# The Magic of Pheromone Sex Traps:
## A Game-Changer for Citrus Farmers in Uganda

**A Case Study of Pallisa and Kumi Districts**

Documented by Mr. Stephen Anguria, UNACOH

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Citrus farming has emerged as a lucrative enterprise in Uganda, with strong local, supermarket, and international demand. Recognizing its potential to boost foreign exchange earnings, the Ugandan government has prioritized citrus as a key export commodity. However, the reliance on synthetic pesticides poses a significant challenge to accessing international markets, such as the European Union, which enforces strict Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for agricultural imports. To address this issue, the Uganda National Association of Community and Occupational Health (UNACOH), with support from Danish NGO DIALOGOS under the Pesticide Use, Health, and Environment (PHE) project, introduced Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques to citrus farmers in Pallisa and Kumi districts.

### The Problem: Devastating Fruit Fly Infestations

Farmers in Pallisa and Kumi faced crippling losses due to infestations by male Oriental fruit flies. These pests lay eggs inside citrus fruits during the early fruiting stage, leading to maggot development, fruit yellowing, premature dropping, and significant yield losses. The need for an effective and sustainable solution was urgent.

### The Solution: Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

UNACOH partnered with Sukuma Uganda Limited, all members of the Food Safety Coalition (FoSCU), to train farmers on IPM techniques. A cornerstone of this approach was the use of sex pheromone traps to combat fruit fly infestations biologically. These traps effectively lured and captured male fruit flies,

disrupting their reproductive cycle. Farmers were also trained in complementary practices such as:

- Maintaining garden hygiene by collecting and burying or burning infested fruits to prevent pest multiplication.
- Avoiding synthetic pesticides in favor of organic products and bio pesticides.

### Capacity Building for Sustainability

The project conducted extensive workshops targeting diverse stakeholders, including farmers, extension workers, agro-dealers, public spray operators, healthcare workers, Village Health Teams (VHTs), and district leaders. Participants were encouraged to share their knowledge with peers, family members, and the wider community to create a ripple effect of safe pesticide handling and sustainable farming practices.

### Lasting Impact

Although the project concluded in 2020, its impact endures. Citrus farmers in Pallisa and Kumi have continued to adopt IPM practices, rejecting synthetic pesticides in favor of sustainable methods. Their commitment has safeguarded their orchards from pest infestations while ensuring compliance with international market standards.

### A Call to Action

UNACOH emphasizes that public health must take precedence over profit throughout the food value chain. By adopting sustainable farming practices like IPM, Uganda can secure its place in global markets while protecting both human health and the environment.

This success story demonstrates how simple yet effective interventions like pheromone traps can revolutionize agriculture in Uganda's citrus-growing communities.