

Pests threaten exports – govt

Government has warned of deadly pest emergence that if not controlled, could cripple food security and the nascent export earnings and is appealing to communities to watch out and report any outbreaks to relevant authorities.

Stephen Tebeijuka, the commissioner crop protect in the ministry of Agriculture, said the country is experiencing repeated and new pest invasions of farms, putting the envisaged agriculture transformation on a slippery path.

“We are talking about commercialisation and transformation of agriculture, but the sector is

faced with a lot of challenges,” Tebeijuka said on Tuesday in Kampala at a new project aimed at controlling pests especially the infamous fall army worm.

“The pests and diseases are playing a big role in reversing the trend we are aspiring to have. In some instances, farmers have lost up to 100 per cent of their gardens [due to pests attack],” he added.

The deadly pests include codling moth, fall armyworm, sweet potatoes caterpillars and the quelea birds.

— Paul Tajuba

