



**agriculture, land reform
& rural development**

Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Media statement

18 December 2019

A call for the management of the Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) in South Africa during the 2019/20 crop production season

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development hereby makes a clarion call to all maize and related host crops such as sorghum and sweetcorn growers including community members to take precautionary measures in controlling the Fall armyworm.

In South Africa, Fall Armyworm (FAW) is a regulated 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). FAW is a disastrous exotic pest with a wide host range and if not properly controlled it may lead to damage of the host crop and or yield loss. FAW is present in all the provinces in South Africa, however; the level of infestation varies per province, district or area.

Farmers and community members are advised to take precautionary control measures and that includes diligent scouting for egg packs, leaf damage and caterpillars as well as trapping to ensure early detection for effective control of FAW.

The moth can be caught in traps with a lure, which can also serve as an early warning of the presence of the pest. For agrochemical control, a list of registered agrochemicals is available on the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) website: <http://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/Branches/Agricultural-Production-Health-Food-Safety/Food-Import-Export-Standards/Fall-armyworm>

Effective control of the FAW can be realised through integrated pest management practice. It is best to start agrochemical spraying 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 when agricultural chemicals are applied.

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

The European Union has extended emergency import measures for hosts of FAW such as sweetcorn, peppers and eggfruit. Growers must ensure they can comply with these measures before they apply for a phytosanitary certification with DALRRD.

Contact a chemical representative for advice on agrochemical control options. Farmers and community members are encouraged to do regular scouting of FAW. Growers and community members can call the nearest Local Agriculture Centre for technical advisory.

For more media inquiries contact:

Reggie Ngcobo - Media Liaison Officer
Mobile: 082 883 2458

For technical information please contact:

Mr Jan Hendrik Venter
Manager: Early Warning System
Tel.: (012) 319 6384/ 6138
E-mail: JanHendrikV@daff.gov.za