Use ‘Plantix app’ to spot plant disease

Plantix, an app that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to spot plant disease is being installed in India as an early-warning system to stop the progress of a crop-damaging worm that is having an overwhelming impact on maize crops in Africa.

The diagnostics smartphone application made by Berlin-based Progressive Environmental and Agricultural Technologies (Peat) has used its geo-tagging software to generate a live tracking map of confirmed cases of the fall armyworm insect in India. It must be noted that the insect was first located in a maize field in Karnataka in May.

The tracking device allows monitoring and focusing on those states as well as districts that are most infected. Peat CEO, Simone Strey said, “Based on this we are sending push notifications to tens of thousands of our users through our Plantix app.” Besides the image recognition quality, there is a community portal and crop guide that serves as a sort of digital extension service all over the entire growing cycle. Meanwhile, the government officials and scientists said pesticides are mainly useless against the fall armyworm, which has now been recognized in 44 countries including Africa.

According to scientists’ only superior farming techniques, like planting hedgerows, can possibly increase production and attract the predators to hunt the worms. In brief we can say that good management along with a mass awareness drive is required to limit the losses. Plantix is basically a mobile app that uses the ‘AI’ and image recognition to identify diseases and then advises the farmers as to what measures can be taken to protect the plant.

A scientist with International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad, Dr. Srikanth Rupavatharam said, “We have been working in collaboration with Plantix since 2016”. He also said, “The armyworm live tracking tool helps us in monitoring and focusing on those states and districts that are most infected with it. This is essential to fight the spread of this bug effectively in the country as huge as India, and help growers receive effective advisories on the ground.”

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