

MARYLAND INFORMATION NETWORK FOR PESTICIDES AND ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

PROJECT SUMMARY

We propose a State Network Project to enhance the function, activities, and processes of the Northeastern IPM Center. The Maryland Information Network for Pesticides and Alternative Strategies (MINPAS) will provide a structure to gather and transmit information on issues relevant to both current and transitional pest management strategies, including pesticides. MINPAS has been previously funded by USDA. Objectives of the projects are (1) serve as the primary information source for federal and state regulatory agencies and other agencies regarding use and usage of all IPM tactics, including pesticides, in all IPM settings in the state; (2) serve as a liaison among the NE IPMC, the land grant institution, and other key agencies in the state; and (3) enhance knowledge of IPM components and promote informed decision-making by state clientele.

MINPAS aims to promote and enhance the adoption of integrated pest management, and to facilitate informed regulatory decisions on registered pesticides used on commodities grown in Maryland. To meet these goals, MINPAS will formally link (1) the IPM and (2) pesticide education units of the Maryland Cooperative Extension and (3) the Maryland Department of Agriculture; deliver pest management information and pesticide regulatory and policy information to Extension educators, growers, crop consultants, and pesticide users in the state; gather pest management data from researchers, Extension educators, growers, crop consultants, and pesticide users in response to requests from USDA, EPA, the Northeastern IPM Center, or other agencies; analyze these data to estimate the impacts of changes in pesticide regulations on agricultural productivity in Maryland; solicit input from other states in the mid-Atlantic region; and share this information with other states in the mid-Atlantic region, the Northeastern Integrated Pest Management Center, USDA, and the US EPA.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Objectives

1. Serve as the primary information source for federal and state regulatory agencies and other agencies regarding use and usage of all IPM tactics, including pesticides, in all IPM settings in the state.
2. Serve as a liaison among the NE IPMC, the land grant institution, and other key agencies in the state.
3. Enhance knowledge of IPM components, and promote informed decision-making by state clientele.

Procedures

MINPAS will serve as the primary information source for federal and state regulatory agencies and other agencies regarding use and usage of all IPM tactics, including pesticides, in all IPM settings throughout the state. MINPAS will consistently respond in a timely fashion to requests for information from these agencies. MINPAS will coordinate the activities of the PEAP and IPM programs in the state through a formal linkage of the Project Director and two co-Directors, exponentially increasing networking and team-building potential between traditional and non-traditional IPM stakeholders. The membership of the existing MINPAS Advisory Committee will be reviewed and reappointed, if appropriate, and additional representatives may be added. The Advisory Committee will be kept apprized of new developments, and will be asked for comment at least once during the project year.

Particulars of how objectives will be accomplished are described below.

1. Serve as the primary information source on use and usage of all IPM tactics, including pesticides

- Upon receipt of a request for information from USDA or other state or federal agencies, MINPAS will direct the request to appropriate parties within the state. These parties may include Extension field and campus faculty, consultants, individual growers, grower cooperatives, personnel at other state agencies, and other appropriate individuals or groups. MINPAS will assist in gathering information necessary for informed decisions at the state and federal levels.
- MINPAS will continue to solicit cooperators for Crop Profile or Pest Management Strategic Plan projects being conducted in the mid-Atlantic states in 2006. The PD's will encourage other appropriate entities in Maryland to take the lead in these types of projects. Solicitation will be made through email and through a formal presentation during the 2006 In-Service Training.

2. Serve as a liaison

- The IPM and PEAP Program Directors have coordinated inter-agency IPM related activities and state reports for the previous four years. These activities will continue. Additionally, the IPM and PEAP Programs will combine efforts, thereby consolidating and maximizing organizational efforts to
 - represent IPM interests via increasing information transfer to and from the NE IPMC in regards to stakeholder involvement in IPM decision making thereby increasing the opportunities for successful IPM implementation;
 - identify and familiarize non-profit and consumer groups with the NE IPMC mission via direct contact, project development, and IPM listserv membership;
 - directly and/or indirectly inform and encourage Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE) personnel, state agencies, non-profit organizations and stakeholders regarding knowledge of and participation in the NE IPMC Working Groups, Crop Profiles and Pest Management Strategic Plan activities;
 - identify additional MCE resources to strengthen and expand existing stakeholder partnerships.
- One of the three co-PDs will attend the Northeastern IPMC meeting in 2006 to report on progress and discuss future developments.
- The PEAP Coordinator / MINPAS Project Director will serve as the principal liaison to federal and state agencies and to the land grant institution on pesticide issues.
- The Extension IPM Coordinator will serve as the principal liaison to federal and state agencies and to the land grant institution on IPM.
- IPM and pesticide issues will be brought to the attention of state regulators directly through presentation to the MDA Pesticide Advisory Committee.
- MINPAS principals will encourage and participate in the initiation of additional IPM networking/team building strategies among interested IPM entities within Maryland, to facilitate active engagement in NE IPMC partnership projects. Discussion of goals and possible strategies will be held during the 2005 In-Service Training.

3. Enhance knowledge of IPM and promote informed decision-making

- The existing MINPAS web site will be maintained and enhanced. Both the Maryland IPM and the PEAP web sites are integral parts of the site and are interlinked to the MINPAS site so that clientele can receive information seamlessly. Both sites are currently fully in compliance with required elements under the NEIPMC grant guidelines. The co-PDs will

continue to work together to improve the web sites.

- A report of IPM programs in the state will be produced and posted on the IPM web site. Visitors to the site will continue to be able to access information on the use and usage of all IPM tactics in all IPM settings in the state. Maryland programs and reports, IPM Program events, special topics, links topical to general IPM tactics and strategies, and regional issues will be priorities.
- The PEAP web site will continue to provide information and links on pesticide use, policy and regulations, as well as safe use of pesticides, a component of many IPM programs. The newsletter *Pesticide Notes* will be posted on the PEAP web site.
- The Project Director and co-PDs will offer presentations during the year on a variety of topics related to IPM, pesticides, and initiatives of the NE IPMC. Campus and field faculty at the University of Maryland will provide information through plant clinics, pesticide certification and recertification meetings, short courses, and other venues.
- Extension specialists, pesticide applicators, pest management consultants, health care providers, and other clientele will be updated on pesticide regulations and policy developments through electronic distribution of the newsletter, *Pesticide Notes*. MINPAS will review sources of information including federal resources, professional journals, and other states' newsletters in order to stay current and transmit the information to clientele within the state through *Pesticide Notes*.
- Clientele will be informed of opportunities for input into pesticide regulatory and policy decisions through implementation of *Just-In-Time Pesticide Info*, the electronic listserv-based information delivery system designed to inform interested parties within one to a few days. MINPAS will maintain a subscription to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's *OPP Update* and other electronic and print services in order to stay current and transmit the information to clientele within the state through *Just-In-Time Pesticide Info*.
- MINPAS will distribute the monthly newsletter *Agricultural Chemical News* to Extension personnel to assist them in making pest management recommendations.
- MINPAS will maintain an email list of appropriate State regulatory personnel, as well as the USDA-APHIS State Plant Health Director, to provide a direct conduit for information exchange from MINPAS and the NE IPMC to the regulatory community.
- In September 2006, the PEAP Coordinator will offer an In-Service Training session for Extension faculty on pesticide issues. Representatives from MDA will be included as presenters. Extension personnel will be updated on pesticide regulations and policies, new initiatives for the next growing season, and teaching materials so that Agents and Specialists can extend the information to their own clientele. A session devoted to MINPAS objectives will be included, and the session will serve as a leading forum for exchange of input between project co-PDs and field faculty within Maryland Extension.

Project Evaluation

As the project develops, the MINPAS Advisory Committee will monitor progress and evaluate success. Marks of progress will include successful transmission of information to stakeholders *via* newsletter and Just-In-Time subscriptions; availability of pest management information on-line; and use of the IPM and PEAP web sites.

Cooperation and Institutional Units Involved

The PEAP, IPM, and pesticide regulatory units in Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE) and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) will maintain the close cooperation developed under the restructuring of MINPAS in 2005. The MINPAS and Maryland IPM web sites will be linked more closely, and sections will be co-planned by the Project Director and co-Principal Directors (PDs). Dr. Amy Brown, PEAP Coordinator, will direct MINPAS, maintain the MINPAS web site, serve as liaison to the land grant institution and other key agencies in the state on pesticide issues, and maintain contact and coordination of the overall program with the other states in the mid-Atlantic region (Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia). Approximately 20% of Dr. Brown's time will be devoted to this project. Ms. Sandra Sardanelli, IPM Coordinator, MCE, will serve as liaison to the NE IPMC, the land grant institution, and other key agencies in the state on IPM issues. Ms. Carol Holko, IPM, MDA will be the principal liaison between branches of MDA and other state agencies dealing with IPM and pesticide issues. Although Ms. Sardanelli will have technical responsibility for maintaining the Maryland IPM web site, both Ms. Sardanelli and Ms. Holko will provide extensive input to the site from their respective agencies. Approximately 10% of Mss. Sardanelli's and Holko's time will be devoted to this project.

The three principals will meet at least twice during the funded year to assess progress and discuss possible improvements or enhancements to the web sites and to the overall program. In addition, the Advisory Committee now in existence for MINPAS will be expanded.

A graduate student will be hired to work on the MINPAS as Project Assistant. Approximately 50% of the Project Assistant's time during the academic year will be devoted to supporting MINPAS goals and objectives. The Project Assistant will be responsible for

- X assisting in the development of the newsletter, *Pesticide Notes*
- X expanding the subscription list for *Pesticide Notes*
- X maintaining the listserv for "just-in-time" delivery of pesticide information
- X facilitating meetings and correspondence with the MINPAS Advisory Committee
- X maintaining and updating the PEAP web site
- X preparing materials for posting on the PEAP web site
- X checking and adding links on the PEAP web site

Key Personnel

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Collaborative Arrangements and Letter of Support

The key personnel listed above will collaborate with representatives from the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Future Harvest - Chesapeake Area Sustainable Agriculture (FH-CASA), and the Maryland Organic Certification Advisory Committee (MOCAC). County level participation in organized state IPM and PEAP activity is strategic for increasing stakeholder awareness and subsequent participation in the NE IMPC agenda. Therefore, besides the above described collaborative network, the opportunities for MCE county level active involvement in the NE IPMC will be vigorously pursued in the following systematic pattern:

- Meet with the MCE Assistant Dean of Programs for advisory and planning sessions.
- Regularly participate in MCE In-Service Training Programs to inform and prepare regional and county level personnel for NE IPMC participation.
- Prepare an MCE Logic Model for the Maryland IPM Program Coordinator's overall planning and implementation.
- Follow up with the MCE Administration on plans begun in 2005 to gain additional program support and to plan activities, such as workshops, that will generate team collaboration in pursuing NE IPMC activities and grant funding.