

Media Update

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PRESS RELEASE

FAO concludes training to safeguard crops and mitigate the risk of infestation from Desert Locust in Pakistan

Bahawalpur | 26 August 2019 — The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Federal Plant Protection and Agriculture Department, Punjab concluded a two-day capacity building training for government officers and technical staff to prepare them for a possible locust outbreak. The training was followed by a workshop on desert locust, survey and control delivered to over 500 local farmers to increase their general awareness about the different types of locusts and the problems that arise with changes in climate patterns.

The training aimed to facilitate control measures and technical capacity building of 45 concerned professionals working in the Department of Plant Protection, and Provincial Agriculture Departments to counter the phenomenon of a desert locust outbreak in areas of Balochistan, Sindh and Punjab. The learning activities ranged from survey methods to spray timings and other standard operating procedures of ground desert locust survey operation. Pre-existing threats and control operations put in place in Balochistan to prepare for a possible attack were also presented at the workshop.

“The awareness sessions are vital for farmers, their families, and entire cities. I would like to congratulate all the departments who prevented a Locust attack due to timely action. Keeping in view that a locust outbreak can destroy livelihoods, we must work together to exchange information and prevent any such outbreak,” said Malik Numan Ahmad Langrial, Minister for Agriculture Punjab.



“FAO is mandated to provide information on the general locust situation to all interested countries and to give timely warnings and forecasts to those countries in danger of locust attack. This year in view of locust spread in Balochistan, followed by its outbreak in Sindh and Punjab provinces, FAO is actively engaged with key stakeholders to build technical capacity of relevant departments,” said Shakeel Ahmed Khan, Sector Specialist, FAO Pakistan.

FAO operates a Desert Locust Information Service that receives and analyzes data from locust-affected countries to assess the current locust situation, provide forecasts and if necessary issue warnings and alerts in order to keep the global community informed of locust developments and threats. Locust situation monitoring and streamlining of control is vital to ensure food security and protect agriculture.

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