Fall Armyworm (FAW) Awareness Day, Smart Village, 23 September

CropLife Egypt (CLE) in cooperation with the Agricultural Pesticide Committee (APC) hosted an awareness day for Fall Armyworm (FAW) at the Conference Hall of The Smart Village (Cairo-Alexandria Road) on 23 September 2019.

The awareness day kicked-off at with Dr. Sherif Ayoub (CLE Chairman) giving the opening address followed by Prof. Dr. Mohamed Abdelmegeed (APC Chairman) providing the welcome address. The conference program started with a presentation covering Fall Armyworm under the title of (identification - symptoms - impact) by Prof. Dr. Hatem Elshannaf (Plant Protection Research Institute), followed by a demonstration video on the farmers’ role in controlling FAW by Prof. Dr. Amany Elhanafy (Plant Protection Research Institute) and finally a presentation under the title of (Risk assessment of FAW in Egyptian agriculture) by Prof. Dr. Ali Soliman (technical consultant to the Minister of Agriculture). Discussion sessions followed each topic where APC members and CLE members discussed new methods in the management of FAW.

Situated in the foyer of the conference centre, CropLife Egypt member companies, including BASF, Corteva, Syngenta, Sumitomo, KZ, Nufarm, Samtrade, UPL and FMC, were present with booths offering solutions through their experts who were present. The event attracted around 300 participants in addition to media coverage from online newspapers and the Misr Agricultural Channel, the first Egyptian channel specializing in agriculture. The event was highly appreciated by the APC as the kick-off for other awareness events to reach more farmers in other parts of Egypt.

Mahmoud Said
R/L Prof. Dr. M. Abdelmegeed (APC Chairman) - Prof. Dr. Ali Soliman (the Minister of Agriculture Technical Consultant) - Prof. Dr. Abdallah Saleh (APC) - Dr. Sherif Ayoub (CLE Chairman)

L/R Prof. Dr. Gomaa Abbas (PPRI) - Prof. Dr. Ali Soliman (The Minister of Agriculture Technical Consultant) - Said Abdella (CLE) - Prof. Dr. M. Abdelmegeed (APC Chairman) - Dr. Sherif Ayoub (CLE Chairman)

Said Abdella leading discussions
Creation and Management of Spray Service Providers (SSPs) Associations in Uganda

As background, the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC) awarded a contract for the creation and management of Spray Service Providers (SSPs) associations in Uganda under the Resilient Efficient Agribusiness Chains (REACH) project in Uganda. The project covers the period from 11 July to 30 November 2019.

Under the Resilient Efficient Agribusiness Chains (REACH) project implemented by the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC), 72 SSPs were trained in Bugiri, Butaleja, Kanungu, Kapchoraw and Kween in 2018. In several districts, SSPs came up with the idea to form groups or associations as a way to ensure sustainability of activities.

The milestones of the project are:
- To ensure the sound registration of associations of SSP groups at district level in Buguri, Butaleja, Mbae, Kabale, Kanungu, Kapchorwa, Kisoro and Kween.
- To build capacity of the associations in terms of association management and group dynamics.
- To link the SSP associations to stakeholders to create market opportunities.

Benefits for members of a Spray Service Provider association include:
- Advocating for favourable policies, for example to reduce the influx of counterfeit agro inputs.
- Creating common storage facilities for agro inputs.
- Creating linkages and facilitating deals and discounts with input suppliers to improve access to agro inputs and equipment.
- Organizing training programs on technical issues such as Integrated Pest Management, Fall Armyworm, etc. and business development.
- Facilitating large contracts covering 20 hectares or more.
- Promoting SSP services among farmers through radio jingles, during farmers’ meetings.
- Assisting and acting on behalf of members who for example have a dispute with a client who does not want to pay.
- Sharing information with all members on new pesticides available on the market or on laws and regulations that impact on SSP activities.
- Setting up collection points for empty containers and agree with suppliers to return the empty containers.

In order to effectively implement the setting up of SSP Associations in Uganda, CLAME developed a training curriculum based on its own experiences as a professional association and the needs of the SSPs, as identified in earlier projects. To ensure that the staff of CropLife Uganda are equipped to facilitate all sessions as described in the training manual, a training of trainers’ program was organized on 22 August 2019 in Nairobi.

The program was part of the annual HUB meeting of CropLife for East and Southern Africa. CropLife Uganda, staff from CropLife Kenya, Ethiopia and Zambia also participated. The program was facilitated by Manon Dohmen of CropLife Africa Middle who developed the training manual. During the program, several aspects of associations were explained, including the structure of an association, roles of the Executive Council and members, possible services an association can offer to its members, financial sustainability, etc.
Creation and Management of Spray Service Providers (SSPs) Associations in Uganda cont.

To get an idea on the status of all the groups in the different districts, a “rapid assessment” was organized by CropLife Uganda.

The assessment reviewed the 8 districts on the status of SSP Associations if any, membership and challenges faced. This exercise was conducted by CropLife Uganda.

The “rapid assessment” conducted provided the needs required for the capacity building of each SSP Association in the 8 districts. The 8 districts were taken through a facilitation exercise on Association Management by Betty Atto.

Each district went through a 2-day session. Day 1 was for the members of the associations who shared their experiences and challenges in their roles as SSPs.

The district officials present guided the SSPs’ in the development of effective action plans for each of those districts generated from their challenges.

On day 2, the officials of the SSP Associations were taken through a rigorous session that aimed to equip them with management and planning skills. In addition, they prepared their work-plans and budget for their respective associations.

In the coming weeks, CropLife Uganda will be conducting a stakeholder mapping exercise. This will be to enable CLU to link the SSPs through the associations with key stakeholders such as member companies, microfinance institutions, other organizations involved in agriculture in their respective districts and the District Agriculture offices.

Stakeholder forums will also be held in each of the districts where both the SSPs and stakeholders will have the opportunity to interact and explore areas of collaboration.

Manon Dohmen, Betty Atto & Evelyn Lusenaka

Above & Below: Rapid Assessment Exercise by CropLife Uganda

Facilitation Exercise for SSP Executives in Bugiri
The EPR Regulation Accelerates Zambia’s Waste Management Program

The Government of Zambia issued Statutory Instrument No. 65 of 2018, the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations, on 17 August 2018 with the authority of the Environmental Management Act of 2011. The EPR gives the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) authority to require producers of certain packaging materials or products to submit and adhere to a Waste Management Strategy and register each type of packaging that they use.

This industry-led approach makes Zambia’s EPR legislation quite innovative and adaptable. Industry expertise can be leveraged to achieve cost effective improvements in waste management. In addition, ZEMA has consulted with various industries throughout the process of designing the EPR and incorporated feedback to make compliance simple and cost-effective to businesses.

The EPR follows ZEMA’s overall philosophy of waste management, which is to begin changing the country’s mindset from viewing waste as a problem to utilizing this as a resource. The first key concept that applies to solid waste in the Solid Waste Regulation and Management Act of 2018 states that, "solid waste is a resource." This has carried over to the EPR, where a major objective is in the “Design for the Environment” (DfE).

The purpose of the Waste Management Strategy (WMS) for the Zambian Crop Protection (CP) Industry is to provide guidance on how to best manage the types of waste produced through ongoing activities of the CP Industry in accordance with Zambian laws and standards and aligned with global best practices. The CP Industry supplies farmers and the agricultural sector with pesticides that enhances crop yields and plant health.

This WMS aims to establish industry standards for waste management that are achievable and inclusive for all crop protection companies in Zambia.

Creating an industry-wide framework, WMS encourages greater participation in the program while making it easier for smaller companies to achieve the same waste management successes as larger companies.

Some synergies also exist when waste management is coordinated at an industry level, such as using common waste transporters and disposal facilities which understand the specific needs of the CP Industry.

There are two distinct phases of the CP Industry’s Waste Management Strategy (WMS):

- Phase 1 – September 2019 to August 2020
- Phase 2 – September 2020 onwards

Phase 1 of the CP Industry WMS will focus on retrieval of waste. This first phase will be a trial period for different aggregation models which makes retrieval effective, efficient, and at the least-cost to the industry. The goal will be to have a sustainable model for aggregation and storage of empty CP containers by August 2020, with contracts signed between the industry and service providers.

Later in Phase 1, alternative methods of disposal will be tested. This work will be aligned with and leverage off of existing alternative packaging disposal projects within the agricultural sector, such as those in the Seed Industry. The benefit of collaborating with other industry programs is that common operations, such as bulk disposal of plastic pesticide containers, can result in more efficient operations and reduced cost through utilisation of shared equipment and infrastructure.

The major focus of Phase 2 will be scaling up and expanding the sustainable aggregation model across Zambia to all commercial farming hubs and extending into rural areas and villages to reach smallholder farmers. Phase 2 will also include full-scale implementation of newer and better disposal methods made available to the CP Industry in Lusaka during Phase 1 which are currently non-existent in Zambia.

A model of aggregating these containers must be used to effectively retrieve the CP packaging from farms. The basic model of collecting packaging wastes is:

- Collection – delivery of packaging waste from farms to a retailer or aggregation point, or collection from a farm by a service provider, ideally through reverse logistics (when delivering a new CP product)
- Aggregation – accumulation of packaging wastes from various sources at a centralised facility meant for temporary storage, known as an aggregation point. Aggregation points can also be involved in pre-processing, mainly to reduce the volume of packaging, for example bailing or crushing, and make transport more efficient.
- Storage – temporary storage of packaging wastes at a centralised facility until it can be collected for disposal.
- Transport – transport to an appropriate disposal facility in Lusaka
This model is depicted in the figure below.

The next step will be to run a pilot program in line with the new concept for the period of 12 months after which the program will be validated and the rollout will commence.

The other agreement made by the Industry players was that an Environmental Fund will be established in line with the regulations and the fund will be managed by CropLife Zambia. The fund will be used to manage the program on the behalf of the Industry. CropLife Zambia will also handle all disputes, communication and administration of the program.

At the moment the above is subject to approval by ZEMA.

The success of this program will see a robust Waste Management program which will ensure collection of at least 75% of empty CP containers in the Country within the next 5 years.

This Strategy was validated by CropLife Zambia members during the Waste Management Validation workshop which was held on 15th August 2019.

Perry Ngoma
Stewardship

A Waste Management Expert facilitating a session during the Waste Management Strategy Validation Workshop

Group Photo: Delegates at the Waste Management Strategy Validation Workshop

Zambia Environmental Management Agency
Managing our environment, securing our future

Partners in Sustainable Agriculture
Risk Assessment and Human Health Workshop - Ghana

The Ghana EPA, in cooperation with the Michigan State University (MSU), organized a one-day workshop on pesticide risk assessment. The workshop took place on September 13, in Accra and was attended by CropLife Ghana together with representatives of the regulatory authorities, namely Ghana/EPA, MoFA/PPRSD and COCOB/CRIG, plus academia.

The growing concerns on the potential risks of pesticides on human health and the environment, although many interventions have been introduced to mitigate such risks are exacerbated with the misuse of pesticides. Many health cases including fatalities have been reported following pesticide misuse in parts of Ghana. The workshop sought to qualitatively assess pesticide risk to human health in Ghana with the objective to identify the main risks posed by pesticide use in the country, and for each product/active substance to identify the access, the exposure and impact, and on identifying these three priority areas, to follow-up and monitor.

Fred Boampong

Inaugural Meeting of the Technical Committee of CropLife Ghana

The Technical Committee of CropLife Ghana met for the first time since its inception following the July “pesticide registration workshop” under the SNV-HortiFresh funded SSP project. The role of the committee is to assist the CropLife Ghana secretariat in maximizing activities for the benefit of member companies and the agrochemical industry. Furthermore, the Technical Committee will serve as an important tool for the association in bringing the needed policy changes and directions for the smooth operation of the agrochemical industry in Ghana. The scope of work includes:

- Supporting the regulatory framework development, in liaison with the CropLife AME regional regulatory committee, including harmonization, legislative reviews and capacity enhancement in regulatory issues;
- Supporting CropLife AME in dissemination of regulatory advice on pesticide registration guidelines with reference to CBI/PRD, minor changes in formulations, equivalence, labelling and GHS implantation etc
- Regulatory issue scanning
- Maintaining good relations with stakeholders involved in pesticide use and management across the country, to increase confidence in the industry, and among member companies.

Those serving on the committee include Peter Ampofo of Bayer West Africa as Chairman, George Brown of Reiss & Co as Vice-Chairman, Seth Mensah of Wynca Sunshine Agric. as Secretary. The other members are Ken Nii Addy of RMG Ghana and Gregory Amprofi of Chemico Ltd.

Fred Boampong

The technical committee at work to provide the needed support for the Secretariat.
Assessment of Fraudulent Pesticides in East & Southern Africa Countries

The proliferation of counterfeit and other illegal pesticides on markets and the subsequent risks to human health and the environment is a growing concern in the sub-region. CropLife AME and the national associations in the region with the support of member companies are actively engaged in anticounterfeiting efforts in the key markets. These efforts aim at sensitizing law enforcement authorities especially the regulators on the risks associated with fraudulent pesticides.

To this end Professor Steven Haggblade, Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, Michigan State University (MSU) shared his findings on the quality of fraudulent pesticides in West Africa. The MSU study which was conducted under the “USAID-Feed the Future” program focused on glyphosate-based herbicides. The findings highlighted the poor quality of the many “me-too” registered brands on the markets in West Africa. The lack of accredited laboratories to support quality control operations further increases risks in human health and the environment. The findings call for action by farmers, regulators, the industry and research entities.

Participants at the East & Southern Africa workshop comprised of representatives of national regulatory authorities, R&D managers and officers of member companies of CropLife AME, CropLife national associations, partners and allied organizations. An assessment exercise was undertaken during the workshop under the guidance of Prof. Haggblade, on the prevalence of fraudulent pesticides in the respective countries. The results indicated an average of 25% fraudulent pesticides of market share with the exception of South Africa which rated fraudulent pesticides at 6%. Herbicides and to a lesser extend insecticides are the mostly fraudulent pesticides. Recommendations focused on improving post registration monitoring and regulatory capacity, the sensitization of key stakeholders on the issue and the related risks, prosecution and increased penalties together with regional harmonization of regulations.
**Tackling fraudulent pesticides in Ghana through the agro-dealer network.**

The Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA/PPRSD) organized a workshop on 3 & 4 September aimed at reviewing the “pesticide dealers' handbook”. The workshop was organized in cooperation with the Market Oriented Agricultural Program (GIZ-MOAP).

The task of the working group comprising of a representative from each of Ghana EPA, MoFA/PPRSD, University of Ghana, GIZ/MOAP, CropLife Ghana, RMG and Macro Fertil was to update the Handbook and make this available to all agro-dealers/retailers and importers across the country through training programs.

It is anticipated that the updated handbook will contribute to alleviating trade in unregistered pesticides (and other agri-inputs) in the country and encourage prosecution of offenders.

Fred Boampong
CropLife Zambia Holds AGM

CropLife Zambia held its 2019 AGM on Friday 5 September. The AGM was attended by 33 delegates which included the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) who presented on the newly promulgated regulation on the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program.

Some of the key issues discussed during the AGM were the following:

- Performance of the Association in 2018/19: successes and challenges
- The implementation of the EPR Waste Management Strategy
- Shelf-life extension: the way forward
- GHS labelling implementation

The AGM also took advantage to discuss other Association Management Issues. Key issues were; membership commitment; payment of dues, sustainability of the Association and partnerships.

During the meeting, the Executive Committee Chairman, Paul Kapapula, presented plans for the Association in the next year which included the following:

- Inclusion of ‘Mode of Action’ Labelling: The Association will embark on an awareness program to sensitize members on the campaign to ensure that MoA is included on all CP labels in an effort to prevent resistance.
- Container Management: run a pilot Container Management Program based on the new concept. Start with Mkushi farming block and follow up with the rollout after 12 months.
- Introduce an accreditation course for pesticide handlers
- Develop an “anti-counterfeiting campaign in collaboration with ZEMA
- Enhance Partnerships in the Agricultural sector
- Enhance the Visibility of the Association

The Chairman called for the active participation of members in the activities of the Association and to support the Secretariat in the efforts to offer services to the membership.

Perry Ngoma
Nigeria Stresses Importance of Biotechnology for Food Security

Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu, Minister of Science and Technology of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Photo credit: Ministry of Science and Technology.

Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu, Minister of Science and Technology, announced that the Federal Government (FG) of Nigeria is working hard in applying genetic engineering and biotechnology. This is to ensure food safety and security in the country, as it recognizes the importance of both fields in boosting local food production and decreasing the need for continuous importation of food and commodities from other countries. The announcement was made during a training workshop in Abuja, Nigeria, where scientists from 21 countries were present to participate in a basic laboratory training on living modified organisms detection and identification.

In his declaration, Minister Onu said that the Ministry of Science and Technology will continue to support the National Biotechnology Development Agency, or NABDA. NABDA's mandate is to promote, coordinate and deploy cutting-edge biotechnology research and development, processes and products for the socio-economic well-being of Nigeria. Through NABDA, the Ministry aims to strengthen Nigeria's agriculture while at the same time protecting the environment as well as guaranteeing the achievement of rapid industrialization.

Minister Onu also commended the organizers of the workshop for allowing scientists to come together to help bridge the knowledge gap on genetic engineering and biotechnology, which he believes will benefit both developers and consumers alike. Better knowledge on both technologies will make a positive impact on Nigeria's national growth and development through improvement of crops and animal production.

ISAAA
Bt Brinjal Technology Boosts Yield, Reduces Pesticides in Bangladesh, IFPRI Reports

Bt brinjal increased yield by 42%, reduced cost of growing brinjal by 31%, reduced pesticide applications by 51%, leading to fewer reports of pesticide exposure symptoms. These are according to the report on the Impacts of Bt Brinjal (Eggplant) Technology in Bangladesh published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Brinjal is a high-value crop widely grown and consumed in Bangladesh. However, it is susceptible to fruit and shoot borer (FSB) attacks, leading farmers to use highly toxic pesticide sprays. This led the Bangladeshi scientists, together with Mahyco researchers, to develop genetically engineered brinjal varieties resistant to FSB. After 10 years of research and development, insect resistant Bt brinjal was commercially released in the country in 2013. IFPRI, under the Bangladesh Policy Research and Strategy Support Program for Food Security and Agricultural Development and with support from USAID, studied the impact of Bt brinjal in Bangladesh.

The key findings of the study are the following:

- 47% reduction in the cost of applying pesticides
- 51% reduction in the number of pesticide application.
- Net yields were 42% higher, equivalent to an increase of 3,622 kg per hectare
- 31% reduction (per kg) in the cost of growing Bt brinjal
- Bt brinjal-planting households were 10% less likely to report symptoms of pesticide exposure

Based on the results, Bt brinjal had significant positive socio-economic, environmental, and health impacts in Bangladesh.
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