

## **Building Collaboration Between NRCS and IPM**

### **Template for Proceeding in Additional North Central States**

**DRAFT 04/30/08**

#### **GOALS:**

- Improve mutual understanding of objectives, programs and roles.
- Increase awareness of opportunities for IPM to meet resource conservation objectives.
- Increase grower participation in EQIP to address pest management-related resource concerns.

#### **STEPS:**

1. Set and state your objectives and target crop(s). For example, increase participation by specialty crop producers in EQIP for pest management practices. Your targets may need modification as you learn more about NRCS objectives and processes in your state. In Wisconsin, the initial target crops were apples and cherry. In Michigan, because of the way NRCS works in the state, the target had to be pest management practices for all crops.
2. Identify/recruit a working group member “coach(es)” from Michigan and/or Wisconsin to advise/assist as you work through the steps. Coach roles can include advice, problem solving, participation in conference calls and meetings.
3. Review the NRCS website for your state, especially as it relates to EQIP. Questions to answer:
  - a. NRCS state office staff responsible for EQIP program, i.e., EQIP program manager.
  - b. NRCS state office staff with pest management responsibility, if any.
  - c. State technical committee membership.
  - d. State technical committee EQIP subgroup membership.
4. Organize an initial meeting.
  - a. Identify and recruit 6-10 participants:
    - i. Grower or representatives from grower groups interested in accessing greater assistance and incentives for pest management practices.
    - ii. University and/or Extension representative(s) including the individual with your state university who is responsible for relations with NRCS. This person may be on the state technical committee.
    - iii. Your state’s NRCS EQIP program manager.
    - iv. Your state’s NRCS staffer responsible for pest management, if any.
    - v. Your coach (optional).

- b. Set agenda which should include:
  - i. Introductions.
  - ii. Initial briefing on rationale for meeting, e.g., increasing collaboration to meet mutual goals. You may also include a brief description of successes in other states but understand that NRCS operates differently in each state. What worked elsewhere may not be a good model for your state.
  - iii. Identification of training needs for NRCS staff re IPM, description of resources available to meet any needs. This training can help meet NRCS staff requirements for in-service training.
  - iv. Identification of grower needs to improve protection of resource concerns when managing pests. How can needs be addressed by increasing grower participation in EQIP? Is there an opportunity to add representation re pest management issues on the state technical committee? Is there a need to adjust the current program to accommodate pest management-related concerns?
  - v. Once agreement is reached on needs and opportunities, discuss how you can work together to take next steps, including outreach to growers once the opportunity is available.

5. Implement actionable items from the meeting which may include:

- a. Participate on state technical committee and/or subgroups.
- b. Offer IPM training for NRCS staff.
- c. Work with NRCS staff to adjust programs to accommodate pest management-related activities.
- d. Implement outreach to eligible growers once the opportunity is available.

#### BUDGET

Maximum of \$5000 per state. Expenses include your time and travel expenses, coach time and phone/travel expenses, phone expenses, meeting expenses. A coach must be designated from the working group to your project for activities to be funded.

#### TIMELINE

The entire process may take up to two years. Funding provided through the working group must be expended by end of March 2009.