

Success story: MUF's partnership with the Portal



The MUF use of CABI BioProtection Portal to support specialty-crop farmers



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Image from CABI

Overview

Who		Where
The Minor Use Foundation (MUF)	 Minor Use Foundation	Global 
Highlights		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MUF uses the Portal to identify biocontrol products that can help farmers reduce reliance on chemical pesticides• They work to facilitate the registration of products in countries where options are limited or unavailable• This support gives specialty-crop farmers better access to sustainable solutions and helps them meet market standards		

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Since July 2024, [the Minor Use Foundation \(MUF\)](#) has been a member of the [CABI BioProtection Portal](#). The [MUF](#) focuses on increasing the sustainable production of specialty crops through the use of crop protection technologies and collaborative information. Since becoming a member, they have been using the Portal to support their mission.

What are specialty crops?

Specialty crops, also called minor crops, include fruits, vegetables, nuts and spices. These crops can be difficult to grow outside native climates and often have cultural or economical significance. [According to the MUF](#), specialty crops can help address global food security issues as well as providing people with more balanced diets.



Mango fruits on a mango tree. © CABI

Challenges faced by specialty crop farmers

Specialty crops can be damaged by a wide variety of pests, which can require different control methods. As these crops often have delicate tissues it makes them more susceptible to damage from pests even at low levels. The environments where these crops grow can add additional challenges. Where specialist equipment is needed, such as tunnels or greenhouses, it can become more difficult to manage pest infestations.



Mangoes damaged by mango fruit fly. © Solveig Danielsen

The importance of using non-chemical pesticides for control

Pesticide residue regulations mean there is a limit to the amount of chemical pesticides that can be used. This means farmers may also or alternatively have to look at biological, ecological and cultural methods. By opting to use non-chemical methods such as biopesticides and integrated pest management approaches (combination of conventional and biopesticides), farmers can both increase the sustainability of their crops and the health and safety of the environment for wildlife and people. These alternatives help ensure compliance with global standards and pesticide maximum residue level (MRL) regulations, thereby improving access to high-value export markets and enhancing the overall marketability of their produce.

How has the MUF used the CABI Bioprotection Portal to help farmers?

The MUF has been using the Portal as a central database of global biocontrols to identify possible solutions for crops. It serves as a tool to locate biocontrols in countries where such products are unavailable or unregistered. The team researches products addressing similar crop and pest issues and works to have them registered. In addition, they reach out to manufacturers listed on the Portal to encourage product registration in target countries.

“The CABI BioProtection Portal has become our go-to resource for identifying sustainable pest management solutions for specialty crops, directly supporting our mission to increase sustainable production and address global food security challenges.” —Sasireka Rajendran, PhD, Global Operations Manager, MUF

Summing up

The Minor Use Foundation uses the Portal to advance sustainable pest control for specialty crop farmers. Through this partnership, they facilitate the registration and availability of biocontrol products in underserved regions.

About the CABI BioProtection Portal

The CABI BioProtection Portal is the largest, free global resource for biological pest management. The Portal's mission is to raise awareness and encourage the adoption of bioprotection among growers and advisors. It offers a comprehensive, searchable directory of nationally registered biocontrol and biopesticide crop protection products, along with detailed guidance to help agricultural advisors and growers source and effectively incorporate these sustainable natural products into integrated pest management programmes.