

Fighting plant pests

Pests are described as insects, bacteria, viruses, birds, and rodents that destroy crops by eating them or by infecting them with diseases.

They are often a nuisance which results in huge losses for the farmer. They can damage the crop when it is growing in the field or after harvest during storage.

The common methods of fighting pests may be categorised as chemical and preventive.

The chemical method is so far regarded by most farmers as the quicker and more effective way of controlling pests. A specific chemical that kills particular pests is used in the correct dosage to dust, fumigate, or spray the crop. Chemicals manufactured to kill pests are referred to as pesticides and they are sold in registered farmers' shops. Pesticides are poisonous and therefore they can be dangerous to their handlers and to the consumers of the crops that they are meant to protect.

Pesticides can also kill innocent insects, and animals that live naturally in the environment where the chemicals are used.

Therefore farmers must handle pesticides with extreme care and to apply them strictly according to the manufacturers' instructions. Pesticides are also expensive and reduce the farmer's profits. Some pests, particularly viruses, cannot be killed by pesticides and plant pathologists and breeders have resorted to genetic engineering or genetic modification (GM) to develop crops resistant to the pests and diseases caused by the viruses. Genetic engineering is almost like vaccination in humans and animals. When genetically engineered crops are grown there is no need for the farmer to use pesticides which destroy biodiversity and increase production costs.

For example, following the successful development of genetically modified Irish potato, farmers will not have to spend money on pesticides to fight Potato Blight when GM crops are permitted to be grown in Uganda. Consumers will eat potatoes that are not polluted by pesticides.

Some preventive methods include weed control to reduce multiplication of pests, use of disease free seeds and planting materials as well as observing good field hygiene.

Integrated pest control involves the use of both pesticides and preventive methods.

— E-mail: ssalimichaelj@gmail.com



Julius Ahagaana (in green) der

There is a mad rush for passion fruit production as the market demand soars through the roof, writes Denis Bbosa

The ongoing dry season continued to pressure passion fruit farmers as most a must to many farmers in Uganda. The reasons for passion fruit are numerous: high market demand stands

Annet Nalubwama, trader at Nakasero Market Kampala says she paid a bag at Shs600,000 from District and makes a profit within 12 hours. Such a rate at which the price of fruit has skyrocketed.

According to Julius Ahagaana, the acting farm manager at Makerere University Research Institute (Muarik), farmers who have invested in the sector are laughing their way through the moment.

"Passion fruit requires to have a reasonable price. It does not require a

trending n

We know a lot of people buy away the egg carton from home and store their egg containers that in the fridge or in a separate

This may look like a good idea but we recommend always storing them in their original carton. The carton protects the eggs from odours and flavours that pass through tiny pores in the egg

Secondly, eggs should be stored with the large end up. The way they are packed in the carton. This helps the yol