

## **A bug-bio factory article**

Have you ever wondered why biological pesticides are preferred to their chemical counterparts when it comes to the best pesticide products to use in farming? It is probably because biopesticides are less harmful to the environment and they decompose much faster than other conventional pesticides.

Casper Nyamukondiwa, has bug-bio-factory that produces locally reared parasitic cocoons ('biopesticide') for biological control of agricultural pests. Using insights that revealed user's lack of knowledge on usage of pesticides and abuse of pesticides resulting in public health hazards, Casper's innovation comes as a breath of fresh air.

"We decided to start production of a biopesticides to optimise pest control in a manner that is safe and friendly to the insect value chain. In addition, we are also developing an App that will use researched data to forecast insect pest outbreak allowing farmers to use the appropriate pesticide to control the related pests," asserts Casper Nyamukondiwa.

He goes on to advise that BIH have played an instrumental part in getting the factory off the ground. Says Nyamukondiwa, "We are receiving funding through the Botswana Innovation Fund as well as also receiving technical assistance from BIH in the form of Intellectual advisory service and Information Technology advice."

The bug-bio factory currently employs a team of five is working on this innovation comprising of the following; a researcher with vast experience in insect-plant interaction, a student who is currently pursuing their PhD and has experience in insect rearing, two BSc graduates with knowledge on insect rearing in laboratories and two personnel learning innovations in Agriculture.