

Climate-smart Push-pull System for Stem Borer Management in Maize

Maize crop can be affected by pests like the stem borer which affect yields by destroying it. The push – pull system has an element of developing integrated pest management.

Stem borers lay eggs on leaves which hatch in 4 to 8 days into larvae. The larvae starts eating the leaves to which they are hatched at. They range from white to yellowish brown with reddish brown head with 4 long stripes along their body. Larvae move inside the plant to feed and damage it. Larvae turns to pupa after 2 – 4 weeks and finally to stem borer in 2 to 12 days. Moths are active at night and rest on plants during day.

Stem borer control

In push – pull system, plant insect moth pest repellant in maize to control weed and later be fed to livestock. Plant maize in 2 feet spacing between rows and desmodium in between maize rows to try push – pull technique. Desmodium produces chemicals that pests dont like. Moths are pushed out of maize. Outside maize field, plant elephant grass which attract moths out of maize and will lay eggs on the elephant rass.