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MEDIA STATEMENT

A CALL FOR THE CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT OF THE FALL ARMYWORM (*SPODOPTERA FRUGIPERDA*) IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE 2021/2022 CROP PRODUCTION SEASON

09 February 2022

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

In South Africa, the 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, 1983 (Act No. 36 of 1983). The 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. The 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, which includes vigilant scouting for egg packs, leaf damage and caterpillars, as well as trapping, to ensure early detection for effective control of the 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. Community members are still encouraged to report new infestations to fully understand the preferred host range of the FAW.

Effective control of the FAW can be realised through integrated pest management practices. It is best to start agrochemical spraying while the caterpillars are shorter than one centimetre (1 cm). Big caterpillars (over 1 cm) crawl deep into the leaf whorls of maize plants, which makes them difficult to reach when agricultural chemicals are applied.

The main concern with this pest is that it can rapidly develop resistance to agrochemicals, therefore it is highly recommended to rotate the agricultural chemicals within the cropping season in accordance with



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Muhasho wa zwa Vhulimi, Mbuedzedzo ya Mavuna Mveledziso ya Mahayani, uMnyango Wezolimo, Izinguquko Kwezomhlaba
Nokuthuthukiswa Kwezindawo Zasemakhaya Ndzawulo ya Vurimi, Antswiso wa Misava na Nhluvukiso wa Matikoxikaya Litiko
Letekulima, Tingucuko Kutemhlaba NekuTufukiswa Kwetinzawo Tasemaphandleni UmNyango wezokuLima, ukuBuyiselwa kweNarha
nokuThuthukiswa kweeNdawo zemaKhaya Kgoro ya Temo, Peakanyoleswa ya Naga le Tihabollo ya Dinaga- magae Lefapha la
Temothuo, Kabobotjha ya Naha le Tihabollo ya Dibaka tsa Mahae Lefapha la Temothuo, PusetsoDinaga le Tihabollo ya Metsemagae
ISebe lezoLimo, uBuyekezo lwemiHlaba noPhuhliso lamaPhandle



the resistance group and mode of action.

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

Farmers and community members are encouraged to do regular scouting for the FAW, particularly in younger plantings. They can call the nearest local agriculture centre for technical advisory.

NB: For FAW registered agrochemicals, visit your nearest reputable agro-dealer.

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Issued by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:

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