

**Northeastern IPM Center – IPM Partnership Grants – 2009 – Proposal  
Statement of Work (SNPs and Minigrants) or Project Description (other Project Types)**

**PD: Patricia J. Vittum**

**Project Title:** New England Pumpkin Pest Management Tactic Survey

Project Category: IPM Planning and Assessment Documents

Project Summary: Pumpkins are a significant crop in New England. According to the 2002 Agricultural Census there are 6529 acres grown in New England and pumpkins are ranked as the third mostly widely grown vegetable in the region. Integrated pest management tactic surveys, crop files and strategic plans have been conducted and developed for many of the widely grown and important crops in the region, including apples, pears, peaches, strawberries, brambles, winter squash, and sweet corn. However similar efforts have not been conducted for pumpkins. Many diseases found in pumpkins have been listed at priority pests by the Northeast IPM Vegetable Working Group. In order to better understand the extent of the disease problem as well as other problem pests, and to determine the adoption of IPM practices, we proposed to develop and conduct a Dillman method integrated pest management tactic survey for pumpkins that can be the first step to complete a New England Pumpkin Crop Profile and Strategic plan.

**Background and Justification**

Pumpkins are a significant crop in New England. According to the 2002 Agricultural Census there are 6529 acres grown in New England and pumpkins are ranked as the third mostly widely grown vegetable in the region. Integrated pest management tactic surveys, crop files and strategic plans have been conducted and developed for many of the widely grown and important crops in the region, including apples, pears, peaches, strawberries, brambles, winter squash, and sweet corn. However similar efforts have not been conducted for pumpkins. Many diseases found in pumpkins have been listed at priority pests by the Northeast IPM Vegetable Working Group. In order to better understand the extent of the disease problem as well as other problem pests, and to determine the adoption of IPM practices, we proposed to develop and conduct a Dillman method integrated pest management tactic survey for pumpkins that can be the first step to complete a New England Pumpkin Crop Profile and Strategic plan.

**Objectives and Anticipated Impacts**

This survey will provide a statistically valid census of pest management concerns and practices by pumpkin producers in New England. The data collected will help vegetable producer associations, state agencies, USDA and EPA identify the IPM priorities for the pumpkin industry. Until we know how and if growers are managing pests, and what their significant pest concerns are, it is not possible to develop measures to increase food safety, protect the environment, and to direct research and Extension efforts. This survey can provide much of that missing information.

## **Approach and Procedures**

Massachusetts has developed expertise and a track record for conducting statistically rigorous pest management surveys. Natalia Clifton, will develop the pumpkin pest issues questionnaire. PRONewEngland state liaisons and industry experts will provide feedback which will be incorporated into a final version. Clifton will manage the Dillman process mailings, data entry and summary. Procedures for all of these steps are outlined in detail in the PRONewEngland Pest management Network survey template (Koehler, 2006a). Those procedures are based on survey systems developed to insure unbiased sample populations, high return rates, and statistically valid results (Dillman, 2000).

## **EVALUATION PLANS**

The pumpkin survey will be conducted in summer-fall 2009. The questionnaire, tabulated results, and executive summary responses will be made available through the PRONewEngland.org website.

## **Cooperation and Key Personnel Involved**

The ProNewEngland team (New England states) will provide review the survey and provide mailing list for pumpkins growers.

## **Natalia Clifton**

- Pumpkin IPM tactics survey: develop questionnaire, define mailing lists, and manage four-step Dillman mailings in compliance with the NEPMNet survey template.
- Data entry, analysis, results tables, and summary report for Christmas tree IPM tactics survey.

## **Literature Cited**

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