

State Network Project (SNP)

This proposal outlines how the Pennsylvania Pest Management Information Center (PMIC) can 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 serve the required functions by continuing to meet, but not limited to, the following objectives; 1) To serve as primary source for all requests regarding the use of IPM tactics and pest management practices in Pennsylvania; 2) Interact with all IPM working groups, either directly or through the support of others; 3) Maintain a Web site and other communication pathways with the Northeastern IPM Center (NIPMC) as well as other key agencies and commodity groups; and 4) Acquire funding to support data collection and other objectives of the PMIC.

Previous Work and Related Experience

Since 1997, the office currently known as the PMIC has provided many of the services requested of the SNP. The following is a list of services provided in the past that are required of the SNP.

- The PMIC Web site contains the required attributes and meets all of the Web standards required by the NIPMC. In addition, this Web site meets all of the federal accessibility guidelines. The primary purpose of the website is to provide access to crop profiles, PMSP's, regulatory decisions, pesticide use data, and other information compiled by the PMIC. The Web site can be viewed at <http://www.pested.psu.edu/infocenter/>.
- An advisory committee was initially made up of the required and recommended members, including the state IPM Coordinator, two representatives of the state regulatory agency (the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture), the Pesticide Education Coordinator, and 12 others, including research and extension specialists, commodity group representatives, and growers. In addition to the overall advisory committee, commodity subcommittees have met based on crop profiles and PMSPs.
- Served and continues to serve as a liaison among the NIPMC, The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) as a land-grant institution, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and other appropriate agencies and commodity groups.
- Solicited input from research and extension education specialists to facilitate the PMIC manager's participation in conference calls conducted by regulatory agencies for fact finding relative to continued label uses, worker practices for exposure reduction, and other pertinent information required for informed decision making.
- Served and continues to serve as the primary source of information for federal and state regulatory agencies for pesticide use, and in other cases IPM tactics in all commodities throughout the Commonwealth. The PMIC often receives requests from federal partners for information regarding pest management practices used in the Commonwealth. This information can often be provided from information that the PMIC works cooperatively with the Pennsylvania Division of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (PA-NASS). However, when necessary, the PMIC has facilitated the collection of these data from appropriate specialists and provided it to the requesting agency.
- The PMIC has had a longstanding working relationship with state and federal regulatory agencies. Representatives of the PMIC have been called upon many times in the past to

help facilitate requests of the Pennsylvania Pesticide Advisory Board (PAB). For example, last year Dr. Richards was asked to brief the PAB regarding the potential regulatory changes for Certification and Training and Worker Safety as discussed as part of the working group she serves on at the National level for EPA. Dr. Richards also serves on EPA's Certification Training Assessment Group to address issues facing the EPA regarding pest management and pesticide safety training.

- Pennsylvania stakeholders have been and continue to be represented on the Northeast Regional IPM working groups, with the following representatives:
 - Community Working Group:
 - Lyn Garling – Penn State Department of Entomology
 - Rick Johnson – Penn State Pesticide Education Program
 - Steve Jacobs – Penn State Department of Entomology
 - Livestock and Field Crop Group:
 - Lyn Garling – Penn State Department of Entomology
 - Dave Mortensen – Penn State Department of Crop and Soil Sciences
 - Vegetable Workgroup:
 - Tim Elkner – Penn State Extension Educator
- The PMIC reviews and compiles pesticide use and pest management practice statistics gathered in partnership with the PA-NASS. This information is made available to regulatory personnel when requests are made to help determine appropriate regulatory decisions.
- Coordinated the dissemination of regulatory decision making, both pending and final, through a well established, far-reaching electronic network and through the publication of eight articles in commodity group newsletters. The PMIC currently communicates regulatory decisions and requests for pest management information by sending more than an average of 15 electronic communications through a mail (list) serve to approximately 250 agricultural researchers, extension specialists, extension educators, and members of the regulatory and grower communities.
- Coordinated in-service training for extension and research specialists, and regulatory and industry partners on accessing information regarding pesticides that are registered for use in Pennsylvania. In addition, this training links affected stakeholders with state and federal partners. The goal of this in-service training was to provide more immediate access to information regarding the current registration status of pesticides in Pennsylvania and to provide a search tool that can identify treatment options for specific pest problems.
- Coordinated the distribution of funds under the subcontract provided by the NIPMC to PIs, co-PIs, and others providing services to the PMIC.
- In addition, the PMIC has successfully pursued grant funding from, and worked cooperatively with, commodity groups, EPA, and PDA to provide these and other services.

The PMIC will continue to provide these services and fulfill the requirements of an SNP by meeting, but not limiting themselves to, the following objectives:

Objective A - Improving the level of knowledge, awareness, and understanding of current grower Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices—including pesticide use—will help agencies and

others make informed regulatory decisions. Another purpose of this objective is to provide actual crop production data based on sound science and actual field use. The following four areas will be addressed as part of this objective:

- Serving as the primary information source for federal and state regulatory agencies regarding use of all IPM tactics, including pesticides.
- Serving as a liaison among the NIPMC, land-grant institution, and other key agencies in the state.
- Providing support for the Northeast Farm Managers meeting to facilitate information transfer among those who manage research facilities that can provide stakeholders with key research information, and respond to requests regarding information necessary for regulatory decision making.
- Providing information in a timely manner to commodity groups, growers, and extension and research specialists.

Procedures to accomplish Objective A:

Procedure A-1: The PMIC will continue to improve and expand when necessary its network that currently links federal partners to agricultural researchers, extension specialists, and other stakeholders so that information on pest management practices is provided in a seamless and timely manner. One important group is the Northeast Farm Managers who are the front line at research facilities that provide valuable information regarding cutting edge pest management and potential availability of pesticide alternatives.

Procedure A-2: The PMIC will coordinate and/or lead field-based reviews of FQPA and other regulatory decisions and their associated impact on stakeholders.

Procedure A-3: With material available from crop profiles, pesticide use surveys, and other available production guides and fact sheets, the PMIC can serve as the primary information source and respond in a timely manner to requests from regulatory agencies. For example, information provided may include, but is not limited to, actual crop production and IPM practices, including pesticide use practices for all commodities in the Commonwealth. In the absence of readily available information, the PMIC will contact appropriate specialists to collect the necessary data and provide the requested information to the requesting agency in a timely manner.

Procedure A-4: The PMIC will continue to serve as a liaison with commodity groups, PDA, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NAASS), and other state agencies.

Procedure A-5: The PMIC will assume the responsibility to consistently respond in a timely manner to requests for information and other assistance from IPM Working Groups (IWGs).

Procedure A-6: To ensure the availability of this information, the PMIC will compete for available funds to continue developing crop profiles, completing and facilitating the collection of pesticide use data. In the 2007 this will primarily be accomplished using funds that were leveraged with the support of last year's SNP funding.

Procedure A-7: As part of this function, a member of the PMIC will attend the PDA Pesticide Advisory Board meetings; the NIPMC convened meetings, EPA regional and national meetings, and other functions as appropriate to act as a liaison among the NIPMC, the land-grant institution, and other key agencies in the state.

Procedure A-8: Commodity organizations, growers, and extension and research specialists will be kept informed of requests for information, and the PMIC's response to such requests through an already established electronic network and through publication of articles regarding regulatory decision making in appropriate commodity organizations' newsletters. The PMIC's advisory committee will review the appropriateness of members on the current electronic network and suggest new members to include. The PMIC staff will annually update this electronic network to ensure accuracy of electronic mail addresses. Where possible and appropriate, members of the electronic network will be encouraged to forward information provided through their own previously established networks. One area for improvement during the next grant period is to work with commodity groups, and corresponding specialists, to more closely target specific crops. In addition, by working with commodity groups and publicizing the availability of these mailing lists to their members will provide the opportunity to broaden existing distribution lists.

Procedure A-9: Finally, over the next year, as the deadline for decision making under the FQPA draws to a close, clear and concise information must be readily available to educate growers and all applicators regarding label changes and new product development. Educational materials will be developed and presented as appropriate to commodity organizations, grower groups, extension and research specialists, and regulatory agencies promoting the function and importance of the SPN. This includes both the development of regulatory update programs and the critical review of similar programs developed by outside sources. Historically, the PMIC has produced several educational materials annually, either PowerPoint presentations, fact sheets, or by using other alternative media. Upon request, the PMIC manager has served as an invited speaker at commodity and other stakeholder meetings to present current regulatory information and appropriate update information.

Objective B - Increase input from stakeholders attending already existing functional advisory committee meetings and develop ongoing interaction with IWGs.

Procedures to accomplish Objective B:

Procedure B-1: Even though an advisory group is no longer required, the PI will continue to attend the Pesticide Education Program and the Pennsylvania IPM Program advisory committee meetings. Members of these groups can provide valuable insight for priorities and needs and serve as a network to accomplish the other goals of this proposal. The primary function of attendance at these advisory committee meetings is to identify and prioritize critical needs and to evaluate activities of the SNP. An additional facet of this objective is to bring together key individuals to form partnerships and collaborations that will facilitate and promote more informed decision making at all levels. This group also can facilitate the review of memberships of IWGs to ensure that Pennsylvania is adequately represented and that the IWGs are addressing issues important to the Commonwealth. The structure of these advisory committees also will help the PMIC facilitate the effective engagement of stakeholders with appropriate IWGs and other components of the

NIPMC. In addition, when necessary, the PA-SNP will engage a broader range of stakeholders, through small group meetings held in conjunction with larger grower meetings.

Procedure B-2: Every effort will continue to be made to reach out to representatives other than those who serve on the above mentioned advisory committees including environmental and consumer advocacy groups, sustainable agriculture perspectives, and representatives of nontraditional agricultural areas. The most efficient way to accomplish this would be through an electronic method of communicating to encourage more frequent and open communication. Electronic communication, conference calls, and sub-commodity meetings will be used as necessary to facilitate this contact.

Objective C - To develop and maintain an information network to communicate with stakeholders regarding timely pest management information and priorities to be considered.

Procedures to accomplish Objective C:

Procedure C-1: Although it will no longer be required under this RFA, the most efficient way to meet this objective will be by providing access to crop profiles, pesticide use data, and regulatory decisions through a user-friendly Web site that meets all of the criteria specified by the NIPMC. PMIC's current Web site is in compliance with these criteria and with tactics outlined in this RFA. Information on this page will include, but will not be limited to the following:

- Crop profiles
- Information regarding IPM practices used by growers
- Pesticide use information
- SPMPs
- Pesticide regulatory issues
- Crop production guides
- Information from IWGs
- Links to PA IPM Problem Solver (which, as in the past, will be funded in part through funds requested in this proposal)
- Links to the NIPMC
- Links to regulatory agencies
- Links to pesticide registration, labeling, and MSDS information
- Links to a public version of NSPIRS

Procedure C-2: This 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.

Objective D - To acquire funding necessary to support data collection regarding IPM practices, including pesticide use surveys, and to provide support for qualified individuals or groups seeking and receiving funds.

Procedures to accomplish Objective D:

Procedure D-1: The PMIC will solicit and acquire funding from outside sources to help facilitate data collection to have necessary information available to respond in a timely manner to requests from regulatory decision makers. The PMIC will solicit and facilitate applications from qualified individuals or groups under other project types in this RFA and will support and facilitate the efforts of qualified individuals or groups seeking and receiving funds.

Procedure D-2: To facilitate the availability of the information frequently requested by regulatory agencies, the PMIC also will continue to pursue additional necessary funds, other than those awarded through this RFA. These funds will be solicited from partner agencies such as Region III EPA, PDA, and commodity organizations. Additional funds are necessary to collect data to prepare crop profiles, conduct or facilitate the collection of pesticide use surveys, and conduct or facilitate the collection and dissemination of information regarding IPM practices used by growers. Finally, the PMIC solicits funds that make financial support for specialists to provide data that is as close to actual crop production practices as possible.

Procedure D-3: Ongoing contractual obligations are currently in place with PDA, EPA, and USDA that provide funds to facilitate, in part, accomplishing this objective.

Procedure D-4: In addition, through an already established electronic network, the PMIC will continue to forward information regarding funding opportunities through this RFA and others as appropriate. In addition, the PMIC will solicit and when possible facilitate applications from qualified individuals or groups.

Procedure D-5: The PMIC has the structure and support staff to participate in the distribution of all subcontracts between NIPMC as outlined in this RFA and currently has a fiscally accountable structure in place to pass funds granted by the NIPMC to other Penn State entities.

Probable Duration, Evaluation Plans, Cooperation and Institutional Units Involved and Key Personnel, Collaborative Agreements, and Budget: Probable Duration:

In consistency with the duration described in Section II of the RFA, the probable duration of the SNP will be a minimum of 1 year. Upon the anticipated successful completion of that year, a detailed progress report and a proposal for further funding will be submitted.

Evaluation Plan:

The primary method to evaluate the progress of the PMIC in meeting the objectives of this proposal will be by review of the program conducted by members of the Pesticide Education and IPM Programs existing advisory committees. As stated previously, input from these advisory committees will provide direction and prioritize the work of the PMIC regarding crop profiles and PMSP participation, development of educational materials and review proposed PA-NASS IPM/Pesticide Use Surveys. The committee also will evaluate the PMIC's ability to meet the priorities and to review crop profiles and educational materials developed by the PMIC. The following are several specific measures that will be used to evaluate the progress toward meeting the objectives:

Objective A– To serve as the primary source for all requests regarding the use of pest management practices in Pennsylvania.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Timely processing and response to requests for information regarding pesticide use relative to specific crops and label uses under review
- Availability of IPM practices and pesticide use information
- Level of involvement of the PI with commodity groups, state and national regulatory programs

Objective B – Increase input from stakeholders by participation in Pesticide Education and IPM program advisory committees and ongoing interaction with IPM workgroups (IWG’s).

Evaluation Criteria:

- Attendance at Pesticide Education and IPM programs advisory committee meeting.
- Participation by the PI or support of participation by others in IWG meetings and activities.
- Availability of electronic communication with advisory committee members and IWG’s regarding priorities and evaluation of materials developed.

Objective C– Maintain a Web site and other communication pathways with the Northeastern IPM Center (NIPMC) as well as other key agencies and commodity groups.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Availability of current IPM data, including pesticide use surveys, regulatory decisions and other information necessary for pest management decision making.
- Evaluations of presentations given by the PI to increase the awareness of stakeholders regarding pest management practices, pesticide safety, regulatory decisions and other pertinent IPM information.

Objective D – Acquire funding necessary to support data collection regarding IPM practices, including pesticide use surveys, and to provide support for qualified individuals or groups seeking and receiving funds.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Successful acquisitions of funding
- Documentation of efforts to promote available funding, and of support provided

Project time line

Attend meetings of the PEP and IPM Advisory Committees: April 2008, October 2008
 Review of PA-NASS IPM Tactics/Pesticide Use Survey..... April 2008
 Review of IWGs priorities and their benefits to the state May 2008
 Educational materials available for Advisory Committee’s review September 2008
 Review of all email listsOngoing
 Attend relevant meetings and present informationOngoing
 Develop at least 3 newsletter articles and three educational materialsOngoing
 Review of regulatory decisions.....Ongoing
 Revise Web site to reflect new projects
 and databasesOngoing as information becomes available
 Response to requests from regulatory decision makers
 regarding IPM practices or pesticide useOngoing
 Dissemination of regulatory decisions and other pertinent information
 through electronic and other media.....Ongoing
 Interaction with Northeastern IWGs.....Ongoing on an as-needed basis
 Providing detailed accounting reports regarding funding to

others receiving support under this RFA On an as-needed basis

Cooperators and Institutional Units:

These institutional units each have a long history of cooperation with the PMIC and have expressed an interest in renewing their longstanding commitment to the program's success:

The Pennsylvania Department will continue to provide funding to support the activities of the program and work cooperatively with the program to respond to regulatory requests for information, process Section 18 exemptions, and coordinate communication with PMIC stakeholders.

Penn State Department of Plant Pathology - Scientists in this department will assist in responding to requests for information to facilitate informed regulatory decision making and work cooperatively with the SNP to provide stakeholders with timely information regarding emerging pest management issues.

Penn State Department of Entomology - Scientists in this department will assist in responding to requests for information to facilitate informed regulatory decision making and work cooperatively with the SNP to provide stakeholders with timely information regarding emerging pest management issues.

Penn State Department of Horticulture- Scientists in this department will assist in responding to requests for information to facilitate informed regulatory decision making and work cooperatively with the SNP to provide stakeholders with timely information regarding emerging pest management issues.

Penn State Department of Crop and Soil Sciences - Scientists in this department will assist in responding to requests for information to facilitate informed regulatory decision making and work cooperatively with the SNP to provide stakeholders with timely information regarding emerging pest management issues.

The Pennsylvania Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistic Service- This office will continue to provide necessary statistics to answer regulatory inquiries regarding pesticide use, pest management practices, and economic impact data for Pennsylvania crops.

The Penn State Pesticide Education Program - This program will continue to provide support staff necessary for the efficient function of the PMIC, which includes but is not limited to staff to facilitate the distribution of subcontracts between the NIPMC and others as outlined in this RFA.

The Penn State Urban Pesticide Initiative - This program will aid in stakeholder outreach through instructor-led consumer information sessions and through technical assistance for creation of educational materials.

Key Personnel

Kerry Hoffman-Richards – Co-Lead Investigator, Project Manager, Federal Partner Coordinator,
Stakeholder Outreach Coordinator
Senior Research Associate
Penn State or The Pennsylvania State University

Collaborative Arrangements

Collaborative arrangements have been in place with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) and the Pennsylvania Division of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (PA-NASS) since the inception of the Pennsylvania State Network Project (PA-SNP) and the Pest Management Information Center (PMIC). Historically the arrangement with the PA-NASS provides the ability to access current regulatory information and for the Principal Investigator to serve as a liaison with PA-NASS. The money provided from the funding of the PA-SNP allows the PMIC to leverage additional funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to collect data, regarding the use of IPM practices, in addition to that which is normally included in their survey.