

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

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Project Title: 2009 PRONewEngland Pest Management Network

I. WHY FUNDS ARE NEEDED

PRONewEngland's role in IPM Planning and Assessment Documents

Pesticide regulations made at the federal level affect important industries in New England as well as the 14 million people who live in the region. It is important to these industries and to these citizens to have their interests represented in federal regulatory decisions. PRONewEngland serves as a source of unbiased information on pest management practices in the region. We conduct statistically valid surveys, create profiles reviewed by Extension specialists, and involve participation of IPM practitioners with intimate knowledge of real world practices and needs in developing strategic plans. This information is provided to EPA and USDA for their use in regulatory decisions, and is used as references by Extension and research projects.

The New England states are individually small, with enough environmental and biological similarity to work as a single regional entity. These activities are more efficient and economically justifiable at the regional than at the individual state level. However, unless it is someone's duty to assist with coordination in each state, a regional approach can be difficult. Acquiring mailing lists for surveys, knowing who to contact for state specific information on pest management practices for a crop profile, and finding growers to participate in a PMSP meeting are much better handled by someone with in-state connections. The PRONewEngland liaisons are the in-state link to accomplish these tasks.

PRONewEngland as a regional communication hub for IPM

For help with a variety of common problems, more people turn to the internet than any other source to get information and resources (Estabrook et al. 2007). Increasing client access to reliable IPM information through web pages appears numerous times in Northeastern IPM Center priority lists. Google and other web search engines do not distinguish the true and tested from the inaccurate or biased. As one web analyst stated: "The valuable gets lost in the dross ... It's up to the reader to separate out the dregs. What's missing ... are genuine editors." Extension in each of the small New England states cannot provide expertise and programs to address the full gamut of pest issues. The pest management information on web sites of the six New England Land Grant universities and state agencies varies in coverage, quality, navigation, and style. This gives the public a balkanized interface to look for regionally specific and reliable IPM assistance online. The PRONewEngland.org web site provides a single coherent access

point to the best IPM resources among the six New England states, with additional original content.

The site consists of topic and state oriented directories of pest management resources gleaned from the web sites of the individual New England state programs; and University and state government contact lists by pest topic for each state. Users can do keyword searches within the PRONewEngland database of currently available pest management online fact sheets from New England University and state agency web sites to find the documents that address their specific needs. In addition to the New England content, the site has links to the best available resources on Federal and other web sites outside the region. With 2,612 pages and 24,255 external links, (plus the 1,099 linked documents in the factsheet database), PRONewEngland, like any website of comparable scale, requires ongoing maintenance as content moves or disappears, and new content becomes available.

Project administration

PRONewEngland also serves an administrative role by handling all Northeastern IPM Center (NEIPMC) funds to the six New England states within a single bundled contract with Penn State. This reduces indirect costs, leaving more funds available for enhancing and promoting IPM implementation in the Northeast. Administrative tasks, including proposal and contract preparation; invoice and budget monitoring; coordination meetings within New England and with the Northeastern IPM Center Steering Committee; and compliance checking for New England crop profile and strategic plans before submission to the National IPM Center occupied approximately 36 staff days in 2008, with a similar effort expected for 2009.

II. WHAT WE WILL DO

State liaisons

State liaison duties will be conducted by Candace Bartholomew (CT), Pat Vittum and Natalia Clifton (MA), James Dill and Glen Koehler (ME), Bill Lord (NH), Steve Alm and Margaret Siligato (RI) and Ann Hazelrigg (VT). All of these PRONewEngland state liaisons hold positions in Pesticide Safety Education or IPM program delivery and have the educational background and work experience to be familiar with the pest management practices and community in their state. Through their other duties they regularly interact with Extension and state agency personnel and other pest management stakeholders. State liaisons agree to respond to all pesticide queries received from Northeastern IPM Center, EPA and USDA, and to provide updates for the PRONewEngland.org contact directories within two weeks of receiving a query or request for contact updates.

The Christmas tree survey and the Bramble PMSP documents (PMSP meeting already held) will be completed by June 2009. If the pumpkin pest management tactic survey and Christmas tree crop profile are funded (separate proposals), state liaisons will assist by providing mailing lists, and will conduct or delegate to another qualified person in their state, document reviews to insure applicability for their state within two weeks of request to do so. If the Pest ID / IPM promotion cards (separate proposal) are funded, state liaisons agree to assist in distributing 8000 cards (1000 sets x 8 different cards per set) to interested citizens in their state within eighteen months of receiving the cards. State liaisons also agree to participate in two PRONewEngland coordination video conferences during 2009.

PRONewEngland.org web site

The PRONewEngland.org web site will be maintained throughout 2009, and expanded to include new content from New England university and state agency web sites. An improved site search engine will be implemented by July 31, 2008. Site design and navigation will be reviewed with UMaine Extension web designer and usability expert Cindy Eves-Thomas by August 31, 2008.

Project administration

Co-PDs James Dill and Glen Koehler will provide oversight for ongoing and newly funded PRONewEngland activities (tracking progress and checking that all survey, profile and strategic plan products comply with PRONewEngland protocols); supervise contract establishment and invoice oversight, and at end of term, contract closure; and be responsible for ongoing project coordination and cohesion, including organizing two video conferences for state liaisons in 2009. James Dill will participate in Northeastern IPM Center Steering Committee meetings.

III. Expected Impacts

Between October 1, 2007 and September 30, 2008, the PRONewEngland.org website had 566,362 hits; 226,557 page views; and 131,080 visitor sessions. We expect increased use in 2009. State liaison cooperation and project oversight will allow for efficient completion of accurate New England pest management survey, profile, and strategic plans for use by policy makers, Extension, and research staff; and to serve as a resource for public education to increase understanding and dispel myths about pest management in New England.

Estabrook, L, E. Witt, and L. Rainie; *Information searches that solve problems*, Pew Internet & American Life Project, December 2007. http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/231/report_display.asp