



EACMV-Ug: A CLEAR THREAT TO CASSAVA PRODUCTION IN AFRICA

Cassava is a strategic pillar of food security in Central and West Africa. A highly resilient crop, it feeds millions of rural households and supports critical local value chains.

However, the crop is under significant phytosanitary pressure from the African cassava mosaic virus, particularly the highly virulent **EACMV-Ug strain (East African Cassava Mosaic Virus – Uganda variant)**.

Understanding the EACMV-Ug

EACMV-Ug is an aggressive variant of the African cassava mosaic virus. It belongs to the begomovirus group and is mainly transmitted by whiteflies (*Bemisia tabaci*) and infected cuttings.

Initially identified in East Africa in the 1990s, this strain is characterised by:

- The severity of the induced symptoms
- Its ability to spread rapidly
- The significant yield losses it causes.

Today, it represents a serious phytosanitary risk for cassava production areas on the continent.

Symptoms and agronomic consequences

Infected plants have:

- chlorotic mosaics on the leaves
- leaf deformities
- Stunted growth
- A marked reduction in tuberous root development

When infection occurs in the first weeks after planting, yield losses can reach 50–70%, exceeding 80% in the most severe cases.



At the farm level, this represents a significant decrease in marketable production and poses a direct threat to local food security.

Source: https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/fcc/documents/CaCESA_FR.pdf

Impact beyond the field

The EACMV-Ug poses a threat that goes beyond agriculture, its impact is multidimensional:

- Food security: declining availability of cassava, a staple crop in several countries.
- Farm incomes: a decrease in marketable volumes and economic losses for producers.
- Stability of agricultural systems: weakening of family farms that depend on this crop.

In agroecological contexts characterised by high climate variability, the impact of the disease is weakening the strategic role of cassava in farm resilience.

Prevention and management leverage

The EACMV-Ug management is based on an integrated approach combining research, prevention, and producer support, through:

- **dissemination of resistant varieties:** the development and availability of resistant or tolerant varieties is essential for long-term control.
- **production and distribution of healthy plant material:** Propagation and certification of virus-free cuttings is essential to limit the spread.
- **phytosanitary surveillance:** Regular monitoring of plots and early identification of symptoms help to contain outbreaks.
- **vector management:** control of whitefly populations, combined with good cultural practices, helps reduce viral transmission.



Wave's commitment

Through its national platforms and regional network spanning 14 countries in Central and West Africa, Wave contributes to **strengthening phytosanitary surveillance, disseminating scientific knowledge, and supporting seed systems.**

The fight against cassava viral diseases, including EACMV-Ug, requires regional coordination and the assimilation of good cultural practices through training, as well as continuous investment in research. In the presence of this threat, a structured, collaborative, scientific approach is essential for the sustainable protection of cassava production and the strengthening of the resilience of African agricultural systems.

