

**SITUATIONAL REPORT ON A CURRENT ARMY WORM OUTBREAK
IN ASHANTI, BRONG AHAFO, WESTERN, NORTHERN, CENTRAL
AND EASTERN REGIONS, 2017**

INTRODUCTION

For the past few days, there have been reported outbreaks of Fall Army Worm (FAW) in six regions of Ghana, namely Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Central, Western, Eastern and the Northern regions of Ghana. These outbreaks are having a devastating effect on cash crops like cocoa, food crops and cereals. Even though these outbreaks occur annually, reports by the media and technical men suggest that this year's outbreak is unprecedented in recent times as it has affected vast areas (six regions at the same period of time). As such, there is the need to quickly arrest the situation to prevent further outbreak or spreading to other regions. Already, food security is at risk and farmers risk losing their livelihood; increasing poverty levels in the country

Currently, Regional Officers including local district NADMO, MOFA and the media have already paid visits to the affected farms and farmers and are assisting with the needed relief and also supplying them with some agro-chemicals for spraying. COCOBOD has also assisted with some quantity of insecticides, but all these are woefully inadequate due the vast areas affected.

On 10th May, 2017, a Press Briefing was held at the NADMO head office to brief the press on the current situation and the way forward. Later, members of the Pest and Insect Infestation Disasters Technical Advisory Committee also had an emergency meeting at the same venue to deliberate on the issue. The report on the current outbreak as given by the representative from PPRSD of MOFA is attached to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM NADMO PEST AND INSECT INFESTATION DISASTERS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

1. Two teams of Technical Committee members are to pay a working visit to the affected regions for their technical assessment of the situation and make appropriate recommendations.

2. The committee also recommended the chemicals to procure to spray the FAW (the recommended list is attached to this report) as a matter of urgency as they await the report from the field visit. This report will be used to find a lasting solution to the annual outbreaks. The criteria used to select the chemicals included; it being environmentally friendly, affordable, readily available and easily broken down within a maximum of two weeks for the crops to be safe for consumption.
3. Even though it was agreed that the infestation on cocoa farm falls under the jurisdiction of COCOBOD, the committee recommended that a report of the situation be send to COCOBOD as a form of information sharing.
4. It further recommended that if possible, government should do the spraying of the FAW instead of the individual farmers because they may not get the right dilution of the chemicals which will lead to the FAW becoming resistant to the recommended chemicals.
5. Frequent meetings will be held as and when necessary

Government on it's part is making arrangements to buy the needed agro-chemicals to spray the affected farms.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REGIONS:

In order to contain and control the spread of these pests and halt the damage they are wrecking on the crops, these are recommendations from the regions:

1. Immediate supply of appropriate systemic chemicals (Akate Master, Confidor, Buffalo, Concider etc.) in sufficient quantities for the cocoa farms.
2. In the case of the maize farms, we are contending here with calamity pests, therefore the timely dispatch and receipt of appropriate agro- chemicals would go a long way to prevent loss of livelihoods and likely food shortages.
3. Adequate supply of PPEs (i.e. Nose masks, goggles, head gear, mouth covers, Long gowns, wellington boots) for use by the spraying gangs.

4. Most of the communities have very few spraying gangs some of which have been observed to be dormant. Once there appears to be a crisis on hand, more gangs should be formed and adequately training to assist in the effort to combat the armyworm attack.