



New species of fall army worm invades Africa

Scientists have raised concerns over the emergence of a new species of fall army worm that has already been reported in four African countries. The new pest, *Spodoptera aptera* -which is similar to the current army worm- is said to cause more damage.

Zachary Kinyua from the Crop Health Research Institute at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) said if the pest spreads to Kenya it will create even more damage.

The fall army worm currently affecting the country can infect at least 80 plant species, potentially bringing the entire country to its knees within weeks. For instance, the army worm has currently affected more than 800,000 hectares of maize in the country.

The pest has so far been reported in Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon and Gabon and is affecting potatoes, cassava, broccoli and amaranth.

According to kbc.co.ke, Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mwangi Kiunjuri promised that the government is going to spend over KSh600 million (€5 mln) to fight the pest this season.

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