

## GERBIL OUTBREAKS CAN BE MANAGED SAFELY

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### Gerbil presence in agriculture

Gerbils are traditionally present in cash crops but during the past two seasons reports of this pest species emerged from vineyards, fruit orchards and even in protea cultivation fields. Some farmers may have never had any gerbil infestation but the fact is that gerbils are increasing in range and intensity, hence all farmers need to be vigilant to prevent being caught off guard with gerbil infestations. There is a particular threat in the Western Cape currently.

### Environmentally compatible gerbil management

There is no need to harm the environment, especially owls and raptors when implementing a control programme. An integrated management plan for gerbils is available on the CropLife SA website: click on Resources, then Guidelines for Pest Management and then open the gerbil management protocol. Please note that the use of owls, raptors and predators form an integral of gerbil control and must be considered when tackling a gerbil infestation.

### An important point to take into account

CropLife SA strongly advises distributors and agents to only recommend and sell rodenticides that are listed in the management plan and to advise farmers to use bait stations or dispense the rodenticides in the gerbil burrows to prevent primary poisoning of non-target species. No home-made remedies may be concocted and used to control gerbils. Rodenticides may not be dispensed from fertilizer spreaders as it is a very high risk for non-target species and illegal to dispense the rodenticides in this way.

### For more information please contact:

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