

Vehicle Mounted ULV Sprayer for Locust Control

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India is witnessing one of the worst Locust attacks in history, which has compounded the already prevailing agricultural and economic crisis due to COVID pandemic. The recent innovation is a much needed relief to combat the locusts and has shown the innovation capability of India.

Vehicle Mounted ULV Sprayer

India has developed an indigenous vehicle-mounted ultra-low volume (ULV) sprayer for locust control, and approvals for its commercial launch are underway. Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers' Welfare (DAC&FW), under **Make in India initiative**, has taken up the challenge to indigenously develop the sprayer. Leading the initiative, the **Mechanization and Technology Division of DAC&FW** got a prototype of the sprayer developed through an Indian manufacturer.

Currently, the sole supplier of vehicle-mounted sprayers is the UK-based Micron Sprayers. This is a major breakthrough as this will end the dependence of importing very important equipment of locust control.

However, the ground control vehicles with sprayers used for locust control can spray up to a height of 25-30 ft only. The tractor mounted sprayers also have a limitation in reaching inaccessible areas and tall trees. Therefore, the necessity of exploring aerial spray options was explored.

Aerial spraying of insecticides is being done by drones in Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Nagore and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan. The Standard Operating Procedure of aerial spraying of insecticides by drones, airplanes and helicopters was approved by the **Central Insecticides Board**. The **UN's Food and**

Agriculture Organization has appreciated that India is the first country in the world which is controlling Desert Locust through Drones.