

## **2008 PROGRESS REPORT Pennsylvania State Network Project**

### **A. GRANT DATA**

#### **Title: Pennsylvania Pest Management Information Center**

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- **Project Type:** State Network Project
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- **State involved:** Pennsylvania
- **Funding Year:** 4/1/2008 - 3/31/2009
- **Funding Amount:** \$5,000

### **B. NONTECHNICAL SUMMARY**

The primary mission of the Pennsylvania State Network Project is to use currently established networks with the Pennsylvania Division of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (PA-NASS), the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), extension specialists, and commodity groups to:

- 1) Serve as primary source for all requests regarding the use of pest management practices in Pennsylvania;
- 2) Interact with all IPM working groups, either directly or through the support of others;
- and 3) Maintain communication pathways with the Northeastern IPM Center (NIPMC) as well as other key agencies and commodity groups.

For the EPA and growers to make informed decisions, and to ensure that decisions are made based on sound science and real-world field level data, there has been an on-going need for information. Meeting this need was streamlined by providing a seamless flow of information through one source, the Pennsylvania State Network Project (PA-SNP). Funding of this proposal continued to support the PA-SNP, which will be delivered through the Pennsylvania Pest Management Information Center (PMIC). Having one contact point for the PA-SNP/PMIC will strengthen the function and process of the Northeastern IPM Center by providing regulatory decision-makers, stakeholders, and others a comprehensive source to find the most current pest management information.

#### General Accomplishments included:

- Updating of existing vegetable profiles
- Updating of existing website
- Serving as the primary source of pesticide safety/use information for commodity specialists, regulatory agencies and extension educators
- Verification of pesticide use recommendations for production guides

- Providing support for the participation of colleagues working with the Northeastern Community IPM Working Group (IWG)

### **C. OBJECTIVES:**

- 1. Serve as the primary information source for federal regulatory agencies regarding the use of pesticides and other IPM tactics. Respond in a timely fashion to requests for information from these agencies, and then record and document responses.**

#### Achievements:

Although there were very few requests for information from the EPA, these requests were forwarded to the appropriate commodity specialists (for example methomyl and thiodicarb on sweet corn and head lettuce). As a result of the decision by the National Agricultural Statistic Service (NASS) to discontinue pesticide use surveys, interaction with the Pennsylvania Division of NASS was limited. Efforts in this area focused on the revision of existing crop profiles with a goal of completing the revision of vegetable profiles first. Funds to continue these efforts were available through an existing Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture grant to the Pesticide Education Program. Dr. Richards attended regional and national meetings and state commodity meetings to maintain her knowledge regarding current pest management issues. Dr. Richards also completed her service as a member of the Environmental Protection Agency's Certification Training and Assessment Group. Finally, financial support and coordination of the Northeast Farm Managers Meeting were services provided through the funding of this grant.

- 2. Increase input from stakeholders and develop ongoing interaction with IWGs.**

#### Achievements:

Although a functional advisory group is no longer required, input from extension educators and commodity specialists were solicited through an existing network of the Pesticide Education Program Advisory Committee. Specifically, through the input of this group it was recommended that an in-service be held to update extension educators and commodity specialists. As a result, Dr. Richards is currently developing a program agenda for an in-service to be held in the spring of 2009. Future projects recommended by the advisory group are the addition of online educational training materials. This potential educational opportunity will be pursued in the next fiscal year.

Richard Johnson from the Penn State Pesticide Education program also serves as an active member of the Community IPM Working Group and has played an integral role in the outreach education effort at the United States Botanical Garden, with the development of educational posters and other outreach efforts.

- 3. Web site will link the PMIC to new and existing partners and serve as a central access for all information that is produced by the PMIC. Web access to this information will**

**provide growers and regulatory partners with the most current information to facilitate informed decision making. Update and promote a web site with such items as: SNP contact information, crop profiles, regulatory information, production guides, IPM Problem Solver, and other relative information.**

Achievement:

The Pesticide Management Information Center web site was maintained at:

<http://www.pested.psu.edu/infocenter/>

## **D. RESULTS**

1. Serve as the primary information source regarding the use of pesticides and other IPM tactics:

- Processed request for information regarding methomyl and thiodicarb on sweet corn and head lettuce to vegetable and entomology specialists and provided response.
- In cooperation with the Pesticide Education Program, an email mailing list was developed to more specifically target specialists with pesticide safety education responsibilities.
- Attended 2008 Northeast Tri-Agency Regional Meeting.
- Began updating of vegetable crop profiles, pumpkin profile is in final editing, and cabbage, snap beans and sweet corn are in process.
- Reviewed pesticide recommendations for the Berry Production Guide
- Reviewed pesticide recommendations for insecticide labels for 3 crop groups:
  - all cucurbits (cucumbers, muskmelon, pumpkins, -winter-squash, summer-squash, and watermelon),
  - parsnips, and
  - parsley.
- Worked cooperatively with Eric Harrington, Cornell University, to facilitate speakers and pesticide update credits for the Northeast Farm Managers Meeting. Speakers facilitated by Dr. Richards included:
  - Phil Pitzer, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Worker Safety Specialist
  - Dave Filson, Penn State University Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator
  - Samuel E. Hayes, Jr, Former Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture

2. Increased input from stakeholders and developed on-going interaction with IWGs

- Feedback from extension educators and university specialists during the Pesticide Education Program Advisory Committee provided suggestions for several areas to emphasize. Most significantly, as a result of their input, an in-service is planned for Spring of 2009 to include topics such as:
  - New product chemistry
  - Bio controls
  - Pesticide registration and food safety

- Richard Johnson from Penn State's Pesticide Education has taken an increasingly active role in working with the Community IPM Working Group. He helped to facilitate the group's participation in an exhibit at the U.S. Botanical Garden which has led to significant requests for the posters that were exhibited. Mr. Johnson continues to work with both the turfgrass and structural sub-groups on several outreach education efforts.

### 3. Web site

The Pesticide Management Information Network web site (<http://www.pested.psu.edu/infocenter/>) was updated and:

- Includes contact information for the Pennsylvania Pest Management Information Center.
- Includes links to crop production guides, pesticide labels, material safety data sheets, and the Pennsylvania IPM Problem Solver.
- Includes links to the Northeastern IPM Center and other appropriate entities.
- Prominently displays, near the heading, the phrase, "The Pennsylvania component of the Northeastern IPM Center." The words "Northeastern IPM Center" are hyperlinked to the Center web site.
- Includes the statement: "This site is supported, in part, with funding from the Northeastern IPM Center."
- Is compatible with regional and national IPM Center sites.
- Complies with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

### Additional Work

Dr. Richards continues to work with Agricultural Science instructors in Pennsylvania to provide pest management information and educational materials that can be used in their classrooms. Four sessions were held which targeted pest management in turf and greenhouse settings. Through these efforts, the IPM Management Manuals for Greenhouse Production were distributed to thirty-five schools. During these training sessions, input was solicited from the instructors regarding areas where IPM educational materials are needed. Greenhouse production is the primary area of interest. Instructors also indicated that any materials that helped meet the Pennsylvania State Standards for Environment and Ecology that specifically addressed IPM would be helpful. An additional educational session was provided as part of the Pennsylvania Agriculture In the Classroom program. This session focused primarily on secondary science education.

Outreach education was also provided to non-traditional audiences through library education programs as a take-off on the theme of "Catch the Reading Bug." An additional audience for this type of non-traditional youth education included outreach efforts through farm safety day camps.

## **E. IMPACTS**

Although the number of requests have tapered off considerably, it is still imperative to provide

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field based information to respond to requests from USDA and EPA regarding the significance of specific pesticide uses. For example, soliciting input from specialists regarding Lannate and Larvin use on sweet corn and lettuce allowed for a response that gave a clearer grower use perspective.

Reviewing pesticide recommendations as requested for the Berry and Vegetable production guide helps to insure that growers are provided with updated and correct information regarding labeled products and rates. This is a time consuming process; however, it is critical to the safe and effective use of these products and production of the crop.

Working cooperatively with the Northeast Farm Managers, agricultural science instructors, and commodity groups to provide educational outreach regarding pest management alternatives is critical to their success as applicators and educators. Initial educational efforts with agricultural science instructors have illustrated a clear need to develop additional programming. These educational efforts not only will help to educate future generations of growers, but also address required educational State Standards that focus on Integrated Pest Management.

Input from the Pesticide Education Program Advisory Committee has helped to identify an educational need for Extension Educator training so that they can provide pest management information to their stakeholders. Funding secured will allow for the delivery of this in-service in the spring of 2009. This funding will allow for participation from all states in the Northeast.

Work with the Community IWG, through the efforts of program colleague Richard Johnson, has lent a hand to their efforts to provide outreach to a wider non-traditional audience.

Maintenance and continued updating of the Pest Management Information Center website will help to facilitate grower access to pest management information.

Additional outreach efforts to similar non-traditional audiences such as libraries and farm safety day camps have increased a demand in these areas. For example, after providing outreach programs to four libraries in Western Pennsylvania and training Master Gardeners to duplicate the training, extension educators and Master Gardeners reached over a dozen additional sites, and they continue to receive outreach requests.