

CORE Almond seed wasp project 2015

Introduction

Almonds are a very promising high value crop for Palestine. The demand for almonds is increasing in local and international markets so there is high potential for the almond crop. Yet the crop faces numerous challenges:

- Almond wasps claiming 50 to 60% of the crop
- Lack of efficient extension services providing the proper advice and info to the farmers at the right time
- Lack of research providing solutions and alternatives for almond growers, in particular for those who are looking to convert to organic almond production in order to add more value to their production and increase profitability

After assessing the almond seed wasp problem, CORE implemented a series of workshops and other activities targeting almond growers in the areas where almond cultivation is concentrated in the West Bank. There were two aims: to assist almond growers in controlling the almond seed wasp and containing the progressive losses and damage to almond crop, and to pave the way towards an organic almond program that would improve the quality of the Palestinian almond production and add more value to it. In consequence, to make almond cultivation more profitable for farmer, more friendly for environment and natural resources and more healthy for consumers.

Thanks to the scholarships and donations recruited by LOCF in the States, CORE was able to carry out the following activities and to achieve the following results:

1. Training

Six training courses for almond farmers on almond seed wasp and its control methods were organized and conducted in the areas and villages where most of the almond crop is cultivated in the northern part of the oPt.



Almond seed wasp training in Sir village Jenin province



Almond seed wasp training in Aqaba village in Tobas province



Almond seed wasp training in Silat alharithia and Ti'anik villages in Jenin province



Almond seed wasp training in Yamon village in Jenin province



Almond seed wasp training in Faqqua village in Jenin province



Almond seed wasp training in Judieda and Siris villages in Jenin province

2. Traps

Special traps were designed and manufactured for monitoring the Almond Seed Wasp in the field, to study and understand the ecology and biology of the pest under local conditions. 36 traps were distributed and installed in 12 demo fields representing the different geographical areas of almond production. Based on data & information gathered by this monitoring system it became possible to identify the proper control method as well as the exact time for intervention.



Distribution of demo field in the almond growing areas - northern part of west bank



Traps installed in the demo fields to monitor the almond wasp

3. Field days and monitoring visits

Field extension days and monitoring visits were carried out on a regular basis for giving advice and assisting farmers in the production process as well as for collecting and recording the data and info from the demo fields.





Extension and collecting information in Silat Al-Harithia, Jenin province



Extension and collecting information in Kufra Ra'l, Jenin province

5. Number of beneficiaries

Number of direct beneficiaries <i>(farmers or workers on the farms, who attended the training or are supporting the farmers who attended the training)</i>	100
Number of indirect beneficiaries <i>(this is all framers who may benefit from the project even though they were not directly involved; family members of farmers, workers, family and members of other companies who may benefit)</i>	550
Total direct and indirect beneficiaries	650

6. Preliminary results:

So far, the results obtained from the demo fields are very positive and satisfying; if you look back for the past few years in the same period of time you would see, contrary to the photos .below, clear cut symptoms of the severe infection caused by the almond seed wasp

If these good results are confirmed at the end of the season, this will open a new wide path to start an organic almond production program in Palestine, which will have a positive consequences and impact; from economic, social, environmental and health points of view .on almond sub sector in oPt

:All that means

More quantity and quality of almond production

More profit and income for almond farmers and their families

Less expenses and losses

More healthy food

Less pollution and rational use of natural resources

Almond fruits without symptoms of wasp infection in the demo field



CORE's Director Samer Jarrar with Mohammed Irshed, almond grower in his demo field in Sir, Jenin Province

