller than one centimeter (1 cm) long. Big caterpillars (over 1 cm) crawl deep into the leaf whorls of maize plants and that makes it difficult to reach them with agro-chemical sprays.

A list of registered agrochemicals is available on the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) website: <https://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/News-Room/Media-release/Fallarmy>

The main concern with this pest is that it can rapidly develop resistance to agrochemicals, thus rotating the agrochemicals within the cropping season according to resistance group and mode of action is highly recommended to avoid resistance.

Contact a chemical representative for advice on agrochemical control options. Farmers and community members are encouraged to do regular scouting for the FAW.

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