



CropLife Africa Middle East holds its third Board Meeting (via WebEx)

On 25 November the Board of CropLife Africa Middle East met via WebEx for its third meeting during 2020, which included the election of a new President for the term, 2020 to 2022. The meeting dealt with the normal statutory requirements and reviewed both the minutes and pending matters. The outgoing Board then took note and accepted the resignation of the following Board Members: Dirk Hartmann, Member of the Board and President since 2018 and Prabdeep Bajwa of Corteva and Member of the Board since 2018. The meeting thanked the outgoing members for their valuable contribution over the past years.

The Board unanimously elected a new President and Directors of the Board of CL AME as follows:

- Jerome Barbaron, President of CropLife Africa Middle East
- Alberto Ancora, of BASF, Director of the Board of CropLife Africa Middle East
- Kolli, Venkata Subbarao of Corteva Agriscience, Director of the Board of CropLife Africa Middle East who shared his willingness to serve as a Vice President and Hub Chair for West & Central Africa. The decision will be ratified at the next AGM of CL AME

The Director General, Samira Amellal, then presented an update on the operations for the year 2020, followed by the CL AME team who presented on the highlights achieved during 2020 in line with the "Strategy 2018-2020" and the actions that had been taken to adapt and prioritize activities in the region.

The Board thanked the executives for their commitment and excellent work performed during the year especially on the introduction of digitalization in stewardship outreach, the extension of anti-counterfeiting activities in the region and the support towards the implementation of E-submissions.

During the meeting, the Director General provided an update on the Strategy Review 2021-2023 whilst the CL AME team shared insight on the Operating Plan for 2021, for approval of the Board.

The meeting concluded with a virtual farewell to Dirk Hartmann in which deepest gratitude and esteemed appreciation was expressed by both, the CropLife AME team and entire Board for his 6 years dedicated service and engagement to the industry.

Dr. Samira Amellal
Director General - CL AME



Jerome Barbaron
President of CropLife Africa Middle East



Stewardship

SSP Training of Trainers (ToT) Nigeria

CropLife Nigeria trained 7 field officers from the organization, Great Northern Agribusiness Ltd, located at Gagarawa community in Jigawa state, which is in the Northern part of Nigeria. They are involved in sugarcane plantation farming.

The ToT took place from 9 -13 November 2020. This is part of the commitment and stewardship activities towards the responsible use and handling of pesticides practiced by CropLife Nigeria

The training was facilitated by Muhsin Gambo Lawal, a field coordinator of CropLife Nigeria. The staff that were trained are field supervisors in sugarcane plantation farms., They were recently recruited to manage the activities of the technical teams, especially those handling pesticides for the company. It was for this reason that CropLife Nigeria was contacted to undertake the training.

Although the trainees did have agricultural backgrounds they found this training very useful and mentioned they had never undergone such an explicit and practical training. This was including throughout their studies and field work, in so far as the use and safe handling of pesticide is concerned.

The most interesting part of the training has shown in the evaluation process by the trainees at the end of the program that messages on Triple Rinsing and disposal of plastic empty containers were appreciated and clearly understood as this would help reduce contamination by discouraging the reuse of pesticide containers.

Scouting and calibration was identified as a challenge by the trainees as they generally don't scrutinize farms for pest thresholds or calibrate their knapsack sprayers. This has over a period of time, resulted in the incorrect application of pesticides.

Gauging the impact of the training, in the pre-test, which is normally undertaken to determine the level of experience of the trainees before the start of the training, the average score was 2.5% For the test post-training, the average score was 75% and 95% for the practical application test.

This level of change was very significant indicating a high level of comprehension for the training. Certificates of Attendance were presented to the trainees by staff of CLN.

Adigun Babajide and Oluwasiji Ofoesuwa
CropLife Nigeria



Outdoor training activity



Group Photo of Trainees



Presentation of a certificate to a trainee

Stewardship

SSP Associations in the Vegetable Sector make Business Deals

Members of 12 different SSP associations active in the vegetable sector in Ghana, were able to conclude business deals with several partners. During business meetings that were organized by CropLife Ghana in early November 2020, in two different regions, a total of 11 potential partners met with representatives of the SSP associations.

The 12 SSP associations represent a total of 180 SSPs in two regions of Ghana. They mainly service vegetable farmers as they had graduated in 2019. To bring their SSP businesses to the next level, CropLife Ghana invited different stakeholders, including agro dealers, microfinance institutes, and farmers' organizations to meet with representatives of the SSP associations in their respective regions. Each association had the opportunity to address all partners on a face-to-face basis.

To prepare the representatives of the SSP associations in advance of meeting potential partners, all participated in a program to practice on how to introduce the SSP association concept to a partner, be able to explain what SSPs are, what the association wants from the partner and what they can offer. These skills were well applied during the business meetings and several groups walked away from the meeting with some concrete results.

The SSP association from Otaomina in the Greater Accra region was able to conclude a deal with a key agro dealer. During the main season, SSPs purchase up to 100 cartons of various pesticides per month on behalf of their clients. Following the discussions, the agro dealer agreed to sell the cartons at a 10% discount and was prepared to deliver the products to the communities. SSPs can earn some extra income by selling the products at the normal market price while farmers will save on transport costs and are assured that they are purchasing good quality products.

The 6 SSP groups from Bono East were linked to 3 farmers' organizations. The mango producer association showed particular interest in the services of the SSPs, as recently a group of 30 of their members were GLOBALG.A.P. certified. Also, the rural banks that attended the program were interested in the business aspects of the SSP concept. In the short term, the SSP associations are able open bank accounts. The money placed in the accounts can be the first step towards direct credit to purchase pesticides in bulk from agro dealers.

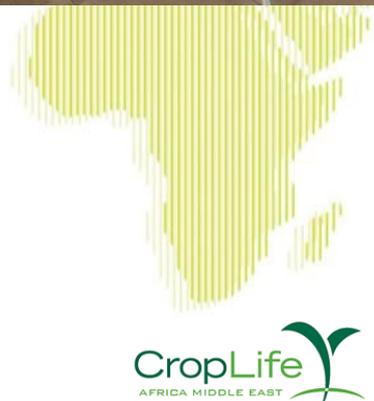
The activities were organized as part of an SSP project implemented by CropLife Ghana under the SNV HortiFresh program. CropLife Ghana will follow up with the SSP associations to ensure that all potential business deals will be successfully concluded.

Manon Mireille Dohmen

Right: 3 SSPs discuss with an agro-dealer in the Greater Accra region



An introductory business meeting in the Greater Accra region



Stewardship

CropLife Uganda held its Annual General Meeting and a Fall Armyworm workshop

CropLife Uganda conducted a training for agronomists from its member companies on 17 & 18 November at the Fairview Hotel in Kampala.

Since the emergence of Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Africa in 2017, Uganda has continued to experience yearly infestations in maize and has also recorded infestations in other host crops causing varying levels of yield losses. The most vulnerable remain the majority of smallholder farmers dwelling in rural areas. This sector relies mostly on the field extension services from member companies by their respective technical teams. In order to help these farmers, minimize losses due to FAW, it is important to ensure that the people they rely on for information and crop protection supplies are well equipped with the necessary knowledge in so far as management and control of the FAW is concerned.

A total of 11 trainees were updated on information and knowledge key for the effective management of the FAW. In addition, the workshop discussed insecticide resistance management and the need to adopt IRAC's mode of action labelling.



CropLife Uganda member companies trained on Fall Armyworm by Mr. Solomon Seruwo at the Fairway Hotel Kampala-Uganda.

The timing of this training coincided with CropLife Uganda's 12th Annual General Meeting held on 19 November 2020 at the Fairway Hotel, Kampala. The meeting was officiated by the Commissioner Crop Inspection and Certification, Ministry of Agricultural Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF).

Evelyn Lusenaka of CLAME guided the meeting on effective association management and stressed on the following:

- What should the key priorities for CropLife Uganda be in 2021?
- How should CropLife Uganda organize themselves to achieve these objectives?
- What committees or working groups should be formed to achieve these objectives?

CropLife Uganda was scheduled to hold an election for a new Board but could not do so during the meeting. This will however be postponed to a suitable timing in December with an official announcement to be released shortly.

Betty Atto-Executive Secretary, CropLife Uganda



Evelyn Lusenaka, taking CropLife member companies through the Association Management Training Guidelines during the Annual General Meeting.

Stewardship

Various Role Players Collaborate to Ensure Pollinator Safety – South Africa

The crop protection industry, together with a number of grower and beekeeping associations, have committed to ensuring that their activities are conducted in such a way that pollinator safety is a key priority.

To this end, a pollinator charter was created in which all parties involved agreed that their members shall adhere to the guidelines provided in the charter. These parties include CropLife SA, Agri SA, Grain SA, SABIO, Hortgro, SAMAC, SANSOR, Subtrop, and Citrus Research International.

“Bees form such a critical component of biodiversity and food production that we owe them all the protection we can afford. By following label directives strictly, adhering to bee safeguarding protocols and establishing information networks between beekeepers and crop farmers, we can prevent pesticide impacts on bees. It needs a total commitment from the crop production, plant protection and beekeeping sectors to achieve this objective” says Dr. Gerhard Verdoorn, operations and stewardship manager of CropLife SA, the association representing the crop protection industry.

The charter states that growers and the crop protection industry shall only recommend or apply crop protection products that are registered according to Act 36 of 1947, as prescribed by the label, and within an integrated pest management programme. In addition, they will ensure that measures are taken to minimise dust resulting from treated seed, and to avoid spraying when bees are foraging, unless absolutely necessary and only with products which are explicitly designed for bee-safe application during flowering.

Commenting on behalf of the macadamia industry, Schalk Schoeman, research extension manager at SAMAC says: “We acknowledge the importance of bees for the macadamia industry. Macadamia pollen is sticky and is not easily dispersed by wind. Clearly invertebrates and more particularly honeybees, play an intrinsic role in dispersing pollen and should be regarded as very important allies in sustainable macadamia production. To further this, SAMAC is currently funding a number of projects focussing on honeybees and growers are actively discouraged from using products that may harm bees during or just after flowering. Environmental sustainability is a key aspect of macadamia farming in South Africa, therefore SAMAC proudly endorses the new pollinator charter.”

In addition to the macadamia industry, pollinators play a critical role in deciduous fruit, citrus, vineyards, canola and even sunflower production.

“Pollination and the wellbeing of bees during their brief, yet vital sojourn in orchards, is critical to the pome and stone fruit industry. The deciduous fruit industry is fully committed to the pollination charter and recognises the role of the grower in ensuring pollinator safety”, says Hugh Campbell, general manager of Hortgro Science.

Another key point is effective and timeous communication between growers and beekeepers. This is why the charter includes an undertaking from pollinators and bee farmers to formalise the relationship with the farmer or landowner, to communicate with growers and other pollinators about their intended activities, and to ensure good hive management practices.

This model of collaboration among multiple stakeholders is an important step in the right direction to highlight the responsibilities of all parties to ensure bee health.

The charter can be viewed on www.croplife.co.za/PollinatorCharter

Elriza Theron



Stewardship

CropLife Kenya Trains Farmers on Reduction of Residues in Produce

The issue of pesticide residues in food has remained a concern for farmers exporting fresh vegetables from Kenya. There have been advances made in ensuring farmers comply with the required pest management regimes but in 2020, a select group of farmers were traced and determined to have not met the required maximum residue levels as set by the European Union.

The offending farmers/farmer groups were identified through the national farmer tracing system put in place by the Horticultural Crops Directorate (HCD) to ensure that all produce can be traced back to the growers as well as from MRL exceedance notifications made by the EU.

The sampling frame for French Beans exported from Kenya was also increased to 10% of exported cargo and this has had a negative impact on the cost of doing business as well as providing unnecessary ammunition for the anti-pesticide campaign that is raging in the country. The EU has notified Kenya of plans to increase sampling to 20% and the possible blacklisting of the country, if the situation is not corrected.

The farmers identified some of their challenges as the lack of proper guidance from the exporting companies' technical assistants, unregistered growers feeding their produce into the supply chain so as to enable the exporting companies to meet their export quotas. Added to this is the use of unregistered products by a few of the farmers as well as poor agronomic practices such as observance of isolation distances that made them vulnerable to cross contamination from neighboring farms which used harsher chemicals.

In order to correct the situation, CropLife Kenya in partnership with the Horticultural Crops Directorate (HCD) undertook, in November 2020, to train 420 farmers and technical assistants from 5 regions in the country on the responsible application of pesticides. The farmers were taken through the process of proper pest identification, how to read and understand the product label for informed choice of products as well as application techniques that reduce cases of overdosing. In addition, the farmers were supported in the setting up of Empty Pesticide Container collection centres that will enable them to responsibly dispose of their empty pesticide containers and related waste.

A follow-up consultative meeting with the exporters and the HCD took place in late November 2020 to emphasize the need for them to take stricter measures to mitigate some of the underlying issues that led to the exceedance of MRL's. CropLife Kenya will continue working closely with the relevant actors to ensure that the USD 60million French Bean and Snap Peas industry is secured and the reputation of pest control products are not put in jeopardy.

Benson Ngigi



Farmers undergoing training on Responsible Use in Machakos County

Association Management

CropLife Morocco holds Annual General Meeting

Owing to the COVID 19 pandemic and in accordance with local guidelines, members of CropLife Morocco held their annual general meeting for the year 2019, under the Chairmanship of Mohamed Chetouani, on Tuesday November 10, 2020, in a Visio conference, via Google Meet.

The topics of the General Assembly were the presentation of:

- Annual report for the year 2019
- Management report for the year 2019
- Financial report for the year 2019

Following discussion and an exchange of views, the Assembly approved the following:

- The annual report of the President related to the 2019 exercise
- The management report of the Executive Director for the year 2019
- The financial report related to the period from January 1st, 2019 to 31 December 2019

This was followed by the election process of the new members of the association's board as follows:

Member	Function	Company
Mohamed Chetouani	President	BASF
Mounir Sefiani	Vice-President	Amaroc
Rida Boufettas	Vice-President	Promagri
Fayçal El Houssaini	General Secretary	Alfachimie
Ibrahim El Ouafi	Deputy General Secretary	SAOAS
Nabil Sedrati	Treasurer General	SIPP
Mahfoud Jalab	Assistant Treasurer	Socaprag
Axel D'hauthuille	Assessor	Syngenta
Jean-Baptiste Boulay	Assessor	BAYER
Karim Ben Brahim	Assessor	Marbar Chimie
Mohamed Miloudi	Assessor	Agrimatco
Ahmed Badaoui	Assessor	Soprochiba
Mohamed Benslimane	Assessor	CPCM

Once the ordinary General Assembly ended, the President declared the Extraordinary General Assembly open to decide and deliberate on two key agenda items:

- Amendment of the internal regulation of CropLife Morocco
- Phyto Loukoss application for CropLife Morocco membership

Boubker El Ouilani



Mohamed Chetouani
President CropLife Morocco



Plant Biotechnology

Africa had a 100% increase in biotech crop planting-countries

The African continent remains the region with the biggest potential to reap from the benefits associated with modern agricultural biotechnology. There has been increased awareness and appreciation of GM crops among African farmers in 2019. Thus, the African continent doubled the number of countries planting biotech crops from three in 2018 to six in 2019.

The countries in descending order of biotech crop area were South Africa (2.7 million hectares for maize, soybeans, and cotton), IR/ Bt cotton in Sudan (236,200 hectares), Malawi (6,000 hectares), Nigeria (700 hectares), Eswatini (401 hectares), and Ethiopia (311 hectares) for a total of 2.9 million hectares, 1.54% of the global biotech crop area of 190.4 million hectares.

The approval of Nigeria's Bt cowpea resistant to pod borers was a major milestone in 2019. Other African countries continued to transition from confined field trials to the environmental release phase: Mozambique for drought tolerant maize and Kenya and Rwanda for cassava brown streak resistant cassava. The countries that improved their biosafety regulation to facilitate biotech crop development and adoption are Ghana and Niger. A number of countries also endorsed the trade of biotech crops and vouched for their food safety including the country of Zambia.

ISAAA



Plant Biotechnology



Kenyan Farmers Start Cultivating Biotech Cotton

Farmers in Kenya are finally planting biotech cotton. This is after the Cabinet approved the commercial cultivation of Bt cotton in an effort to revive the cotton industry, boost textile and apparel manufacturing. Bt cotton has been genetically improved to resist infestation by the African Bollworm, the single most destructive cotton pest in Kenya. Over 200 Bt cotton on-farm demonstration plots have so far been planted in western Kenya with plans underway to expand to other parts of the country. This is in an effort to prepare farmers for successful commercialization by ensuring training on appropriate agronomic practices and stewardship.

During a study tour organized by Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology in Africa (OFAB-Kenya chapter) and partners on October 28-29, 2020, farmer leaders expressed renewed hope in resuming profitable cotton farming. "Bt cotton presents me with a golden opportunity to provide for my family and secure the future of my children", remarked Mr. Francis Apailo, a cotton farmer in western Kenya. The farmers exuded confidence in the performance of Bt cotton in their farms and urged for timely seed delivery. They also recommended increased farmer-to-farmer exchange visits both in the country and the region so that African farmers can fully embrace Bt cotton, which they felt would benefit their families and the continent at large.

Accompanying the farmers, county leaders exuded confidence in the government's roadmap to revamp the cotton industry. "Commercial cultivation of Bt cotton will not only increase farmers' profits but also create numerous jobs for our youth," observed Mary Nzomo, Trans Nzoia County Executive Committee (CEC) member of Agriculture and chairperson of the 47 CECs of Agriculture Caucus. The stakeholders present acknowledged the importance of countrywide sensitization about the attributes of Bt cotton and the inclusion of all stakeholders to realize the successful implementation of the program.

The field study culminated with a visit to the Rift Valley Textiles (RIVATEX) East Africa Ltd, Kenya's premier textile factory. To run at capacity, the ultramodern factory requires 40,000 bales/year, 90 percent of which is currently being imported from neighbouring countries. The country is currently producing 17,000 bales/year, barely enough to feed one factory with lint. Bt cotton cultivation is expected to close this deficit. Farmers appreciated the value chain structure put in place by the government to ensure a ready market for Bt cotton. The farmer leaders from seven cotton-growing counties were accompanied by CEC members of Agriculture, journalists, and other agricultural biotechnology stakeholders.

ISAAA





CropLife Africa Middle East
International Association AISBL
Rue Théodore de Cuyper 100
B-1200 Brussels

www.croplifeafrica.org

