THE FALL ARMYWORM PROBLEM IN MALAWI

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

✓ First record of infestation

✓ Identification

✓ Current distribution and damage status

✓ Control / Management strategy used

✓ Government response
1.0 FIRST RECORD OF INFESTATION

✓ The fall armyworm infestation was first recorded in Malawi in December 2016, in the southern region of the country.
2.0 IDENTIFICATION

✓ Samples were collected by the Ministry of Agriculture and sent to the Commonwealth Agricultural Biosciences International (CABI) in the UK, under the Plantwise Initiative for identification

✓ CABI identified the pest as fall armyworm (Rice strain) – Dr. A. G. Buddie.
3.0 CURRENT DISTRIBUTION AND DAMAGE STATUS

✓ The pest has spread to all parts of the country (All Agricultural Development Divisions), major crops attacked being maize and sorghum.

✓ Over 35,000 ha of maize and 134,000 farming families have been affected

✓ Infestation was severe in some parts and light in others, no replanting was required

✓ Actual yield loss is being assessed by the Department of Crop Development.
4.0 CONTROL / MANAGEMENT STRATEGY USED

✓ Training of Agricultural Field Officers and Lead Farmers in identification, monitoring and control of the pest

✓ Creation of public awareness and recommending management measures through mass media

✓ Distribution of free pesticides (Cypermethrin, Deltamethrin and Chlorpyriphos) to farmers

✓ Some farmers used neem extract and soil mixed with ash
5.0 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

✓ Used emergency funds to:
  • Train Agricultural Field Officers and Lead Farmers in identification, monitoring and control of the pest
  • Create public awareness and recommend control measures through mass media
  • Procure and distribute free pesticides to farmers

✓ Established a National FAW Management Task Force

✓ Developed a National Action Plan for FAW management (being reviewed by the National FAW Mgt Taskforce)

✓ Developed a national project proposal with short-, medium- and long-term objectives (being reviewed by the National FAW Mgt Taskforce)