



agriculture & rural development

Department:
Agriculture and Rural Development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

21 February 2017

Media Statement by the MEC for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development on the Fall Armyworm in KwaZulu-Natal

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in KwaZulu-Natal has positively identified the *Spodoptera Frugiperda*, known as Fall Armyworm. It has been identified on maize crops in Amajuba, uThukela, uMkhanyakude and Zululand Districts. This outbreak in the province follows a pest alert by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) which was issued on the 1st of February 2017.

I want to assure the farmers and people of KwaZulu-Natal that the Department is in control of the Fall Armyworm in the province.

Fall Armyworm is a new pest in South Africa and it is a quarantine pest which affects a wide range of crops such as maize, sorghum, soya beans, ground nuts and potatoes. This pest is a fast traveller and cannot be contained in one specific area.

The Department has put up an emergency Plant Pest Response Plan which is already in motion. As part of mitigating this scourge, the Department will do the following:

1. Conduct pest scouting, collecting and reporting on the spread and damage.
2. Conduct awareness and education to producers.
3. Solicit resources for control such as procurement of Agro-chemicals and traps.
4. Promote integrated pest management.
5. The Department is working closely with DAFF and farmers to determine other hosts affected. The creation of a database to coordinate other provinces is being considered.

Since the Fall Armyworm is a new pest in South Africa, an interim control programme aimed at assisting farmers with a proper guide for pesticide usage as an emergency measure, is being carried out. Such a control programme would be effectively communicated to various role-players and would be made available on both the DAFF and KZN DARD websites.

Presently, the Department has pesticide products which are approved for use in controlling the Fall Armyworm in the maize and other crops vulnerable to it.

I want to encourage all farmers to use registered pesticide products in fighting this scourge. We direct farmers to use products approved in terms of Fertilizer, farm feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, of 1947 (Act no. 36).

I want to call on all farmers, both commercial and subsistence, to report any suspected detection of this pest to our Departments Local and District Offices for immediate quarantine and intervention.



KZN MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Themba Mthembu, addressing members of the media on the Fall Armyworm in Kwazulu-Natal



From left: Head of Department for KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Dr Sipiwe Mkhize, KZN MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Themba Mthembu and KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Chief Director for Analytical Laboratory Services Mrs Nomfuzo Mkhize addressing members of the media on the Fall Armyworm in Kwazulu-Natal

Issued by the MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development in KwaZulu-Natal
MEC Themba Mthembu

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