

Northeastern IPM Center Partnership Grants Program

Report Guidelines for State Network Projects – Fall 2008

A. Grant Data

- Today's date: December 3, 2008
- Title: New York Information Network for Pesticides & Alternative Strategies
- Project Type: STATE NETWORK PROJECT
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- State(s) involved: New York
- Funding Year(s):2008
- Funding amount: \$5,000

B. Nontechnical Summary

The New York State Network Project or SNP called "The New York State Information Network for Pesticides and Alternative Strategies" was designed to gather and disseminate information on pesticides and pest management. The SNP is administered and staffed by the Pesticide Management Education Program (PMEP) at Cornell University. PMEP's primary mission is to provide objective information, promote sound decision making and safe handling practices to people who choose to use pesticides while controlling pests. PMEP utilizes all available communication venues, one-on-one consultations, phone and email queries, public presentations, workshops, seminars, a listserv and the World Wide Web to communicate unbiased and factual information.

C. Objectives

1) Answer queries posed by federal regulatory agencies regarding the use of pesticides and other IPM tactics throughout New York State.

Queries about the use of pesticides and IPM tactics were answered in a variety of ways listed above. Many of interactions with the Federal EPA are informally received through phone discussions and at meetings. One of our most important venues is through participating on EPA committees. We currently participate on EPA's Certification and Training Assessment Group (CTAG) Board, the CTAG Valid Exam/Manual Development Protocol Workgroup and the National Rights-of-Way Syllabus & Exam Project.

2) Help process when necessary, subcontracts between the Northeastern IPM Center and other entities of Cornell University to minimize total indirect costs. There were no requests for this service this year.

D. Results

PMEP is the primary source for pesticide information in New York and regularly networks with federal and state pesticide regulatory agencies and other agencies regarding use and application of pesticides. Specifically, PMEP provides on-site pesticide certification training, including IPM information and practices, throughout New York and distributes similar information via certification/recertification manuals that are utilized throughout the Northeast region. Just in New York, 1,717 applicators became certified last year using manuals developed by PMEP. The total number sold to all states using our training manuals is 8,626 training manuals. These manuals contain IPM information as well as safe handling and use information. Those applicators certified with our manuals are therefore, tested on IPM concepts as well as pesticide use practices.

The PMEP ListManager (cce-pmep-l), often referred to as “listserv,” provides pertinent regulatory, educational and IPM information primarily from the Federal Register, EPA’s listserv, USDA (Office of Pest Management Policy), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Northeastern IPM Center, from university faculty and staff, and cooperative extension educators to those desiring such information. As of December 2008 there are 1094 members receiving this data. Here is a brief topic summary of the traffic on the listserv:

- PMEP Webmaster Requests Answered (98)
- IR4 (2)
- NE-IPM (2)
- Pesticide Registrations/Exemptions/Tolerances (31)
- EPA Updates (26)
- USDA/APHIS (2)

The PMEP website continues to serve as a source of information for many. This year our web experience and success helped us expand our web presence with a new initiative. We were given the responsibility to host and manage the content for the “Pesticide and Environmental Stewardship” website. The objective of this website is to provide convenient access to information on pesticide stewardship topics. This is a collaborative website using “SharePoint” software which helps website contributors from North Carolina State University, South Dakota State University, Washington State University and Cornell work together effectively and efficiently. This project is funded through the National Science Foundation Center for Integrated Pest Management (CIPM) housed at NC State. <http://pesticidestewardship.org/Pages/default.aspx>

The PMEP website is in the process of being “improved.” We have split the topics into two main pages, one for Pesticide Safety Education pages and Pesticide Use Reporting pages. A pilot of this project may be accessed at these addresses: <http://pmep.info/>, <http://psep.cornell.edu/>, <http://psur.info/>

PMEP is also involved in a collaborative effort with the New York IPM program to create on-line courses offering recertification credits. The courses will be hosted on Cornell Cooperative Extensions Distance Learning site. Courses will include topics in the Pesticide Stewardship and Vegetable IPM areas. The course development software is called Moodle and has the programming to provide course use tracking data on our courses. These data will provide much needed impact information for our education and regulatory programs. These will be developed using Smith Lever and EPA Pesticide Stewardship grant funds.

Our work with EPA on CTAG has resulted in the New York Manual and Exam development process being used as the National model for a flexible process for developing effective integrated licensure tests and pesticide training manuals.

E. Impacts

The impact of PMEP's website can be estimated by tracking the annual public's use of this facility. Based on the statistics maintained for our current website and individual directories, during 2006 there were 6,514,882 successful pages retrieved by users from our site. This is an increase of over 1.8 million pages in just one year. Our SNP combines pesticide and IPM-related pesticide information on our website and listserv that is current, accessible, and timely.

Applicators stay in compliance with regulations by knowing which pesticides are registered and those that have been suspended or cancelled. They also, have access to current IPM guidelines that provide information for making better pest management decisions and the selection of appropriate pesticides. Alerting growers to emergency pest problems, pest outbreaks, and where to obtain access to state emergency exemptions and special local need labels is critical.

The impact of our participation in EPA committees will have nationwide impact. The model process for development of manuals and certification tests will lead to better training materials and testing of applicators competency.

F. Appendices