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भारतसरकार/ Government of India

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्रालय / Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण विभाग / Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

वनस्पति संरक्षण, संगरोध एवं संग्रहनिदेशालय / Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine & Storage

एनएच4, फरीदाबाद(हरियाणा) – 121 001/ NH-IV, Faridabad (Haryana) – 121 001

Dated: 22.07.2022

To

The Directors of Agriculture
Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland

Sub: Advisory on Rice Swarming Caterpillar (*Spodoptera mauritia*) on rice crop -reg.

Sir,

I have the honor to bring to your notice that rice Swarming Caterpillar (*Spodoptera mauritia*) or armyworm, a polyphagous pest infests various graminaceous crops and weeds is reported to cause severe losses to rice crop especially in upland rice from North East India. This pest emerged in epidemic form many times during last few years. The swarming caterpillars damage the paddy crop by cutting off leaf tips, leaf margins, leaves and even the plants at the base, more severely on the seedlings in nursery and direct seeded crops and early tillering stage in transplanted rice. The grown up caterpillars feed voraciously by night devouring the entire plant and hide during the day time. Later in the season they migrate from older rice fields to grassy areas where subsequent broods cause severe damage.

Keeping in view the current crop stage and prevailing favourable weather conditions for the pest the rice crop should be monitored regularly for pest build up and adopt Integrated Pest Management techniques. AESA based IPM Package of practices of rice and pest specific package of practices of Rice Swarming Caterpillar are available at DPPQ&S website in the link <http://ppqs.gov.in/ipm-packages>. Important IPM practices are listed below

- Deep ploughing the field in summer exposes the larvae and pupae for predation by birds. Infested crop residues should be removed and destructed promptly.
- Flooding the nurseries and paddy fields brings out the larvae to the surface, which get predated by the birds. Herd of ducks if let in to the field, will feeds on the caterpillars
- Farmers must be advised to maintain field sanitation at the vicinity of the main field and nearby areas must be kept free from weeds.
- In case of severe infestation, small plots can be isolated and the movement of the caterpillars can be prevented by digging a trench around the infested field wherever possible.
- kerosene oil may be poured into the stagnant water in the bunded fields (2 L kerosene per hectare). With the use of a long rope stretched across the field (two persons walk through the field) the paddy plants are shaken rigorously. The larvae fall into the kerosenized water and ultimately die.
- As the moths of *S. mauritia* are attracted towards light, therefore, light traps can also be utilized for mass trapping of the moths.

.....To be continued in next

- Use of egg parasitoides viz, *Telonomus* and larval parasitoides viz. *Apanteles* spp., *Meterorus* spp, *Charops bicolor*, *C. dominans* and predator birds common crow, the cattle egret, the paddy bird, the white breasted water hen and the mynah, have also been found to predate on the larvae of this pest
- Pesticide must be used as per label claim approval by the Registration Committee. Detailed information is available at directorate website. <http://ppqs.gov.in/divisions/cib-rc/major-uses-of-pesticides>

Further the following strategies should be adopted for spreading awareness among farmers

- Mobilization of extension functionaries at grass route level for regular monitoring of pest status.
- Awareness among farming community through newspapers, printing and electronic media, KisanGosthi, leaflet and pamphlets.
- The concerned officials at the district/ division/ block level may be advised to take the suitable plant protection measures immediately

The detailed information on pest incidence may also be sent to the directorate through email ppa@nic.in or appa.ipm-dppqs@gov.in urgently to apprise the same to Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare.

Encl: as above

Yours faithfully



(Dr. J.P.Singh)
Plant Protection Adviser

Copy for information:

1. PPS to Joint Secretary(PP), DA & FW, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi- I 10001
2. The Directors of Agriculture of other rice growing states with the request to keep close watch on pest build up & take appropriate measures as indicated above
3. PPS to PPA for information
4. Officer In-charges, CIPMCs Guwahati, Agartala, Shillong, Gangtok, Imphal, Aizwal and Dimapur with directions to conduct regular survey in the area to ensure and necessary follow-up with the state authorities.