CropLife Quality Brands for Better Cocoa in Ghana

From now on cocoa farmers in Ghana have the possibility to check the genuineness of certain pesticides through a hologram and a unique code that are printed on the bottle. CropLife Africa Middle East has introduced the CropLife Quality Brands this year in Ghana as a pilot project. The Quality Brands is a voluntary, industry driven project with the specific objective to combat counterfeit and illegal products in poorly regulated market environments in Africa and the Middle East. The project is only available to products that comply fully with the local regulatory and stewardship standards as well as registration in Europe.

In Ghana, the project was introduced in December 2011 with a large media campaign. During Farmer Days, the CropLife Quality Brands had its own stand in which farmers and dealers could try to text the code to check the genuineness of the products. More than 200 people succeeded in texting the correct code and were awarded with free mobile credits. Leaflets and brochures were distributed to visitors to the stand, amongst whom were the Minister of Food & Agriculture, Mr. Kwasi Ahwoi, Central Regional Minister, Mrs. Anna Benyuwa-Doe, and the Chief Executive of COCOBOD, Mr. Tony Forfe.

In December, meetings were organized with several stakeholders, including technical partners (GIZ, AGRA, IFDC, ITTA), cocoa buying companies (ADM, Armajaro, WCF), farmer organizations (Cocoa Abraapa) and government agencies (Cocobod) to introduce the project. In addition, in December and January twice a day, a radio jingle will be played on national radio in several of the local languages.

It is estimated that 15 to 30 percent of the pesticides sold in Ghana are illegal or counterfeit. Counterfeits can damage or even destroy crops, pose a risk to human health, and damage the environment. In addition, produce can be rejected for export if counterfeit pesticides have been used. Under the European Council Directive 91-414 the registration of pesticides for the European market was reviewed. This resulted in a reduction, by half of the registered substances that are allowed on export crops to Europe. Export crops from Africa to the European market, such as cocoa, coffee, vegetables and fruits, need to comply with these new regulations. The Quality Brands scheme ensures that the export product is allowed on the European market.

The CropLife Quality Brands works as follows. When a farmer wants to purchase a pesticide, he/she must look for the silver Holospot® on the label of the bottle. Each Holospot® shows the CropLife logo and a code in colours that change if looked from a different angle in the sunlight. With a magnifier the same code can be spotted in a different place. Each bottle has a unique code. To verify the code, farmers can text the code to a telephone number that is linked to a database of the manufacturer of the product. Within a few seconds, a message will be received indicating whether the product is genuinely from the manufacturer or not.

An important advantage of the Quality Brands for the industry is that it engages all participating companies to fully respect one another’s Intellectual Property Rights – even in countries and markets where such rights may be difficult to enforce legally. The project is an industry wide initiative and available to any company that is willing to comply with the set quality standards. The scheme is therefore also open to companies who are not necessarily a member of a CropLife association. The project has been approved and is supported by the Anti-Counterfeiting Steering Committee and all other relevant functions of the global CropLife network.

Other advantages are, that Ghana can give a strong signal to the export markets and customers that a major effort is being made to have only legal and authentic pesticides used for cocoa production in the country. Cocoa originating from Ghana will receive an additional quality boost. In addition, farmers will have the assurance to buy only genuine products with guaranteed quality and performance.

The Quality Brands in Ghana has started with an insecticide that is widely used in the cocoa sector. Hopefully in the near future, more products for different crops will be joining the scheme.

Representing the Plant Science Industry
Marques de Qualité de CropLife pour du Meilleur Cacao au Ghana


Maron Dohmen

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Upcoming Events

- Meeting with ACDI-VOCA and CropLife Egypt: Dec 25-27
- Meeting with SAGA (Sudan): Dec 28-30
- CLI Stewardship Committee Meeting-Washington: Jan 10
- CLI Global IPM Project Team Meeting-Washington: Jan 11
- Uganda Anti Counterfeiting project with support of IFDC and Grameen Foundation: Jan 16-21
- CleanFarms visit to Kenya and Container Management visit to Ethiopia: Jan 30-Feb 4
- ToT Master Trainer Course - Bari: Jan 2012
- Regional master trainer session in Egypt: Jan 16-20
- CPSC Meeting in Washington: Feb 15
- Anti Counterfeiting Steering committee meeting in Washington: Feb 16
- Meeting of the Regional Regulatory Committee in Casablanca RRC 1-2012: Mar 7-8

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