



HOW TO MANAGE FALL ARMYWORM (*Spodoptera frugiperda*)



Photo: ©FAO/Tamiru Legesse



Photo: ©D. Van Heerden

Egg mass



Photo: ©FAO/David Aninang

Young caterpillars



Photo: ©D. Van Heerden

Caterpillar with
inverted Y on head



Photo: ©Albert Bierone

Male moth



Photo: ©CABI

Damaged leaves

Fall Armyworm (FAW) is a transboundary pest that is causing damage to maize, rice, sorghum, millet and pastures

PREVENT

- Avoid late planting.
- Avoid staggered plantings (plots of different ages).
- Increase plant diversity – intercrop maize with cassava or yam.

MONITOR

- Check your crops at least once a week for signs of Fall Armyworm.
- Look for Fall Armyworm egg masses and caterpillars.
- Look for Fall Armyworm natural enemies - ants, earwigs, small wasps, mummified (fungi) or swollen dead (virus) caterpillars, and conserve them.
- Look for Fall Armyworm damage on leaves – inspect 25 plants and count how many have damage (number of plants with damage X 4 = % plants infested in field). If 4 to 5 plants out of the 25 inspected are damaged, take action.

ACT

- Handpick and destroy egg masses and young caterpillars on leaves.
- Actions to try:
 - Spray sugar water to attract and maintain populations of ants.
 - If present in large numbers, collect caterpillars killed by fungus or virus, liquefy, strain and spray the liquid on the plants.
 - Apply ash, sand, or soil to whorls with damaged leaves – they could kill the caterpillars.
 - Use botanical pesticides (based on neem or other plants).
 - Use bio-pesticides based on *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) or virus (NPV).
- Be very careful of synthetic pesticides – some are very toxic to humans and natural enemies, all are expensive and some don't kill Fall Armyworm (FAW). Consult your nearest agricultural officer for recommended pesticides and their rate of application.