

3. Farmers attempt to avoid planting their crops in an area which is surrounded by fallow fields because of the pests inhabiting those fields. Thus, when farmers in an area return their land to fallow, it often forces farmers in adjacent fields to let their land go fallow as well. This explains why some areas around villages are extensively cultivated while other large tracts of land are in fallow.
4. Some farmers are using pesticides to control pests. For instance, most farmers are using DDT around their sesame drying piles to control ants. Likewise, salt is sometimes used on millet and sorghum threshing floors to control termites. In addition, some farmers are using seed treatment dressings like Aldrex-T or Dawa Suwait on their seeds to protect them from ants, termites and other pests. Currently, farmers are primarily using such dressings on groundnuts and sesame, despite the fact that it can be used on other seeds as well. These dressings are also used on millet to attempt to control long smut.

Recommendations

1. Entomologists should conduct research on the life cycle of santa (Cryptocamenta spp.) in order to find a way of eradicating the pest. Currently, it is the most damaging insect to millet crops in the region.
2. Millet breeders should develop high-yielding bird resistant varieties of millet which could be made available to farmers in this area. Developing such varieties is a more reasonable approach to bird control than eradicating millions of birds. Such work could begin with the bird resistant varieties already present in farmers' field in this area, (i.e., the millets with long bristles on the candles).
3. Farmers should be encouraged to continue treating seed. More information should be disseminated to them regarding the proper use on various crops other than sesame and groundnuts. This information could be provided by the Agricultural Extension Office of North Kordofan or some other branch of the Ministry of Agriculture. Ways should be devised to increase the use of such dressings among farmers in the area. (See chemical input constraints for some suggestions). As for DDT and salt, viable substitutes for these toxic and harmful substances should be introduced to control ants and termites. (See chemical input constraints.)

C. Loss of Soil Fertility

Given the characteristics of the soil of this area (sandy to clayey sand) soil fertility is difficult to maintain. Depletion of soil fertility is quite common due to over-cultivation, and results in a decline in crop output.