Management of maize streak virus disease

Recognize the problem
Maize streak is one the most important diseases of maize, especially in irrigated farms. The disease can be seen on the top and bottom of the leaves. The early symptoms of the disease are small round spots on the leaf which get bigger and turn into yellow or light green streaks which run along the leaves in the same direction as the veins. Maize affected by the disease will have a low harvest.

Background
MSVD is caused by a tiny particle called a virus. This virus is transmitted by a small, light brown insect called a leaf hopper that lives on the maize. The more leafhoppers there are the more quickly the disease will spread. Some types of maize do not catch the disease even when it is present in the field, these are called resistant varieties.

Management
- Inspect the maize plants regularly. If there are signs of the disease uproot and destroy the plants. The diseased plants can be buried, burned or fed to animals.
- Early planting preferably with the first good planting rains
- If the disease is bad, next season plant resistant varieties such as MH 26, MH 27, MH 28, Pan 4M-19, SC 403, SC 627 and ZM 309
- For open pollinated varieties, select seed from cobs from MSV free gardens

Scientific name(s) > Maize Streak Virus (MSV)