

Short Biography: Dr Mesfin Wondafrash Gossa

Mesfin Wondafrash Gossa obtained B.Sc. in Agriculture (Plant Sciences) from Alemaya University, Ethiopia and worked as a junior and assistant researcher for the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization (EARO). He did M.Sc. in Insect Sciences at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. He then worked for Arba Minch University and Haramaya University as a lecturer where he taught entomology and crop protection courses to undergraduate cohorts. He also obtained M.Sc. in Nematology from a consortium of four universities in Europe, including Ghent University in Belgium, Evora University in Portugal, Bielefeld University in Germany and Jaen University in Spain. In his thesis research, Dr Gossa investigated the interaction between root-feeding plant-parasitic nematodes and shoot feeding aphids in a black mustard plant. He obtained Ph.D. in Entomology from the University of Pretoria where he studied the species identity, genetic diversity, natural enemies and host utilization patterns of an invasive pine weevil in South Africa.

Dr Gossa did his postdoctoral research at the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI), the University of Pretoria. During his postdoc, he ran the *Eucalyptus* Insect Pest Project in Africa (EIPPA). In this project, he investigated eucalypt insect pests and their natural enemies in sub-Saharan Africa, more specifically their presence, distribution, prevalence, genetic diversity and host utilization patterns. Currently, he started a two year contract with the South Africa National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) as postdoctoral researcher. His current research focuses on monitoring tree health at sentinel sites, more specifically in botanic gardens and arboreta.