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### Fall Armyworm spreads in Somalia

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Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*), FAW, is an insect native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas. Its larval stage feeds on more than 80 plant species, including maize, rice, sorghum, millet, sugarcane, vegetable crops and cotton. FAW can cause significant yield losses if not well managed. It can have a number of generations per year and the moth can fly up to 100 km per night. FAW is a dangerous trans-boundary pest with a high potential of continuing to spread due to its natural distribution capacity and trade. FAW was first detected in Central and Western Africa in early 2016 (Benin, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, and Togo) and in whole of mainland Southern Africa (except Lesotho and the Island States), in Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Ghana, Niger and Ethiopia, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and it is expected to go further. Its modality of introduction, along with its biological and ecological adaptation across Africa is still speculative.

The pest has been recently detected in Kenya and is suspected to have entered the country from Uganda. The fall armyworm was first reported in western Kenya by farmers in March 2017, and immediately confirmed by the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service and Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation. Early 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources of Ethiopia received a report from Mizan Plant Health Clinic, which had intercepted the fall armyworm in five woredas (districts) of three zones – Bench-Maji, Kaffa and Sheka – located in southwestern Ethiopia, where early maize planting begins during January, February and March. Although it is hard to know more updates about Fall Armyworm in Somalia due to lack of accurate information or data but it was officially detected and reported that this pest was already spotted in the country. According to Ergo radio, farmers in the middle shabelle region of Hirshabelle state, tried to combat destructive Fall Armyworm crop pest, farmers were using certain traps to combat against the pest, and the traps lure the moths using synthetic compounds that mimic the natural chemicals emitted by female moths to attract male moths for mating. The traps need regular checking and the lure needs replacing every few weeks.

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