



Tropentag, September 14-16, 2010, Zurich

“World Food System —  
A Contribution from Europe”

## Constraints of Eco-friendly Pest Management Practices in Bangladesh

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### Abstract

Bangladesh has achieved food self sufficiency with the impact of the “Green revolution”. But the technologies have resulted in farmers’ dependence upon pesticides, which are causing serious environmental problems. In Bangladesh, at present, 79 % of imported pesticides are used for rice, 10 % for vegetables.

Mindless spraying of chemical pesticides has adverse residual effects on the whole environment. The pests are becoming resistant as the frequency of spraying is increasing. The increasing cost of farming put pressure on farmers who are starting to leave farming as an occupation. To control pests, a collaborative IPM project was started in 1980. The project received the majority of its funding from DANIDA while it is administered by the DAE.

The main goal of this study was to find the obstacles to ecofriendly pest management practices in Bangladesh. Information was collected through direct observation and 12 key informant interviews at government and NGO levels.

Farmers consider that all insects are bad and therefore insecticides should be sprayed to ensure a healthy crop. They use pesticides as preventive rather than curative measure. Mono-cropping and the poor soil fertility are the major causes of pest attacks. Not only lack of farmers’ knowledge, but also unconsciousness, commercial mentality and lack of knowledge of sellers are the main causes of increasing pesticide use. Most farmers are using pesticides recommended by dealers. The latter sometimes recommend highly toxic pesticides which are available to them.

It was found that farmers increased their production by 8-10 % after IPM training through increased knowledge, better management, use of balanced fertilizers, good healthy seeds etc. However, only 4 % of farmers have been trained out of the 11.8 million farmers in Bangladesh.

The present Pesticide act dating from 1985 that allows any buyer to purchase any amount of pesticide needs to be amended. The supply of organic pesticides is so low compared to farmers’ demand that they face problems in controlling pests in an environmentally friendly, safe and secured way. The government needs permit the production and importation of bio-pesticides.

**Keywords:** Environmental safety, Integrated Pest Management, pesticide dealers, IPM training, pesticide act