

How effective is garlic in managing pests?

Moses Mulondo

Dear Mulondo: Farmers who grow garlic type of onions can fight over 10 pests and diseases linked to destruction of crops which may cause big losses on the farmers' farms.

Garlic is one of the crops which has ability to fight pests and diseases. It has an anti-feedant (insect stop feeding), bacterial, fungicidal, insecticidal, nematicidal and repellent properties according to Infonet-Biovision organisation which provides agricultural database with scientific and practical validated information and knowledge. It is for this reason that garlic is widely cultivated and easy to grow in field, garden or backyard and appreciated as a seasoning or supple-



ment for cooking owing its medicinal properties.

Unlike commercial pesticides which are harmful to human and animals,

garlic is preferred in organic farming because it is reportedly effective against a wide range of disease-causing pathogens and insects at different stages in their life cycle.

These pests and diseases include ants, aphids, armyworms, diamond-back moth and other caterpillars such as the false codling moth, pulse beetle, whitefly, wireworm, khapra beetle, mice, mites, moles, Epilachna beetles, and termites as well as fungi bacteria and nematodes. However, according to agro-experts, garlic should be used with caution because it has a broad-spectrum effect and can kill useful insects as well.

In case a farmer is growing garlic for pest control, it is good for him or her to avoid using large amounts of fertiliser because much fertiliser can reduce the concentration of the effective substances in the garlic.

— Answered by Farmbiz agronomist