

INTRODUCTION

Insect attack in stored products is well known as the most serious cause of loss in many tropical countries, especially at the producer level.

Survey work to measure these losses is at last being conducted in some countries, i.e. in Zambia, Nigeria and southern India. Detailed information collected at farmer level, where 70-80% of agricultural food production is stored and consumed, must be accumulated if we are to convince governments of the serious nature of these losses.

An appreciation of the overall national plan within a country is essential if control methods are to be monitored and integrated sensibly within the production and marketing system.

Simple inputs such as insecticides applied at the correct time using the correct formulation may often be more sensible than a more sophisticated approach using inappropriate Western technology.

A thorough knowledge of the traditional methods evolved by farmers in developing countries is also essential if useful economic improvements are to be made without conflict with village tradition.

The importance of high value crops should not be overlooked to provide extra cash in the farmers' hand and foreign exchange from export, i.e. a national benefit.

Incentives are needed at producer level if these aims are to be achieved. Availability of appropriate technology, co-operative credit and prompt payment to producers on a quality basis will give such an incentive.

It is our job to provide appropriate technology.

Fred Ashman
Convenor