



Stewardship

Virtual Responsible Use Training, South Africa

When the national lockdown was introduced in South Africa due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the CropLife SA team had to rethink how they were able to service their members and the agricultural community without any physical interaction. It became apparent that there were various ways to do this, which was sometimes even better than the traditional way.

The team observed a significant increase in the attendance of industry meetings and forums, which prompted them to investigate remote training opportunities, specifically for the responsible use of pesticides. With the assistance of some members, these opportunities were quickly identified and turned out to be very successful.

One example was the online training provided by CropLife SA in conjunction with Nexus Ag and UPL to over 350 attendees comprising of farm workers, spray operators, farm managers and storage managers of export farmers from the lower Orange River region.

The training was provided in two sessions and covered topics such as the dangers and risks associated with pesticides, the importance of personal protective clothing, safe and correct handling and application of pesticides, legal requirements for pesticide stores on farms, triple rinsing and recycling of empty pesticide containers, the safe transport of hazardous chemicals and the correct protocol to follow in case of spillage.

In another instance, training was provided to approximately 20 crop advisers from Inteligro about the importance of stewardship and covered topics ranging from container management, regulatory requirements, label instructions and responsible use, to the safe transport and storage of hazardous chemicals.

Another session for Inteligro involved training for approximately 35 farmers in managing Red-billed Quelea as well as an overview of the importance of container management.

Other sessions included training for the technical team of Meridian Agritech in stewardship and the regulatory environment, as well as a presentation to approximately 200 members of the South African Association for Food Science and Technology about food safety in relation to pesticides, which was very well received.

These sessions are an example of the industry's commitment to promoting practices that encourage the responsible, safe and efficient use of its products and although the restrictions imposed by the lockdown might have initially slowed things down, it certainly didn't stop the CropLife SA team from delivering its services to the agricultural community.

Elriza Theron, CropLife South Africa



Dr Gerhard Verdoorn, responsible for the undertaking of the Responsible Use training workshops



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Feed the Future Ethiopia Value Chain Activity (FTFE-VCA) partnering with CropLife Ethiopia Trained 59 SSPs in four major chickpea growing districts of Amhara and Oromia regional states of Ethiopia

CropLife Ethiopia successfully trained 59 SSPs in partnership with Feed the Future Ethiopia Value Chain Activity (FTFE-VCA) Phase II project known as “Scale Up project”. The project aims to scale up maize and chickpea value chain activity by training and working with SSPs, in terms of geography, crops, pests and diseases which will increase smallholder access to required inputs, knowledge and usage of proper procedures for pesticide application to combat pests and diseases.

Chickpea is a versatile crop with multiple benefits to Ethiopian farmers as an important source of protein; improvement of soil fertility through nitrogen fixation; and for crop rotations mainly with wheat and teff to ensure the sustainability of farming systems. It can also be a significant contributor to household incomes and can secure reserves of foreign currency in international markets.

Although chickpea is widely grown in Ethiopia, the major producing areas are concentrated in the two regional states - Amhara and Oromia. These two regions cover more than 90% of the entire chickpea area and constitute about 92% of the total chickpea production. However, diseases and insect-pests are the main challenge among production constraints of chickpea by most of the farmers in Ethiopia. As part of the effort to curtail the challenge, the current SSPs were selected from four major chickpea growing districts within these two regional states, namely; Ada’a, Gimbichu, West Dembia and East Dembia. The training was undertaken by two teams of CropLife Ethiopia from 18 to 29 August 2020 with strict compliance of physical distancing, regular hand washing/use of sanitizer, and compulsory wearing of facemasks.

The network of 59 farmers trained as SSPs were equipped with knapsack sprayers, complete sets of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and presented with an attendance certificate. This will allow smallholder farmers in the project and surrounding areas to benefit from SSPs who have been well trained and equipped with both theoretical and practical knowledge of responsible pesticide application during the SSP and Business trainings. The SSPs were also linked-up with CropLife member companies and will receive further coaching and mentoring by CropLife Ethiopia.

The last day of the training and graduation ceremony was graced by the presence of Mr. Yimenu Jembere, Chairman of CropLife Ethiopia and Chemtex Plc General Manager; Etmalsha Meshesha, Regional Manager, Feed the Future Ethiopia Value Chain Activity and Mr. Fasil, Gimbichu District Administrator who commended CropLife Ethiopia for conducting the training despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fasil Tadesse, CropLife Ethiopia



Theoretical training

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Practical Training



Graduation Ceremony

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CropLife Kenya partners with the Danish Embassy and the Regulator to train 23 new SSPS.

The Spray Service Provider concept has largely been accepted as the next frontier for responsible use of pesticides in Kenya. The pesticide regulator, Pest Control Products Board has embraced the concept and taken steps to enhance the training and uptake of SSP's by various stakeholders.

Since 2018, a partnership between the Royal Danish Embassy, PCPB and CropLife Kenya has seen the training and deployment of a cumulative 98 SSP's to support the Aberdare Fresh Produce Society (AFPS) located in Nyandarua County, Kenya. AFPS is a conglomerate of farmer groups whose main objective is horticultural production for export to the European Market.

As is the norm with horticultural production for export, they have to meet the tight requirements as outlined in the GLOBALG.A.P. certification protocols.

During the week of 24 to 28 August 2020, 23 farmers were taken through the SSP training program at the Agricultural Training Centre in Nyandarua County.

The farmers will support their fellow farmers in the various producer groups to attain efficient pest management and ensure compliance in the management of empty pesticide containers within their region.

The training was officiated by the Managing Director of PCPB and the Food Sector Counsellor at the Danish Embassy. They urged the newly trained SSPs to be diligent in their role and to ensure they live up to the expectations placed upon them to ensure that all produce from their region meets food safety requirements.

Through the Chairman of the AFPS, the SSPs were thankful for being considered for the training and assured the donors that they will undertake their task diligently so as to maintain the reputé of the earlier trained SSPs.

They noted that the rate of rejection/interception of produce from their society has greatly reduced since the deployment of the 1st batch of 25 SSPs in 2018 and that compliance levels during the audits has also improved.

We wish them well as they proceed to serve the farmers of Nyandarua.



Mr. Henning Høy Nygaard -
Growth Counsellor Food -
Embassy of Denmark



Peter Opiyo - Managing Director
PCPB



Above: SSPs being taken through a lesson on the calibration of a knapsack sprayer

Below: Mr. Henning Høy Nygaard from the Danish Embassy handing over PPE and a knapsack sprayer to the Chairman AFPS



Benson Ngigi

Stewardship

CropLife Zambia Trains SSPs under the iDE Zambia Program

iDE Zambia has been one of the consistent partners in the implementation of the SSP program in Zambia since 2015. iDE Zambia has been running the “Strengthening Zambia farmer Income and Self-Reliance” project through the iDE Zambia Farm Business Advisor network in parts of the Copperbelt and Central provinces.

The goal of this project is to improve self-reliance and strengthen the livelihoods of smallholder farmers “in the last mile” by promoting resilient incomes with emphasis on increased participation of women and youth.

Farm Based Advisors, (FBAs) are community-based entrepreneurs who sell inputs, extension advice and services, including pesticides, to farmers along with linkages to credit providers and output markets. One of the services provided by FBAs are IPM practices and spray services.

To acquire this knowledge and skills, iDE has partnered with CropLife Zambia to train the FBAs to enable them to provide these services to the farmers. Following the positive results obtained from the evaluation of the impact of the SSPs, iDE has continued training new FBAs since 2015.

Perry Ngomo

- Overall sales, including sales of inputs, equipment, facilitation of credit, services, and output sales, have reached over ZMW 8,644,960 (~\$1 million) since the market-development focus started in October 2014.
- iDE has already reached over 18,000 small-scale farmers in Zambia, by training and inspiring FBAs to transform their own communities by distributing farm knowledge and technology along the last mile.

Extracted from: <https://www.ideglobal.org/key-project/farm-business-advisors-address-food-security-in-zambia>

iDE recently conducted an Environmental Appraisal and Climate Change Analysis for the Smallholder Agricultural Reform Through Enterprise Development (SHARED). The analysis highlighted potential environmental risks associated with the farming practices by its clients and includes the following observation; “there was improper use and handling of agricultural chemicals and the exposure to pesticides could cause negative health effects, depending upon the type of pesticide and the amount of exposure”.



Practical Session: Sprayer calibration



Demonstration on the use of a knapsack

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Practical Session: Participants explaining the parts and functions of a knapsack sprayer



The trainer explaining the function of different parts of the sprayer

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CropLife Kenya distributes Personal Protective Equipment to Spray Service Providers.

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) while applying pesticides cannot be overemphasized. The registration of all pest control products in Kenya is subject to very stringent regulations, one of which is the inclusion of the required PPE on all pesticide labels. This regulation is meant to pass on the important message to all end users and persons handling pesticides that they require a certain amount of protection during handling and application.

PPE consists of items such as overalls for skin protection, goggles for eye protection, masks for respiratory system protection, gloves for hand protection and gumboots for feet protection. Other less commonly used pieces of PPE are aprons, face shields to prevent eye splash and respirators for use in confined environments such as green houses.

In line with our commitment to “protect and provide”, CropLife Kenya has undertaken to equip 392 Spray Service Providers across the 5 Counties of Busia, Siaya, Kitui, Makueni and Taita Taveta. The SSPs are specially trained farmers who offer pesticide application services to fellow farmers at a small fee.

Over 200 SSPs in Busia, Siaya and Taveta have already received their PPE. The distribution exercise will see a total of 392 SSPs receive full sets of PPE to enable them undertake pesticide application safely and effectively. The gesture also serves as an example to farmers on the standards they are expected to maintain during pesticide handling and application. Agro-dealers are a major source of pesticides for most farmers and agro-dealer support in creating awareness on the safer application offered by SSPs will go a long way in ensuring that the farmers without access to quality PPE and application equipment are offered a viable option.

Furthermore, the SSPs are being linked to their local Government extension officers and the local agro-dealers. This is meant to enhance the capacity of SSPs to be able to offer reliable pest management advisory services which includes advice on Integrated Pest Management which advocates for combined use of other non-chemical pest management options. The linkages to other actors in the agricultural space are also important in awareness creation among farmers on the availability of SSPs in these 5 counties.

CropLife Kenya will continue to interact with PPE manufacturers, its member companies and agro dealers to scale up access to personal protective equipment at the grassroots level for safer and efficient application of pest control products in the country.

Benson Ngigi



Above: Agrovat outlet in Migwani Mwingi West Sub-County

Below: Linkage to Farm Shop Agrovat in Mwatate Sub-County



Above: Siaya SSPs receive their PPE and certificates from the County officials at Sub County Agriculture offices

Below: Group photo of Mwingi central SSPs during PPE distribution



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CropLife Egypt and the Knowledge Economy Foundation / Bashaier Network, field events

CropLife Egypt participated in the promotional events of “From Farm to Export Project” for small strawberry farmers in two villages in the Qalyoubia governorate. Representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Agricultural Quarantine Department and the National Food Safety Authority attended the events.

CropLife Egypt will undertake SSP training programs and pesticide Responsible Use awareness programs alongside this project in 7 villages together with other activities that will be carried out by Bashaier to qualify small strawberry growers in this area.

Mahmoud Said



Top - Left and Below: Project promotional events in the Qalyoubia governorate with farmers



Stewardship

Improving Pesticide Use for Cashew Production

CropLife Cote d'Ivoire undertook a capacity strengthening program for pesticide application in cashew production. The program was deemed necessary as cashew production is confronted with serious pest infestation in recent years, and the use of pesticides has been set as a component of the World Bank and the Interprofessional Funds for Research and Counseling in Agriculture (Fonds Interprofessionnel pour la Recherche et le Conseil Agricole, FIRCA) Cashew Production Improvement Initiative in Cote d'Ivoire.

The overall goal is to set-up a pool of professional pesticide applicators for the management, responsible and efficient use of pesticides on the cashew farms. To this end theoretical sessions were organized targeting 274 participants in the three production basins in the northern, central and eastern areas of the country. Focus topics related to the basics on pesticides, pesticide regulations, IPM-RU, container management (triple rinsing and puncturing), importance of PPE, pesticides and sustainable agriculture, counterfeiting and related risks, combating counterfeiting and other illegal pesticides.

The practical sessions were organized as "in-house training" within more than 30 producer communities, with not more than six participants per session. Such an arrangement was made in line with the measures to avoid the spread of COVID-19. The sessions focused on application technics such as calibration, measuring and mixing pesticides, maintenance and checking for leaks and using PPE correctly.

Bama Yao



A theoretical session (L) and a practical session on a cashew farm (R) with arrangements in place to conform with the Anti-COVID-19 measures.

Photo: Courtesy CropLife Cote d'Ivoire.



Anti-Counterfeiting Activities

Strengthening cooperation to with USPTO to combat counterfeiting

The positive cooperation between CropLife International/CropLife Africa Middle East and the Office of Policy and International Affairs of the US Patents and Trade Office (USPTO) in recent years led to a Webinar co-organized on August 06, fully dedicated to pesticides.

The virtual conference was organized as part of an awareness raising activity targeting the IP Attachés and embassy officials as they may face issues related to counterfeiting of pesticides in their respective countries of representation. More than 80 participants were recorded on the webinar as representatives from US Embassies across Africa and the Middle East.

Presentations by D'Arcy Quinn, CropLife International, Bama Yao, CropLife AME and Steven Haggblade, retired Professor, Michigan State University provided information on the fundamentals about counterfeit and illicit pesticides, the trends in Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, the impact of counterfeit pesticides on farmers' incomes and livelihoods, social and economic stability, human health and the environment.

Based on the feedback received from the moderators from USPTO, the Senior Trade Advisor, JoEllen Urban and the IP Attaché for Middle East Pete Mehravari, and many participants, the conference proved to be very useful

Bama Yao



Senior Trade Advisor, JoEllen Urban



IP Attaché for Middle East Pete Mehravari



Steven Haggblade, retired Professor,
Michigan State University



Association Management

Appointment of Perry Ngoma as Executive Secretary of Zambia Seed Trade Association.

The Zambia Seed Trade Association (ZASTA) and CropLife Zambia share offices and facilities. Following the retirement of Dr. Watson Mwale on 31 July, Perry was appointed as the Executive Secretary for ZASTA and now supports both CropLife Zambia and ZASTA. The Executive Committee of CropLife Zambia appreciating the benefits and synergisms that this partnership will bring immediately supported and endorsed this appointment.

ZASTA is the national seed association in Zambia and was established in 1999. It provides for the needs and benefits of members derived from the effective and systematic exchange of information and experiences as well as technology, production, distribution and trade. ZASTA has 21 members.

The 2 associations agreed on the engagement of a "technical support person" to assist Perry with his expanded workload.

We wish Perry every success in his new role.

Les Hillowitz



CropLife Ethiopia appoints new CEO

On 1 August, Fasil Tadesse Tewolde was appointed as CEO of CropLife Ethiopia. Fasil's background is in agricultural research where he spent more than 13 years at research institutes and universities, in both Ethiopia and Japan. His focus has at all times been in horticulture and in 2016 obtained his PhD at the Chiba University, Chiba, Japan in the environmental horticultural field.

Ethiopia is a core country within the Africa, Middle East region and has been party to several projects, both past and present, aimed at improving productivity of the smallholder farming sector and where sound leadership is paramount.

We wish Fasil every success in his new role.

Les Hillowitz



Fasil Tadesse Tewolde



Plant Biotechnology

Kenyan researcher assures farmers Bt cotton seed will be available

Farmers have been assured of the availability of the BT Cotton seed come the short rains, despite numerous challenges that COVID- 19 pandemic continue to pose in various sectors.

The Crop Scientist, Dr. Charles Waturu said even if planting of the seeds will be carried out in late October or November when the rains start or start subsiding, the crop would still perform as expected.

Dr. Waturu who is also the lead Researcher for the BT cotton since 2001 said unlike the traditional variety that requires more rain, the new one has been proved to be drought resistant.

“The BT cotton is a unique crop in that it is drought resistant, early maturing and high yielding as compared to the old variety which we are replacing in an effort to revive the collapsed textile industry,” he said.

Speaking on Monday during an Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) Kenya Science Café, the researcher also said although there will still be unscrupulous traders who will attempt to counterfeit the BT cotton seeds, measures have been put in place to protect the farmers.

Dr. Waturu, said once the BT cotton seed is rolled out, we will expect our farmers to ensure they acquire their seeds only from the authorised outlets whose products will be well packed and patented such that should be there a query such a dealer can be easily traced.

Waturu said the hybrid seeds were not replantable once a farmer harvested his crop.

“If you replant what you have harvested from a BT cotton crop, then that is not a certified seed and will only give you deteriorating results and I urge farmers to be always going for quality seeds from recognized and authorized outlets like products from the Kenya Seed Company,” he stated.

He said germination gap for the old variety stands at 50 per cent while for the BT seed stands at 85 per cent hence no gaping required for the hybrid variety.

“Due to the many opportunities the new cotton variety will create farmers should embrace it once the roll out of the seeds was done,” Waturu said

He said the BT cotton has huge oil potential, cotton cake used as animal feed besides its high fabric quality.

“A country like India which is among those who farm the BT cotton in the world produces 1.5 million tons of cotton seed which it exports thereby earning huge profits in foreign exchange,” he said.

He cited China, India and the United States of America as currently leading in BT cotton production with 29 million hectares under the cultivation of the crop out of which 11.6 million hectares were in India alone.

ISAAA





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