

Plantwise Policy on the Use of Pesticides

Plant doctors are trained within the Plantwise programme to offer sustainable plant health management advice to farmers following the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM). IPM involves the use of cultural, biological and mechanical methods, alongside targeted interventions with fertilisers and pesticides when justified, as outlined by the FAO⁸. Plantwise facilitates the development of pest management decision guides ('green and yellow lists') to support the practical implementation of IPM. Based on a traffic light system, these lists guide plant doctors and other extension staff through the most appropriate pest preventive measures and curative management options⁹.

Where the use of pesticides is unavoidable, plant doctors are advised to recommend only locally-registered and available pesticides to the extent that this information is available. Furthermore, plant doctors are made aware that they must not recommend pesticides that are subject to international restrictions, such as those listed by the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, as well as pesticides listed as Classes Ia and Ib by the *WHO Recommended Classification of Pesticides by Hazard* (WHO, 2009). Above all, plant doctors are encouraged to give advice that keeps pesticide usage to the lowest effective level and ensures minimal risk to human health and the environment.

The Plantwise knowledge bank provides the plant doctors, other agricultural extension workers and researchers with an array of resources to assist them with diagnosis and management options. Where pesticides are considered as a potential management option by information resources available in the knowledge bank, all references to internationally-restricted pesticides, as listed above, are avoided.

8. *International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management* (FAO, 2013)

9. The concept for green and yellow lists was first developed by the Commission on Integrated Production Guidelines and Endorsement of the International Organization for Biological Control's West Palearctic Regional Section

