



DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

FAO Emergency Centre for Locust Operations



(26 Aug 2004)



General Situation as of 25 August 2004

The Desert Locust situation continues to be extremely worrying in West Africa where large-scale breeding is in progress in Mauritania, Senegal, Mali and Niger. This is expected to lead to a substantial increase in locust numbers and new swarms are likely to start forming in southern Mauritania by the end of August. Significant crop damage has been reported in several countries but quantitative data are lacking. A swarm was reported in northeastern Chad. The risk remains that some swarms could reach Darfur, Sudan. Although additional funds have been forthcoming, control operations are still hampered by insufficient resources. Consequently, international assistance is urgently required to increase efforts that are underway in order to protect crops and try to prevent the situation from developing into a plague.

In Mauritania, swarms continue to mature and lay eggs throughout the summer breeding areas south of 18N from the Atlantic coast to the Malian border in the east. Mainly second instar hopper bands are present in Trarza, Brakna and Gorgol while second to fifth instar bands were reported in Guidimaka and Hodh El Chargui. New swarms are expected to start forming in the latter two areas by the end of the month. Control operations treated 6,055 ha from 11 to 20 August. In Senegal, more mature swarms are laying eggs in the Senegal River Valley near Saint Louis and Matam as well as in the centre of the country northeast of Dakar. Hoppers are forming bands in some places and have

reached the second instar by mid-month. Control operations treated 16,700 ha from 11 to 20 August. In Mali, breeding is in progress over a large area of the Sahel (from Kayes in the west to Tombouctou in the centre and Gao in the east) and in parts of the north (Timetrine) where first to third instar hopper bands are present. Mature swarms and adults were also reported in these areas. Control operations treated 5,413 from 11 to 20 August. A few mature swarms, at densities up to 50 adults/m², were confirmed in northeastern Burkina Faso near the borders of Mali and Niger. Control teams are being mobilized. In Niger, numerous small swarms continued to arrive in southern Tamesna and lay eggs near Tassara during the first decade of August. By mid-month, hatching and band formation had commenced. Scattered adults were reported in the Air Mountains. Control operations treated 1,940 ha from 1 to 8 August. A late report indicated that a swarm was seen in northeast Chad south of Fada near the Sudanese border on 4 August, and scattered adults were seen nearby. There was an unconfirmed report of locusts in the extreme northwest in Nigeria near the Niger border. More details are awaited.

So far, no swarms have been reported in Darfur, western Sudan. Small-scale breeding is likely to be in progress in parts of the summer breeding areas west of the Nile.

The situation continued to improve in Northwest Africa where control operations have nearly come to a halt. During the second decade of August, no locusts were reported in Morocco. Only small residual populations remained in the spring breeding areas in north-central Algeria where 287 ha were treated, and numerous solitary adults were present in the south near the border with Niger and Mali.

The FAO Desert Bulletin is issued monthly, supplemented by Updates during periods of increased Desert Locust activity, and is distributed by fax, e-mail, FAO pouch and airmail by the Locusts and Other Migratory Pests Group, AGP Division, FAO, 00100 Rome, Italy. It is also available on the Internet.

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Elsewhere, small-scale breeding is in progress in the interior of **Yemen** where first to fourth instar solitary hoppers were present at mid-month.

The most up-to-date information on the situation and photos are available on the Internet (www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm) as well as maps of the latest infestations (193.43.36.11/mapper).