



## **Government ready to combat second wave of desert locust invasion.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives (MoALF&C) Hon. Peter Munya today addressed the nation on the status and impact of 2nd wave of desert locust invasion of Kenya.

Speaking at a Press Conference at the Ministry's Headquarters in Nairobi, Kilimo House, the CS reported that 15 counties had so far reported invasion by the desert locust: Marsabit, Wajir, Garissa, Tana River, Lamu, Kilifi, Taita Taveta, Mandera, Machakos, Kitui, Isiolo, Samburu, Laikipia, Meru and Tharaka Nithi. "As I indicated in Naivasha last year, the Government preparedness on Desert Locust management has been greatly enhanced," said Munya, highlighting that the Government had:

1. Established eight (8) control bases in Isiolo, Marsabit, Masinga, Garissa, Turkana (Lodwar), Mandera, Lamu (Witu) and Taita Taveta to coordinate desert locust management operations;
2. Deployed nine (9) surveillance and spray aircrafts with an additional three (3) on standby;
3. Deployed 21 vehicles mounted with sprayers for ground control operations in the various bases;
4. Stocked sufficient control pesticides at both the headquarter and field control bases with a mechanism to purchase more if necessary in place.

The Government has worked with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to train over 500 NYS troops who have been deployed in the various bases, with an additional 500 to be trained and deployed in the next eight weeks. The CS also acknowledged other partners, including the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF), DLCO-EA and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), whom he mentioned had come on board to boost ongoing efforts.

Hon. Peter Munya confirmed that out of the 75 swarms that had settled in the country between November 2020 and January 2021, 66 have been treated reflecting a total area of 19,100 ha, citing preparedness by the Ministry, the Council of Governors and County Governments and early action as key to the successful intervention in comparison to the response to the first wave. "This time, the swarms are much bigger than during the first wave, and our strategy has been to control them as they enter the country from the Ethiopian Highlands and Somalia, before they go far inland especially ahead of the coming planting season," he added.

In response to a question by a Journalist on how much money the Government had spent so far, and whether the budget deficit during the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the control efforts, the CS confirmed that the Government and her partners currently had adequate mechanisms to

monitor the availability of resources against the need, and therefore there was no cause for alarm by the public. "We have also launched a livelihood recovery support initiative for households and communities that will be affected by this invasion, to enable them to get back on their feet as soon as possible".

He cautioned a section of the media from over-sensationalising the news, clarifying that a delay in revenue collection did not necessarily mean that the Government was broke.

### **Note to the Editor:**

Towards the end of the year 2020, the Ministry announced that it was combating a second wave of invasion of the Desert Locust with **Hopper bands** being reported in the course of January 2021 in:

- ✓ Tana River: Ozi and Hurara areas;
- ✓ Taita Taveta: Bololo, Irima, along Tsavo National park fence;
- ✓ Lamu: Vumbe, Basabu and Mangai areas;
- ✓ Kilifi: Chambuko, Vibao viwili, Mtoroni, Pandacha, Kagorokani, Sokorosa, Ndovuni.

Similarly, **adult swarms** of Desert locust were reported in the following areas during the course of January 2021:

- ✓ Mandera: Mandera South, North and West;
- ✓ Wajir County: Arab low, Hadado, Finni;
- ✓ Samburu: Silanga Nanyukie, Barsaloi, Sarara, Barsaloi, Ololokwe and Sisei/Tuum;
- ✓ Isiolo: Nkorika and Ntepes in Oldonyiro, Iresaburu and in Garbatulla and Yakibarsadi in Kulamawe;
- ✓ Garissa County: Kumahumato Abakaile Ward;
- ✓ Marsabit: Dakabiricha and Badasa in Saku sub-county.

Additional resources: <http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html>

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