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OxitecÂ achieves biological pest control in Brazilian corn farms

14 April 2023 | News

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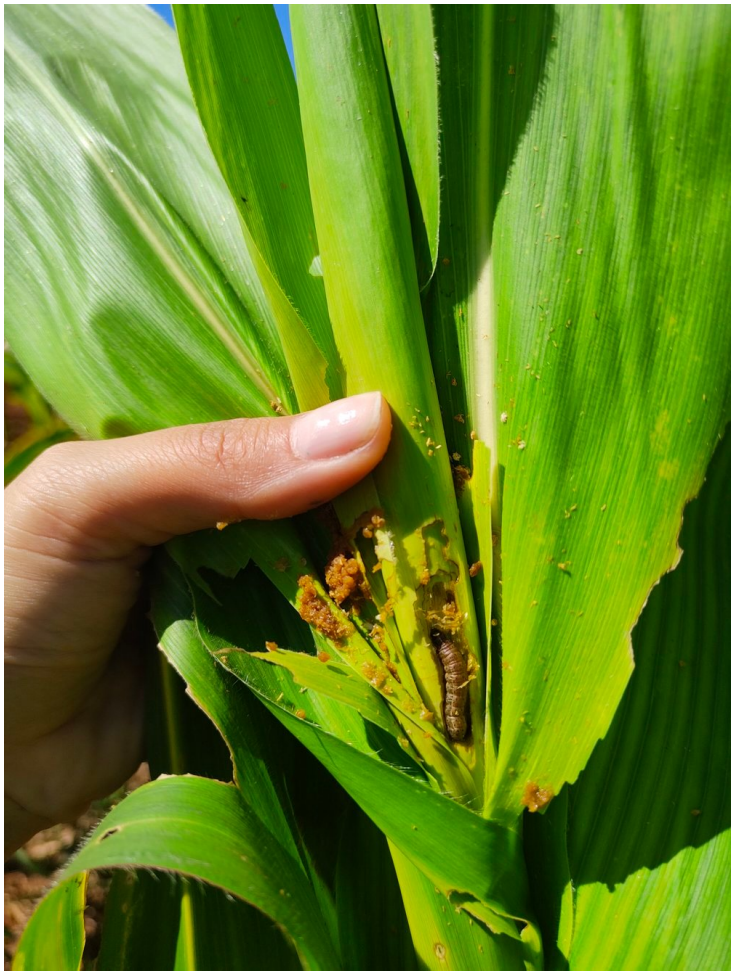

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Oxitec Ltd, the leading developer of insect-based biological solutions has successfully completed the third large-scale pilot season of the Friendlyâ?¢ fall armyworm, and the launch of the fourth pilot on commercial corn in Brazil.

Following full commercial biosafety approval from Brazilian regulators in 2021, season-long pilot deployments enable validation of product delivery and performance on large commercial corn farms in Brazil's most significant corn-growing regions. The Oxitec solutions prevent pests from transmitting diseases, destroying crops, and harming livestock.

FriendlyTM fall armyworms were deployed on thousands of acres of commercial corn fields in So Paulo during the recent pilot season. As a result, deployment systems were optimized and validated. In partnership with FundaÃ§o MT, a leading Brazilian agricultural research organization, new pilot trials are underway in Mato Grosso state during corn planting season.

By combining these pilot seasons, Oxitec is validating FriendlyTM fall armyworm product form factors so that it can be distributed nationally and easily deployed in growers' fields. As Oxitec moves closer to commercializing this new biological solution for fall armyworms, product dosing, and placement are also being tested and optimized, along with a digital support system for growers.

The fall armyworm includes a caterpillar life stage that destroys corn and other crops. A difficult pest to control, it rapidly develops resistance to biotech corn varieties designed to control crop-damaging pests, as well as traditional chemical pesticides. In recent years, fall armyworm has spread beyond the Americas, and now imposes an economic burden of billions of dollars across Africa, Asia and Oceania.

Hence Oxitec is developing new effective, and environmentally safe solutions urgently needed for improved and more sustainable crop protection. Published scientific modelling demonstrates that releases of Oxitec's male Friendlyâ?¢ fall armyworm will be a highly effective pest suppression tool and can also delay the spread of resistance to biotech corn varieties to protect their durability against this pest. Oxitec's pilot deployments continue to confirm the strong performance of Friendlyâ?¢ fall armyworm on Brazilian farms and across a range of geographies and operational settings.