

## **Northeastern IPM Center – IPM Partnership Grants – 2009 – Proposal Statement of Work**

**PD:** Amy Brown

**Project Title:** Facilitating Informed Decision-Making on Maryland Pesticides

### **Background**

Maryland has a diverse agricultural base requiring an array of pest management strategies to control a wide variety of pests. Pesticides and other pest management approaches have inherent risks and benefits. Both policy-makers and growers need information on the availability, reliability, advantages, and disadvantages of various approaches. It is essential that state and federal authorities be supplied with sound information in order to ensure that growers continue to have the safest and most effective tools and materials available to them. Increased public understanding of the real risks and benefits associated with pesticide use is critical to making informed decisions. Increasingly, EPA and USDA rely on State Network Projects (SNP) for fast, science-based input on pesticide-related decisions and other questions surrounding pest management. The Maryland Pesticide Education and Assessment Program (MPEAP) has served since 1982 as the primary source for information on pesticide policy at the state and federal levels, as well as on use, usage, economic and social benefits, and economic, environmental, and health risks. Since the inception of the concept of the SNP, MPEAP has functioned as Maryland's SNP.

### **Approach and Procedures**

Objective 1: Answer queries posed by federal regulatory agencies regarding the use of pesticides and other IPM tactics throughout Maryland.

MPEAP 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. MPEAP will consistently respond in a timely fashion to requests for information from these agencies.

Upon receiving a request from NE IPMC or USDA for information about a particular pesticide used in the state, the MPEAP Coordinator will direct the request to appropriate experts in the state. Depending on the nature of the request, these experts will comprise state and county Extension specialists, agents, and educators; private consultants; state agency representatives; or other knowledgeable contacts. At minimum, experts will be asked to indicate whether (1) the pesticide is not important to Maryland agriculture or other interests; (2) the pesticide may be important, but the expert is unable to provide a proper assessment within the given time frame; or (3) the individual does not have the expertise required to make an assessment of the pesticide's importance to Maryland agriculture or other interests. Experts will be requested to respond directly to the primary source with a copy to the MPEAP Coordinator. Experts will also be asked to send a copy to intermediates in the process, such as representatives of the NE IPMC, if expressly requested by the Agency.

Objective 2: Inform Maryland stakeholders about pesticide-related regulations and policies.

The MSNP Director will serve as liaison between state stakeholders and federal and state regulatory authorities. Maryland interests will be represented at meetings and discussions attended by the Director in this role. However, this will be limited to events attended through financial support from non-SNP project sources as travel is not budgeted through this grant application. MPEAP will distribute pertinent and timely information on pesticides including changes in regulations, policies, acceptable use patterns, etc. as well as notice of opportunity to comment on actions under consideration by federal agencies and institutions. In addition to information supplied through NE IPMC, at her discretion the MPEAP Coordinator will distribute additional information gained through various sources including listservs of which she is a member, meetings attended, newsletters, email communications from knowledgeable experts, or other sources.

- One primary means by which information flows through MSNP is the *Just-In-Time (JIT)* ListServ, which distributes notices to Maryland stakeholders on pesticide issues. Subscribers to the *JIT* service are notified of upcoming pesticide policy-related meetings; requests for comment on proposed actions such as cancellations, restrictions, or changes in registrations; and other time-sensitive pesticide issues. Being on the *JIT* Listserv maximizes the time subscribers have to plan for meetings, learn about possible actions, or prepare comments.
- A second primary means by which information is distributed is through In-Service Pesticide Training for Extension field faculty held annually in September. The MSNP Director hosts the meeting and serves as the primary instructor. The purpose of the In-Service Training is to ensure that Extension personnel have the most current information on pesticides, pest management, and alternative strategies before they begin planning grower meetings, plant clinics, recertification meetings, and other opportunities for interaction with producers, dealers, crop consultants, etc. Information and training tools presented during In-Service help Extension educators prepare to keep their own clientele informed. Field faculty offer training sessions and various meetings for growers and other Extension clientele during the late fall and winter months when field work is not ongoing. Extension educators use these meetings to educate clientele on new pesticides and/or new uses; new alternatives to control pests; new pest management thresholds, sampling techniques, and strategies; and new policies on pesticides and pest management. In-Service Training sessions serve as a means to distribute new and revised leaflets, bulletins, teaching tools, etc. so that Extension faculty can transmit the information easily to their own clientele.
- The third primary means by which pesticide-related information is disseminated is through posting to the PEAP website at <http://pesticide.umd.edu>. This will include new and revised publications, directions on how to subscribe to the *Just-In-Time* Listserv, links to appropriate pesticide resources, and other pertinent information.

A student will be employed part-time to assist the MSNP PD with maintenance of the *JIT* list, preparation of materials and arrangements for the annual In-Service Pesticide Training,

and maintenance of the PEAP website.

Objective 3: Help process, when necessary, subcontracts between the Northeastern IPM Center and other entities of the University of Maryland.

To minimize total indirect costs, MPEAP will process subcontracts between the Northeastern IPM Center and other entities of the SNP leader's institution. The Department of Entomology business office will facilitate the process.

**Interactions and Collaborations**

MPEAP has an especially close tie with the Maryland Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program. MPEAP will continue to serve as the link between the NE IPMC, the grower community, the land grant institution at large, Extension and state government programs on pesticides and IPM, and other key institutions, agencies, and organizations.

Information supplied by Maryland experts will be submitted to NE IPMC and may be shared with other SNPs throughout the Northeast region. The states in the Mid-Atlantic region have maintained historically close ties through the SNPs. Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, New Jersey, and New York will continue to cooperate closely. The PDs of these SNPs will meet during the biannual Certification and Training Workshop in South Carolina in August 2009 to discuss common issues. In addition, these states will advise each other of opportunities for collaboration and solicit participation in ongoing or proposed research and implementation projects related to the goals of NE IPMC.

**Expected Impacts**

1. Federal agencies will make informed decisions on pesticide policies and regulations.
2. Maryland stakeholders will be able to plan for impending changes in pesticide availability, regulation, and policies.
3. States in the Northeast region will have access to Maryland information through the NE IPMC.
4. Indirect costs of grants from NE IPMC will be minimized.