



## **CropLife Africa Middle East calls for functioning Agro Input Markets despite lockdown measures related to the COVID-19 Crisis**

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic will have an impact including the pesticide industry in the Africa and Middle East region. Various countries are faced with partial to total lockdown which is having an effect on the ease of doing business and on agricultural production as a whole. Although it is too early to measure the actual impact, discussions with the national associations in the region indicate growing disruptions in the agricultural sector which employs an average of 60% of the population. The challenges faced by Africa Middle East countries will impact global supplies in the future and is therefore something of global interest.

Together with health workers who are at the forefront of this crisis, farmers and the agricultural sector have a key role to play in this COVID-19 crisis management by assuring continued food supply especially for the local population. With often above 50% food imports and at times stock levels of a few weeks only, local production and its national distribution may become more important in the coming months. Regardless of the measures to enforce quarantine and social distancing, people will need reliable and regular food supply just like they will require medical supplies.

Pesticide imports and interstate movement of pesticides are critical factors for crop protection products to reach distributors and eventually farmers. The free flow of inputs is essential in countries such as Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia, countries which are soon going into peak planting and growing season.

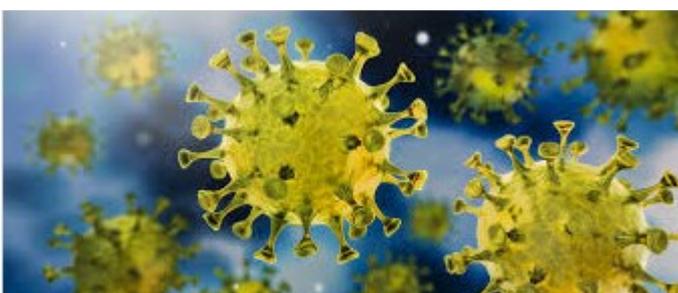
The East Africa region has also seen an upsurge of locusts especially in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. Disrupted distribution of the required products will be a major setback in locust control. Similarly, Fall Armyworm (FAW) control continues to be a challenge in the Southern Africa countries. Similar concerns exist in countries in West Central Africa where the planting season is approaching for cotton and staple foods. In addition, the main export crop cocoa will require the annual plant protection products to control pests and diseases in the coming months.

Farmers and Farm workers are in the frontline of providing the world with a stable food supply. Now they will be instrumental in keeping a health crisis from turning into a hunger crisis. While non-essential travel restrictions have been an important way to prevent the continued spread of COVID-19, we must ensure the uninterrupted and timely supply of crop protection products, seeds and fertilizers so farmers can continue to maximize yields and ensure high quality harvests. Any delay within the agricultural input supply chain could put food supplies within the region at risk.

Realising that this is a challenge for all to overcome, CropLife Africa Middle East member companies are working hard to continue providing the farming communities with the needed tools and inputs to maintain a stable food supply and will look to governments to continue to treat food production as an essential service in the response to COVID-19 and to ensure that food insecurity does not further increase this challenge.

As the regional association representing the plant science industry, we are committed to supporting the national association network with information and expertise on how different countries succeed to maintain a functioning agro-input market and sustainable agricultural production also under the challenging COVID-19 situation.

We appeal to governments in the region to consider agricultural inputs as essential goods so as to ensure farmer access to these inputs, under strict observation of health guidelines (social distancing) to ensure safety for all. Food security in the coming months can only be secured if farmers can access these inputs on time and in the right quantities.



**Dr. Samira Amellal**  
**Director General / CEO**  
**CropLife Africa Middle East A.I.S.B.L.**



## Stewardship

### Capacity Enhancement for pesticide dealers and applicators in Cote d'Ivoire.

CropLife Cote d'Ivoire organized its first training workshop for the year on IPM/RU for pesticide dealers, applicators and counsellors. The 78 participants were individuals seeking certification for the first time or renewal of their expired certificates from the Pesticide Committee chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Among the participants were three from Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger who wanted to improve their knowledge in their handling of pesticides, as dealers in their respective countries.

More than 10 sessions were covered during the four-day program in which 16 topics were discussed, ranging from basics on pesticides (definitions, formulations, terminology....), pesticide regulations, pesticide application, GAPs, pesticides and sustainable agriculture and economic development...

A special focus was placed on the importance and correct use of PPE, empty container management and anticounterfeiting activities. These topics were referred to during the opening and closing ceremonies which were chaired by the Deputy Director of the Plant Protection Directorate (DPVCQ) as well as during the specific sessions devoted to these topics. The participants were frequently called on to give their expected contribution to any project or program related to the three issues.

The workshop was supervised by the Bureau Norme et Audit (BNA) as CropLife Cote d'Ivoire is seeking certification of the training program. Such certification would provide an opportunity to engage in negotiations for conducting training for government, projects and development agencies involved in agricultural development.

The closing ceremony was attended by the President of the Board of ANADER, the National Extension Service. This level of cooperation is in line with the commitment made between ANADER and CropLife CI to pursue and provide knowledge and support to the farming community through synergy raising as determined in their respective mission statements.

**Bama Yao**



The President of CropLife CI (Left) and of the Deputy-Director DPVCQ (Below) addressing participants during the opening and closing ceremonies, respectively.

Photo: Courtesy CropLife CI



## Stewardship



The President of the Board of ANADER, the Extension Service, and the Executive Director of CropLife CI (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> L-R) during the interview by the national press agency



Group photo of participants at the end of the training program.

Photo: Courtesy CropLife CI

## Stewardship

### Container Management Team Activities

CropLife Egypt Container Management Team ( CM) continues in their preparation for a pilot project to manage empty pesticide containers.

The CM team comprising of Dr. Sherif Ayoub, Mahmoud Said, Inji Zaki, Hamza Ghallab and Manal Saleh of Blue Moon, paid a visit on 4 March to the El-Mahrousa Plast factory at “10<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan industrial zone” and learned about types of plastic used in pesticide containers and methods of recycling for each type.

The team followed-up with a meeting with the Agricultural Pesticide Committee (APC) on 5 March and discussed the triple rinsing training/awareness to be included in all APC activities in addition to APC’s willingness to participate in the project through farm visits and collection schemes.

The CM team and Blue Moon accompanied by an APC member continued with visits to mega farms on 10 March. This included a visit to Dina Farms to train their staff on triple rinsing and to discuss the possibility of collecting their empty containers after these had been triple rinsed.

**Mahmoud Said**



The CM team with the APC



## Stewardship



The visit to Dina Farm

**أشطف عبوات المبيدات المستخدمة الخاصة بك شطف ثلاثي!**

**اتبع هذه الخطوات 3X**

أفرغ العبوة عن طريق وضعها رأساً على عقب فوق خزان آلة الرش. أتركها كذلك لمدة ٣٠ ثانية أخرى

١. املاً ربع العبوة بالمياه

٢. احكم إغلاق العبوة ورجها لمدة ٣٠ ثانية

٣. أفرغ العبوة عن طريق وضعها رأساً على عقب فوق خزان آلة الرش. أتركها كذلك لمدة ٣٠ ثانية أخرى

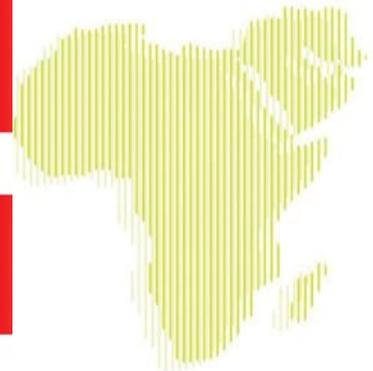
دائماً ارتدى معدات الوقاية الشخصية

حافظ على صحتك - ألق العبوة حتى لا يمكن إعادة استخدامها ويتم إرسالها لإعادة التدوير

CropLife INTERNATIONAL

CropLife AFRICA MIDDLE EAST

The Triple Rinse poster in Arabic



## Stewardship

### Morocco: Train of trainers' session on the responsible use of pesticides

The performance of Moroccan agriculture is the result, amongst other things, the know-how of growers and the use of pesticides to protect crops from pests and diseases. The use of pesticides ensures abundant and quality agricultural production to provide important income to producers, while preserving the health of consumers and the environment.

However, while plant protection products are necessary to all growers, they must be used safely and wisely by farmers, in order to guarantee and ensure their safety, the safety of the applicators, consumers, animals and preserve the environment which are the guarantee to sustainable agriculture.

The CropLife association, representing the plant science industry in Morocco, advocates ethical and responsible management of plant protection products throughout their life cycle, from the first phase of their design and manufacture, to the last phase of their use or disposal under conditions that meet the country's standards and regulations.

Unfortunately, in practice, plant protection products are not yet well applied and used according to the rules by some farmers who are not well informed about their safe use.

Knowing the threats generated by the misuse of plant protection products on the sustainability of the agricultural economy in particular and on the national economy in general, CropLife Morocco with the support of CropLife Africa Middle East is committed to partnering with the National Office of the Agricultural Council to conduct train of trainer sessions for agricultural advisors. Once this is done they can in turn train, advise Moroccan farmers and raise their awareness on good agricultural practices as well as on the responsible use of pesticides.

All the training sessions were covered by the local agricultural radio station MedinaFM.

The objectives of the training were to:

- Explain to participants the challenges facing the Moroccan agricultural sector
- Raise awareness about pesticide contribution to the sustainability of the agricultural economy facing climate changes
- Inform participants about the risks to human health and the environment associated with the misuse of plant protection products
- Reinforce good agricultural practices and the responsible use of crop protection products
- Provide participants with tools enabling them to conduct extension meetings with small-scale farmers.



Above: Dkhissa, Meknès, February 18th, 2020

Below: El Hajeb, Meknès, February 25th, 2020



# Stewardship

## Morocco: Train of trainers' session on the responsible use of pesticides cont.

### Outcome

At the end of the training sessions, participants were:

- mindful of the importance of plant protection products
- better informed on the risks and impact of misuse
- suitably trained and able to conduct extension meetings with farmers on the Responsible Use of plant protection products

At the end of each session, participants received flyers, leaflets, booklets and posters on pesticide safe use

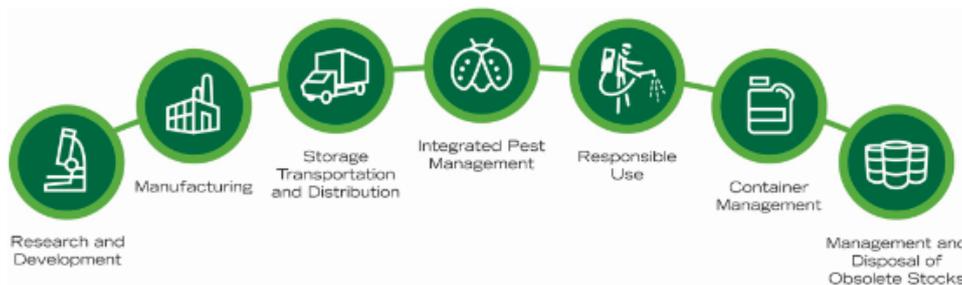
Boubker El Ouilani



Above & Below: Douiet, Fes, March 3, 2020



Above: Douiet, Fes, March 10th, 2020



# Anti-Counterfeiting Activities

## IPR enforcement under the US-AU Trade Negotiations

The African Union (AU) is engaged in negotiations with the US under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area. IP enforcement has been identified as a strategic pillar within the negotiations. To this end an IP workshop was organized on 4 – 5 March in Addis Ababa to guide the team of the AU on the contribution of IP in innovations and economic development, by sharing best practices for IP enforcement.

CropLife Africa Middle East (AME) addressed the 35 participants representing various organizations and institutions on the importance of IP in agriculture, and the anticounterfeiting activities in Africa. The message highlighted the strategic position of agriculture in Africa and in the trade negotiations with the USA.

This covered the proliferation of counterfeiting and other illicit pesticides of poor quality and the related threats to health and the environment. This criminal activity inevitably leads to financial and economic losses, thereby threatening agricultural economies and overall national economies. The approach by CropLife AME in combating counterfeit pesticides was well received with the request for continuous support on the issue.

Bama Yao



## Association Management

### CropLife Africa Middle East welcomes NUFARM SAS as a member of the Regional Association

The Board and management of CropLife Africa Middle East Board welcomes NUFARM as member of the Regional Association.

The General Assembly voted through written resolutions on 29 February on the admission of NUFARM SAS as a member of CropLife Africa Middle East.

We look forward to working together with the NUFARM Team in the Region

Samira Amellal



### Henri Fosso - Farewell

Henri Fosso resigned as President of CropLife Cameroon (CM) at the 34th AGM on March 05, 2020. Henri Fosso has given the industry over 30 years of dedicated service.

Following the membership of his company FIMEX International to the Union Phytosanitaire d'Afrique Centrale (UPAC) in 1989, he was elected as President and led the association to adopt the CropLife philosophy in 2003, to then become a member of CropLife Africa Middle East (AME).

Under his leadership CropLife CM was able to engage with the pesticide industry in Central Africa through responsible ethics and a code of conduct. He was strongly involved in and provided valuable guidance for the preparation of the first pesticide regulations in Cameroon. He further succeeded in engaging with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) in a public-private partnership for joint programs including training of trainers and of dealers/retailers, toxicovigilance seminars, container management, anticounterfeiting activities, conferences, meetings with the media, annual launches of crop seasons etc.

He ensured his attendance at all the annual workshops of the West and Central Africa (WCA) Hub of CropLife AME, as well as those held by the Africa Middle East Working Group (AMEWG, which later became CropLife AME) by the former Global Crop Protection Federation (GCPF).

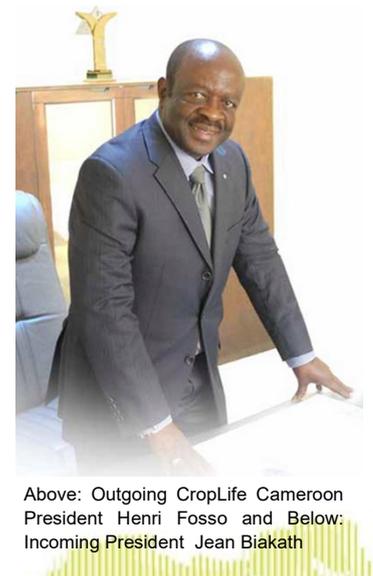
Henri Fosso represented CropLife CM in the Groupement Inter-Patronal du Cameroun (GICAM), the employers' organization and was elected as Vice-President from 2014 to 2017, and administrator of the Cameroon National Funds for Employment (FNE) during the same period.

He played his role of "The Elder" stamped with wisdom when necessary during the various meetings and workshops in Cameroon and elsewhere in WCA resulting in the AGM unanimously nominating him as "Honorary President" of CropLife CM. President Fosso will thus stand beside his "younger brothers" to continue providing sound advice.

CropLife AME would like to extend their sincere gratitude to Henri Fosso for his unwavering dedication to the pesticide industry in WCA.

Jean Biakath was elected as the new President of CropLife CM. We extend a warm welcome to him. Jean has a solid reference in the pesticide business in Cameroon having a long-standing presence of almost three decades. He has worked closely with Henri Fosso and will bring this experience to the association and pursue the work both he and Henri Fosso had initiated.

Bama Yao



Above: Outgoing CropLife Cameroon President Henri Fosso and Below: Incoming President Jean Biakath



AFRICA MIDDLE EAST

## Association Management

### CropLife Zimbabwe meets with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, 20 March at the Royal Harare Golf Club

CropLife Zimbabwe coordinated a breakfast meeting with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr John Basera and CEOs of agrochemical companies in Zimbabwe on 20 March 2020. The breakfast meeting was seen as a long overdue exercise to have the public and private sectors re-engage and form synergies which will benefit the agricultural sector of Zimbabwe.

Chairperson of CropLife Zimbabwe, Ms. Caroline Charumbira gave the opening address, welcoming all guests. She highlighted concerns from the agrochemical industry such as illegal and counterfeit products passing through our porous borders, issues of foreign currency needed to sustain agrochemical supply, engagement of all players in the tendering process and product stewardship partnerships with Agritex.



Dr John Bhasera presenting to the group

The Permanent Secretary spoke about government's Agricultural Recovery Plan such as the need to improve soil conditions by soil profiling and enabling farmers to make correct decisions to reach maximum yields, as the country is struggling to achieve these targets due to lack of soil testing. The ministry is also looking to increase the mechanisation of farms and land under irrigation, which numbers as little as 0.5% - 1% of arable land. The government is also working on the training all Extension Officers in April 2020 and encouraged the private sector to assist in the training process. Dr John Basera, also urged CropLife members to develop formulations to effectively deal with weeds such as Star-grass.

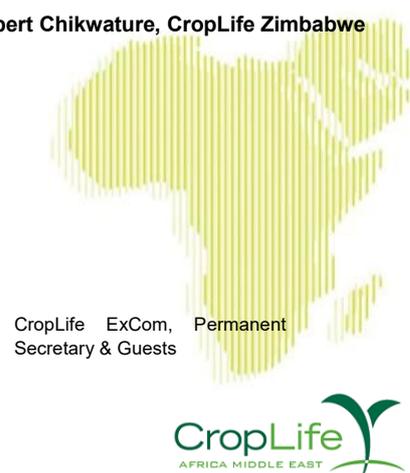
CropLife and the Permanent Secretary agreed on the following issues to be implemented going forward:

- The CropLife Course for Agritex officers
- CropLife members to plan trainings on the responsible use of pesticides and weed control at agricultural colleges across the country
- Revival of the Master Farmer Programme with the involvement CropLife so that certificates awarded will also carry the CropLife logo
- Fall Armyworm training for Agritex Officers
- Further engagement between CropLife Zimbabwe and the Ministry of Agriculture to improve the working relationship.

Regarding the concerns raised by the Chairperson of CropLife Zimbabwe, the Permanent Secretary assigned responsibility to his staff in attendance to look into developing solutions to address these and provide feedback.

Overall the meeting was deemed a success in terms of the re-engagement process between the Ministry of Agriculture and CropLife Zimbabwe. Now on the cards is a meeting with all players in the agricultural industry i.e. Fertilizer, Seed and Chemicals, to meet with the Ministry and strategize on the development of the industry and make Zimbabwe's agricultural sector a booming industry.

Obert Chikwature, CropLife Zimbabwe



CropLife ExCom, Permanent Secretary & Guests



## Plant Biotechnology

### Long Wait Over as Kenya Finally Commercializes Bt Cotton

After many years of waiting, Kenya has finally commenced commercial farming of Bt cotton heralding a new dawn for cotton farmers in the country. On Monday, the country planted its first Bt cotton seed on a commercial scale in a historic launch held at Alupe University, western Kenya. The country now becomes the seventh African country to commercialize the genetically modified (GM) cotton.

The planting marks the first of 1,000 on-farm demonstration plots to be planted in 23 counties for training at least 40,000 farmers prior to full commercial roll-out in the country. This latest development follows a Cabinet approval for commercial farming of Bt cotton granted on December 19, 2019.

Speaking during the launch, Kenya's Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Peter Munya revealed that the Government targets to have over 200,000 acres under commercial Bt cotton cultivation by 2022 creating over 25,000 jobs for Kenyans along the value chain. "These job opportunities will be in cultivation, processing or trading in locally manufactured garments and clothes," said the CS.

"Cultivation of Bt cotton by our farmers will guarantee a constant supply of raw materials to ginneries and cotton processing industries thus supporting value addition and job creation up the value chain," he added.

The Government banks on Bt cotton commercialization to revive the textile and apparel industry and increase the contribution of the manufacturing sector to the country's GDP from the current 9.2 percent to 20 percent by 2022, a significant step in achieving the 'Big Four' Agenda, Kenya's economic development blueprint. The crop's commercial farming is a culmination of a process that started in 2001 when the first application to introduce Bt cotton was made. The first transgenic cotton confined field trials were planted in 2004 and completed in 2010.

In September 2018, ISAAA AfriCenter organized a study tour of India's Bt cotton program for Kenyan policy makers and other senior government officials from various regulatory and cotton value chain players. During the tour, the policy makers promised to fast-track the growing of the GM crop in the country.

Bt cotton is currently planted in 15 countries globally covering an area of 24 million hectares. The top three leading Bt cotton producers are India (11.6 Million hectares), USA (5.06 Million Hectares) and China (2.93 Million Hectares). Kenya is now the latest entrant joining South Africa, Sudan, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria and eSwatini in planting GM cotton in Africa.

ISAAA



## Plant Biotechnology

### Ugandan President Ready to Sign GMO Bill into Law

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has given the clearest indication yet that he is ready to sign the National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill into law. The President has directed the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) caucus to convene a meeting and resolve the impasse that has stalled the passing of the bill into law.

Speaking during the Presidential Investment Round Table at State House, President Museveni accused groups opposed to the bill saying they harbour anti-science attitudes and use religion as a pretext to their resistance against biotechnology.

"Initially, they (GMO opponents) had some good reasons but I now think it is time to insist. We shall now call the caucus and resolve this," said the President. The President said nothing can stop scientific innovations, thus, those opposed to science are fighting a losing battle.

The bill, otherwise known as the Genetic Engineering Regulatory Bill, seeks to provide a regulatory framework that facilitates the safe development and application of biotechnology, research, development, and release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). In August 2019, the Head of State declined to assent to the bill for the second time but instead introduced new clauses that needed to be addressed by Parliament before he could sign it.

President Museveni has on several occasions emphasized the critical role of modern biotechnology in ensuring sustainable food and nutrition security for the country's over 40 million people.

The passing of the bill into law will give Ugandan farmers the opportunity to access biotech crops cushioning them from losses due to various environmental stresses that have rendered lots of devastation on their conventional crops. The move will definitely be hailed by Ugandan farmers who have now to sit and watch as their neighbouring Kenyan farmers, enjoy the benefits of cultivating biotech cotton, recently approved by Kenyan Government.

ISAAA





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