



July 2004

Director's Notes

With this month's newsletter, I'd like to start a "Director's Notes" section to highlight Center news and upcoming events.

- The Directors of all four Regional IPM Centers met in Washington, June 15-17, with reports from CSREES, EPA, OPMP, the National Plant Diagnostic Network and the National IPM Committee. Minutes from the meeting will be available shortly at <http://www.ipmcenters.org/Intranet/meetings.cfm>.
- Jim VanKirk has accepted the position of Associate Director for IPM and will join us this summer. We are truly excited about having someone with his background and experience joining us, in spite of his accent and choice of baseball teams.
- The Scientific Review Panel met and made recommendations for funding of State Contacts, Crop Profiles and PMSPs, and Special Projects. Short descriptions of the approved projects are the subject of much of this newsletter.
- Unfortunately, CSREES has announced a 10 percent cut in funding for next year. However, we hope to maintain present levels next year with holdover funds and monies from other sources.
- The Center will be moving in September to new facilities on the NCSU Centennial Campus. These facilities include more office space, a real server room, and a conference room large enough to handle most of our meetings.

-Ron Stinner, Director

Southern Region Awards Center Grants

The Southern Region IPM Center is pleased to announce it has awarded its first set of Center grants for 2004. After the Scientific Review Panel met in June, the Center awarded more than \$520,000 to fund 24 programs across the Southern region. Funded programs fall into one of three categories: State Contacts, Crop Profiles and Pest Management Strategic Plans, or Special Projects.

State Contacts

Funding was available for up to \$25,000 per state or territory on an annual basis to fund a State Contact. State Contacts serve as the primary contact for regulatory questions related to pest management and pesticides, and are responsible for establishing and maintaining a stakeholder network to develop state priorities. In addition, state contacts are responsible for maintaining a project website and provide oversight for the development of Crop Profiles and Pest Management Strategic Plans.

States approved for funding for state contacts include: Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Florida, and Texas.

Crop Profiles and Pest Management Strategic Plans (PMSPs)

The Southern Region allotted a total of \$150,000 to support the development of Crop Profiles and PMSPs, with funding available for one year.

Crop Profiles are searchable descriptions of crop production and pest management recommendations compiled by state and commodity. They describe the production practices for a commodity, the pest problems associated with its production and the pest management practices (both chemical and non-chemical) currently used to control the pest.

PMSPs address the pest management needs and priorities for individual commodities and are focused on commodity production in a particular state or region. The plans take a pest-by-pest approach to identify the current management practices (both chemical and non-chemical), and those under development. In addition, plans state the commodity's priorities for research, regulatory activities and education/training programs needed for transition to alternative pest management practices.

States approved for funding of Crop Profiles and PMSPs include: North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, and Oklahoma. (continued on page 2...)

In this issue:

1

Director's Notes

Southern Region Awards
Center Grants

3

June Regional Director's
Meeting

4

Jim VanKirk Joins the
Center as Associate
Director

Northeast IPM Center
Website Gets a Facelift

5

Profile: Organic
Volunteers

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Center Grants continued from page 1...

Special Projects

This year the Southern Region IPM Center set aside \$150,000 for projects that address novel approaches or critical IPM issues of regional or national significance. These projects needed to incorporate several of the following characteristics: applicability to wider area, demonstrated funds leveraging, emerging issues, innovative partnerships, not currently funded by other programs, new tools and delivery systems, entrepreneurial, generally start up or unique opportunity, fits mission of center, includes development of IPM elements, and incorporates short-term "planning grants."

Special Projects approved for funding include the following:

"Photo Guide of Pest and Beneficial Insects of Corn, Soybean, and Wheat in the Mid-Atlantic Region," (Ames Herbert and Sean Malone, Virginia Tech University)



Accurate identification of insect pest and beneficial species is essential to practicing IPM. However, proper identification of insect pests continues to challenge growers and agriservice personnel involved in pest management in field crops. For example, green cloverworm larvae are often confused with soybean looper larvae. Some clientele have trouble differentiating armyworms from corn earworms, or bean leaf beetles (a pest) from lady beetles (a beneficial).

Inaccurate pest identifications such as these lead to unnecessary or off-label pesticide applications. The proposed insect photo guide will provide clear photos of approximately 40 insect pest and 10 beneficial species of corn, soybean, and wheat specific to the Mid-Atlantic region. Identification keys will be included for easy separation of some of the most commonly misidentified species.

Development of Southern Region IPM Organic Tree Fruit Working Group (Donn Johnson, Curt Rom and Jennie Popp, University of Arkansas)

The Southern region has a growing organic tree fruit industry that consists of many small acreage fruit and vegetable farms, and many farmers sell through a growing network of local farmers' markets and organic produce retailers. The ultimate goal of this special project will be to organize a Southern Region Working Group for Organic Tree Fruit Production that would share

insights and promote submission of grant proposals that address the prioritized needs for organic tree fruit research, extension and demonstration and information transfer system that are economically and environmentally viable.

Assessing the Pre-season Risk of Thrips Vectors of Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus in Solanaceous Crops (David Riley, Robert McPherson, Alex Csinos and A. Culpepper, University of Georgia Research Foundation, Inc.)

Tomato spotted wilt virus (TSWV), causes severe yearly losses, up to \$100 million in certain years, to crops in the Southeast including tomato, pepper, potato, tobacco, peanut, and ornamentals. The goal of this project is to develop a system for predicting the timing and relative intensity of TSWV spread from overwintering hosts into susceptible crops in the spring. Such a preventative system would allow growers to adjust their selection of TSWV management tactics to the intensity of the TSWV problem and thereby avoid incurring unnecessary management expenses.

Survey of Pest Management Practices in Arkansas Schools (John Hopkins, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service)

Currently, there is no specific program promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Arkansas in schools. Survey results from Alabama, Florida, Nebraska, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania indicate that most schools rely on pesticide applications to manage their pest problems. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency promotes School IPM programs as a means to protect human health by suppressing pests that vector diseases, reduce losses from pest damage, reduce environmental pollution, and reduce human exposure to pesticides. The primary goals of this project are to establish a relationship with key school officials in Arkansas and encourage their support in promoting School IPM, to conduct a survey to assess current pest control measures and awareness of IPM in the state, and to identify schools that would be supportive of implementing a "Voluntary School IPM Program."



Mosquitoes pose many health risks to individuals and animals in Texas. Researchers at the Texas Experimental Station are hoping to reduce these risks.

Development of a Mosquito Abatement Program in Texas: Monitoring and Predicting Insecticide Resistance (Jeffery Tomberlin, Jimmy Olson and Patricia Pietrantonio, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station)

West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis and canine

heartworm are just a few diseases of concern to Texans, either personally or to their animals. All of these diseases are transmitted or vectored by mosquitoes that occur in both rural and urban areas of Texas. Reducing risk of these diseases to Texans and their companion animals will require effective management of their mosquito vectors by all public and private organizations, while reducing insecticide resistance within those mosquito populations being suppressed. The goal of this special project will be to focus on sampling *Cx. quinquefasciatus* populations being suppressed with malathion, resmethrin and other adulticides and determining proper timing in alternating available insecticides available for controlling adult mosquitoes in order to minimize the development of resistance in the resident populations.

Breeding an Economically Viable Honey Bee for Reduced Chemical Beekeeping (Keith Delaplane, University of Georgia Research Foundation)

A case is made that the U.S. beekeeping industry has been slow to adopt pest-resistant honey bee stocks, preferring instead to depend on synthetic in-hive pesticides which raises risks of contaminated honey. This proposal seeks to develop a genetically improved bee stock that will encourage beekeepers to reduce their use of in-hive chemicals, lowering consumer risk of contaminated honey. The products of the program will be a demonstration of the techniques necessary to develop a bee that is both pest resistant and economically viable, and an actual bee stock that will be made available to the industry.



Many beekeepers have been dependent on risky synthetic in-hive pesticides. The University of Georgia Research Foundation is hoping more beekeepers will adopt pest-resistant honey bee stocks.

Integrated Pest Management of Grasshoppers (Orthoptera : Acrididae) in Texas High Plains Cotton (Steven Davis, Texas Cooperative Extension)

Grasshoppers are one of the most detrimental pests to cotton and other crop production sites in Texas. In order to aid in the reduction of the threat of insect damage and reduce the use of broad-spectrum insecticides, the Texas Cooperative Extension (TCE), through their local Extension Agents - IPM, will survey, collect specimens and record grasshopper population data regarding species emerging from CRP acres adjacent from high value production fields. In addition to (continued on page 6)

June Regional Director's Meetings



Regional IPM Center Directors met in Washington, DC on Tuesday, June 15 through Thursday, June 17 for their semi-annual Center Director's meeting. The meetings were held at the USDA/CSREES building with members from Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN) and E-Extension on hand to discuss the latest updates with their programs and organizations. Steve Morrill, David Stangel, Arty Williams, and Jonathan Becker represented the EPA, Kitty Cardwell and Jim Green gave updates for the NPDN, and Sally Rockey discussed the advances being made in the E-Extension program.

Tuesday's meetings started off the day with an update on Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP) from Al Jennings and a CSREES update from Mike Fitzner. Some updates included information about the new CSREES website and announcing the 5th National IPM Symposium scheduled for April 4-6, 2006 in St. Louis. In addition, Amy Rhodes will be joining the CSREES staff at the end of the month to work within their communications and public relations department.

Following CSREES, each Center gave an update on the latest news within their region. Within the Western IPM Center (WIPMC), a RFA for Critical Issues was released on June 11 with funding available for up to \$300,000. Proposals for this RFA are due August 19. The WIPMC Advisory and Steering Committees met on April 27 and 28 and discussed adding critical issues to the RFP in the general and specific/current categories. The Steering Committee also discussed the FY2005 WIPMC conference, with a tentative theme of IPM and Water Issues, that will most likely be held in February or March 2005. The WIPMC has also completed, started or planned several Pest Management Strategic Plans such as celery and citrus in California, macadamia nut and watercress in Hawaii, alfalfa seed in Idaho, PNW beef cattle in Montana, PNW onion in Oregon and winegrape in Washington.

The North Central IPM Center (NCIPMC) updates included the release of a RFA to establish Working Groups on May 11 with a proposal deadline of August 30. Up to six Working Groups will be established in 2004 and awarded up to \$30,000 each. Other updates include the NC IPM Extension Coordinators taking on the duties and serving as state contacts for the NC IPM Center beginning October 1, 2004. The NCIPMC hopes this will help improve coordination of state IPM programs within the region and will increase the level of competitive funding available for region IPM Working Groups and new and emerging IPM issues. The NCIPMC has also created and re-printed many of their publications including their National Pest Alerts. The newest National Pest Alert features *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 on geranium, potato, tomato and peppers. Southern Oak Death was reprinted to meet demand and Soybean Rust was slightly revised and reprinted. In addition to the National Pest Alerts, the first edition of the NCIPMC newsletter, Connection, was printed for June 2004.

The Northeast IPM Center (NEIPMC) recently awarded partnership grants across the region. These grants funded State Network Projects, Surveys, Crop Profiles and Strategic Plans, IPM Working Group Priorities, Regional Publications, and Critical and Emerging Issues. The Partnership Grants program awarded more than \$550,000 to support 21 projects. In addition, the redesigned NEIPMC website was posted this month to better serve each of its audiences. The new website includes information for IPM users, such as growers, and menus for researchers, Extension staff and regulators. The Southern Region IPM Center and the North Central IPM Center will follow their lead with similar designs and changes to their websites. The NEIPMC is also planning a Northeast Regional IPM Conference to be held in Manchester, NH on March 15-16, 2005. More information about the conference is available at http://NortheastIPM.org/conference2005_index.cfm.

The Southern Region IPM Center (SRIPMC) updates included a summary of the meetings with their Advisory Council and Steering Committee members held April 28-30. The SRIPMC also awarded its first set of Center Grants with \$520,000 funding 24 programs across the region including State Contacts, Crop Profiles and Pest Management Strategic Plans, and Special Projects. The Southern Region has also increased their publications with a new SRIPMC tri-fold brochure and four editions of their monthly newsletter complete. The biggest change and addition to the Southern Region is Jim VanKirk joining the staff as the new Associate Director. VanKirk will begin with the Center before the beginning of September.

Other updates for the first day of meetings included updates from the EPA's Voluntary Pesticide Programs; Risk Mitigation Measures; Registration Review Program; PMSP Working Groups; PMAP Transition to Centers; National Plant Diagnostic Network Update and a review of the October 2, 2003 Center Directors and National IPM Committee Meeting.

Wednesday's meetings included an EPA update from Jonathan Becker, and a discussion session with Jim Green, NPDN, about utilizing Master Gardeners to help manage the Sudden Oak Death outbreak. Other topics included updates from Endangered Species; E-Extension; CAB International and a discussion about Center Communication Strategies – Keeping the Right People Informed. There were also break out sessions between the Directors and the Federal IPM Coordinating Committee and other select individuals meeting with Therese Murtagh and Wilfred Burr to discuss NRCS-related issues.

Thursday, the final day of meetings, was the Center Directors meeting to discuss IPM Evaluation; Mid-term Evaluation; Meet with Grant Specialists from CSREES/OEP; and Discuss the relationships of the Centers to other CSREES Programs.

As a whole the meetings were a success in keeping everyone informed and up to date with other programs and Center events. The next Director's meeting is tentatively planned for September 15-16, 2004.



Jim VanKirk Joins the Center as Associate Director

The Southern Region Integrated Pest Management Center (SRIPMC) is pleased to announce that Jim VanKirk accepted the offer to join the Center as Associate Director and is slated to start by the beginning of September. VanKirk brings with him a long tradition of successful programs started and implemented in the Northeast with the Northeast IPM Center (NEIPMC).

"I am very excited about Jim joining us as Associate Director of the Southern Region IPM Center. With his extensive background and experience in IPM, I know he will be a valuable addition to our staff. I am looking forward to his input and ideas for new programs in the Southern region, as well as helping him broaden his knowledge base by adding Southern crop and agriculture experience to his repertoire," said Ron Stinner, director of SRIPMC.

VanKirk received his Bachelor of Science with honors in Entomology from Cornell University and then went on to receive his Master of Science in Entomology at Oregon State University. After receiving his Masters, VanKirk held a broad range of positions such as IPM Assistant, Farm Manager, Research Support Specialist and Area Extension Specialist.

In 1996 VanKirk accepted the position of Facilitator for IPM Activities, and provided an organizational and public relations focus for IPM demonstration, implementation and research activities for land-grant universities in the Northeast region. In addition, VanKirk assisted with grants management, networked with IPM research and Extension specialists and educators for regional program team development, and assisted state IPM coordinators with special projects.

With the formation of Regional Pest Management Centers in 2000, VanKirk became the Coordinator of the Northeast Center in addition to his Facilitator position. VanKirk held both positions until September 2003 when the Centers evolved into Integrated Pest Management Centers and he was promoted to Director of the NEIPMC. With co-Director John Ayers, he managed two competitive funding programs. VanKirk managed daily Center operations including the development of web sites, and development of IPM working groups. Some of the web work he was involved with included the development and management of the NEIPMC database, the Center website and other online outreach. In addition, VanKirk oversaw the development and distribution of all NEIPMC reports and publications and represented the NEIPMC to other agencies in the region and elsewhere.

VanKirk plans to work with individuals in the Southern region building on the work and programs already started, such as the monthly newsletter, while adding a slightly different perspective the he hopes will catalyze continued success of the SRIPMC.

"I am very excited about joining the Southern region. The Center is continually building on the Southern region's long history of excellence in IPM programs, and I look forward to working with groups and individuals to support existing efforts and to find and develop new avenues for success. I hope to contribute a slightly different perspective to the Center's important work, and I look forward to learning a great deal from the many diverse organizations and people that engage with the Center," said VanKirk.

VanKirk can be reached at jim_vankirk@ncsu.edu or 919-513-1432 after September 1.



Jim VanKirk, the Center's newest addition to their staff.

Northeast IPM Center Website Gets a Facelift



The Northeast IPM Center has a newly designed (pictured left) and updated website available for viewing at <http://www.nepmc.org>.

The new site contains the following features:

- Searchable databases of IPM information resources
- Searchable directory of IPM experts
- Listing of IPM search and extension priorities
- Links to state programs and partner agencies and programs
- Information on IPM working groups
- Crop Profiles and Pest Management Strategic Plans
- Information on comprehensive crop data
- Reports and newsletters
- Funding and employment opportunities
- Alerts and advisories and links to national and regional IPM sites.

Look for the Southern Region to follow in the Northeast's footsteps with a similar web design in the next few months.

Center Grants continued from page 2...

recommendations from Extension agents, TCE wants to educate and involve agricultural producers in the scouting practices, pest recognition and proactive treatment of potential grasshopper problems with acceptable practices.



Integrating Pest Management Tools for a Sustainable Strawberry Crop in Florida (Silvia Rondon, Daniel Cantliffe, James Price and Natalia Perers, University of Florida – IFAS)

Recent assessment of priorities in strawberry production identified as a main concern

The University of Florida wants to provide growers with more information and training materials in IPM practices on strawberry crops.

the need for more information and training materials in biological control and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices, as well as the need to educate growers and pest managers with new pest management methods. Our project intends to conduct on-farm demonstrations with growers, Extension personnel, and crop consultants. This project will identify and present the latest information on effective insect and disease control in strawberries as well as revise scouting protocols for the strawberry growers.

Leveraging Federal Conservation Programs to Increase Adoption of Integrated Pest Management in Western North Carolina Christmas Tree and Nursery Production (Lawrence Elworth, Center for Agricultural Partnerships)

The Center for Agricultural Partnership's project provides a targeted information, recruitment, and assistance program to increase grower participation in Western North Carolina Christmas tree and nursery production. By providing growers with the awareness and knowledge necessary to successfully apply to EQIP for support in the use of IPM practices and by conducting a targeted recruitment and assistance program, the project offers the means to make the potential for EQIP to increase IPM adoption a reality.



The Center for Agricultural Partnerships wants to increase grower participation in Christmas tree production.

offers the means to make the potential for EQIP to increase IPM adoption a reality.

Organic Volunteers

Organic Volunteers is a web hosted database of educational opportunities and internships available for individuals who want to get involved working on and gaining experience with organic farms. Organic Volunteers provides a list of hosts and their contact information so that volunteers can get in touch with and make arrangements with the host.

Started in June 2001 by Ethan Schaffer and his brother Grayson Schaffer, the site has been extremely successful in helping youth and college aged kids gain experience working with organics. With approximately 650 different farms and organizations listed as hosts and over 7,500 members, the site is growing exponentially. The site has an average of 17,000 hits a day and had over 100,000 individual visitors last year.

A national website, Organic Volunteers works with hosts and volunteers across the United States, with additional volunteers traveling internationally. Currently, the majority of their international volunteers are from Europe, but they are about to launch their program into Latin America. Additional information about their Latin America expansion is now available on the web.

To aid in their success, Ethan and Grayson have partnered with numerous organizations and universities to help support their website. Organizations such as California Certified Organic Farmers, ATTRA (Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas) and Earth Island Institute are just a few they have alliances with. In addition, many university internship departments use their website to help place students, although individuals don't have to be enrolled in a college program to volunteer.

"Some people take time off from school to get some hands on experience, some people do it through school, we leave it pretty open," said Ethan. "We even have some volunteers that have been involved for years trying to learn it all through experience only."

In working with universities, Ethan learned that enrollment in production agriculture degrees is declining. He hopes his website will help spark interest and give more college aged kids the opportunity to gain experience in organics.

"Universities are finding that people don't want to be farmers anymore. But what we are noticing is that tons of people want to be organic farmers," said Ethan. "We are trying to pump the movement full of energized youth that want to become organic farmers."

A member of the SRIPMC Steering Committee, Ethan feels it has helped his organization in creating partnerships and learning more about other organization within the agriculture industry.

"Being a member of the Steering Committee has helped us build bridges with other movements so that we can move outside of just thinking organics and also think of IPM. I see organic agriculture as part of the IPM movement, it is just one method within all the practices of Integrated Pest Management," said Ethan. "The Steering Committee has helped us work with a lot of the more established agriculture universities, and as an organization we are all about making coalitions and building bridges."

For more information about Organic Volunteers or to volunteer, visit www.organicvolunteers.org or contact Ethan Schaffer at ethan@organicvolunteers.com.



An organic volunteer in action.

