

Notes

NRCS and IPM Webinar Training: Writing a EQIP 595 Pest Management Plan

**Friday, March 6th, 2009
10:00 a.m. EST, 9:00 a.m. CST**

**Due to technical difficulties, the webinar program shut down approximately 10 minutes into the session, and the group proceeded by using the PDF's sent out prior to the call. If you'd like to hear the recording of the session, please go to <http://www.ipm.msu.edu/work-group/resources.htm#ResourceList> under "Other Resources for IPM".*

Participants (25)*: Tom Akin (MA NRCS), Ted Alme (ND NRCS), Anastasia Becker (MO Dept. of Ag.), Steven Boetger (FL NRCS), Pat Cimino (EPA), Jim Dangler (GA NRCS), Rick Foster (Purdue University, IN), Lyle Frees (WI NRCS), Mark Goodson (PA NRCS), Tom Green (IPM Institute), Tibor Horvath (NC NRCS), Jim Jasinski (Ohio State University), Lynnae Jess (MSU), Jim Kaap (WI NRCS), Bill Kuenstler (NRCS), David Lamm (NC NRCS), Joy Landis (MSU), Mike Laughrey (OH NRCS), Carlos Morganti (Caribbean Area NRCS), Sandra Primard (VT NRCS), Ruth Shaffer (MI NRCS), Brandon Smith (NH NRCS), Matt Stasiak (University of Wisconsin Extension), Barb Stewart (IA NRCS), Brenna Wanous (IPM Institute).

*Please contact Brenna Wanous (bwanous@ipminstitute.org) if you participated in the webinar and your name is not included on the list.

CALL TOPICS

1. Introduction to the NRCS and IPM Working Group for Growers' Incentives for IPM:

- a. The working group (WG) is funded by the North Central IPM Center and includes 12 states from North Dakota to as far south as Kansas, Nebraska as far east as Ohio.
- b. The WG is co-led by Mike Brewer (Michigan State University, IPM Program) and Tom Green (IPM Institute of North America).
- c. The WG's goal is to increasing incentives for growers to implement IPM, especially through NRCS programs such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).
- d. The WG maintains a listserv (contact Brenna Wanous at bwanous@ipminstitute.org if you'd like to join the listserv) and website (<http://www.ipm.msu.edu/work-group/home.htm>), and holds monthly conference calls (first Friday of each month).

2. Introduction to EQIP:

- a. EQIP is a NRCS program which is designed to provide technical assistance cost-shares and incentives with growers to help protect resource concerns, including soil, air, plants, animals, humans and other resources.
- b. Implementation of EQIP is largely state-specific; there is significant variation regarding growers/crops eligible for participation, county, practices, amounts and types of

technical assistance, cost-shares and financial incentives in each state. This training shows an example of a *Wisconsin* EQIP 595 pest management plan.

- c. In the past, EQIP has placed more emphasis on practices such as nutrient and manure management than on pest management. A National Resources Defense Council report (2007) identified where the majority of EQIP dollars are allocated and urged more support for IPM practices. The report is available at (<http://www.ipm.msu.edu/work-group/reports.htm>).
- d. In recent years, there have been a number of innovative programs developed in states such as PA, CA, WI, MI, CT and others to increase specialty crop grower and pest management participation in EQIP; progress has been made toward achieving these goals.
- e. One major concern within the EQIP program is the availability of Pest Management Plan (PMP) writers. The planning and writing process is required for each EQIP contract, but there is a shortage of individuals that are familiar with the process of plan writing, and are certified to do so.
 - i. In some states, NRCS completes the plan writing;
 - ii. In other states, the task is delegated to the private sector - Certified Crop Advisors (CCAs), Technical Service Providers (TSPs), etc.
 - iii. Collaboration between the NRCS and private sector is extremely important and helpful when putting these together.

3. General information about writing PMPs:

- a. The goal of the plan is to describe the crop, site and resource concerns specific to the site, practices used on the site, and mitigation practices that are required or recommended to address the concerns.
- b. There is no set format for the plans in most states; it is very important to check with your state NRCS office to identify the requirements.
- c. This plan template was developed through collaboration between Matt Stasiak (Extension agent and CCA in Wisconsin who regularly creates these plans), John Aue (private IPM Consultant without CCA status), Jason Fischbach (Extension agent in Wisconsin), Pat Murphy (Wisconsin NRCS State Conservationist), Brenna Wanous (Project Assistant at the IPM Institute) and Tom Green (CCA and TSP at the IPM Institute).
- d. Once the initial plan and annual updates are submitted to the NRCS, the grower is able to receive his/her cost-share or incentive payment. The actual payer and cost can differ by state; for example, in Wisconsin the NRCS builds in a recommended \$550 payment for the initial plan development and \$250 payment for each annual update, which the grower pays out of his cost-share amount.
- e. IPM Elements and Guidelines are an extremely valuable resource in creating the plan by offering the list of recommended practices, generating a score for the farm or orchard, etc. Check to see if your state has these available (see e.ii.)

- i. IPM Elements and Guidelines are usually two to four page documents used to identify on a crop and region-specific basis the available IPM practices that could be employed to mitigated resource concerns and put a systems-approach in place on the farm.
- ii. The IPM Centers website (www.ipmcenters.org) provides a *Guide to IPM Elements and Guidelines* which offers direction in developing and using these tools and a listing of completed IPM Elements and Guidelines at <http://www.ipmcenters.org/ipmelements/index.cfm>.

4. Demonstration of writing PMP's:

- a. Checklist/Cover Page (page one of *595 Pest Management Plan_Template* PDF)
 - i. This page was put together by the University of Wisconsin to help organize required information and ensure no key components were left out. There are different requirements for each state, so please check with your NRCS district conservationist for requirements;
 - ii. Complete the site specific information on the cover page as per the farm/grower you are writing the plan for;
 - iii. Complete the qualified (i.e. certified) IPM planner's certification and business information;
 - iv. Each EQIP contract per grower requires an Initial Plan and Annual Updates; indicate on the cover page which of the two that is;
 - v. Arial and soils maps are required and topographic maps are recommended (usually provided by NRCS); if soils information is not provided, it can be found at the NRCS Soil Data Mart (<http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>);
 - vi. Continue through the list provided on the cover page to identify whether the action item was met; if not or if a question can't be answered, use the comments column to indicate why.
- b. Plan introductions – page two:
 - i. Site and grower-specific information;
 - ii. Introduction paragraph – identify where, what and why;
 - iii. Orchard maps (including Arial, Soils and Topographic) –provided by the District Conservationist in charge of the contract;
 - iv. Information for tract/block and acreage for each block.
- c. Environmental assessment (vastly important – the reason for the plan) – pages two through five:
 - i. Using the soils information provided by NRCS or found at <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>, identify soil type, drainage capacity, availability water capacity, proximity to bedrock if applicable, slope, proximity to water ways, concentrated flow areas leading to surface water, potential conduits to ground water and any other red-flag factors;
 - ii. This will identify specific risks that are due to the site; for example, soils low water capacity that are located on a slope of 12% raise concern for soil erosion

and pesticide transport. List specific concerns and mitigation practices for each concern that is identified.

- iii. List ALL pesticides the grower is planning to use this year.
 1. This changes year to year and during the season, so generating the plan prior to the growing season allows for the grower to reassess and modify their anticipated pesticide uses if necessary. Annual updates at the end of the growing season will list the actual pesticides used.
 - iv. Identify any additional concerns such as nearby abandoned apple trees (if the crop is apples), nearby house or schoolyard, etc.
 - v. Highlight surface water, groundwater, concentration of water flow and conduits to groundwater concerns, if applicable.
 - vi. Run NRCS' WIN-PST program or use a state resource (such as the WIN-PST Quick Hazard Rating Quick Reference Guide, a "cheat-sheet" created by the University of Wisconsin for Wisconsin soils, used in this plan) to identify the risk for using each pesticide on that specific soil type. If pesticides are rated at an "Intermediate" level risk or higher, employing a mitigation practice is required.
 1. WIN-PST is a Windows-based Pesticide Screening Tool, which rates each pesticide to specific soil types and resource concerns. Ratings vary from Very Low to Extra High. This program can be found at <http://www.wsi.nrcs.usda.gov/products/W2Q/pest/winpst.html>
 - vii. Using the information from above, list the products and risks; indicate the pesticides that are rated for "Intermediate" risk or above.
 1. For growers that use particularly high-risk materials (organophosphates, for example), the planner isn't required to mandate growers to discontinue use, though many urge growers to begin using newer pesticides on a trial basis and continue to move toward IPM adoption each year.
 2. Some states offer a specific cost-share for growers to transition away from o.p. and other high-risk materials.
 3. The NRCS cannot make recommendations on pesticide use; however, their role is to describe the risk associated with the High and Extra-High rated chemicals and allow the growers to choose.
 - viii. Complete the Mitigation Summary Table according to pesticides used (trade name, active ingredient), soil type, management techniques employed and additional conservation practices.
- d. *Integrated Pest Management Strategy* (takes a systems-approach to make general recommendations for reducing risks, plus additional specific recommendations when necessary) – pages six and seven:
- i. List pest pressures specific to that orchard and nearby area;
 - ii. Describe site-specific pest history and activity;
 - iii. Identify site-specific pest management resistance and/or concerns;

- iv. Lay out for the grower specific methods for scouting, monitoring and controlling pests;
- e. Pesticide Storage, Mixing and Container Disposal (paged seven and eight):
 - i. Locate the well in relation to the pesticide mixing and storage units. Distance from the well must be in compliance with NRCS requirements;
 - ii. Specify what sprayer the grower uses, when it was last calibrated and concentration at which pesticides are sprayed.
- f. Emergency Action Plan and Re-entry Interval Tracking (page eight):
 - i. Verify that pesticides are labeled, emergency phone numbers are posted and pesticide application records are available for consultation;
 - ii. Verify that grower has the required emergency kit components listed.
- g. Implementation Records (page eight):
 - i. Provide grower with the attached template for pesticide application records if not using it already.
 - ii. Ensure they understand the process of documenting their applications.
- h. Planning Priorities (page eight and nine):
 - i. List all practices grower should be focusing on this growing season to:
 1. reduce/prevent pest pressures,
 2. reduce/prevent pest damage,
 3. reduce risk of pest resistance and
 4. mitigate risks of pesticide use (specifically those rated at “Intermediate” or higher).
- i. Attachments (pages nine through twelve):
 - i. Plan Priorities (to be posted in shed or barn);
 - ii. Scouting List;
 - iii. Scouting Schedule;
 - iv. Pesticide Application Records Template;
 - v. Additional resources (i.e., pest management handbooks, spray guides, etc.).

Resources:

North Central IPM Working Group website: <http://www.ipm.msu.edu/work-group/home.htm>

Northeastern IPM Working Group: <http://www.neipmc.org/nrcs.cfm>

- This working group, funded by the Northeastern IPM Center, is developing an excel-based planning tool that identifies available IPM practices for specific crops.
- An early version of this tool is available <http://www.ipm.msu.edu/work-group/resources.htm> under the fourth bullet point in the “Other Resources for IPM” section.
- Ruth Hazzard and Kathy Murray, the leaders in developing this tool, will be invited to a North Central IPM Working Group conference call this spring to update our group on their progress.

Guide to IPM Elements and Guidelines and directory of available documents:

<http://www.ipmcenters.org/ipmelements/index.cfm>

NRCS Soil Data Mart (find your growers’ soil descriptions by county): <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Win-PST website: <http://www.wsi.nrcs.usda.gov/products/W2Q/pest/WinPST.html>

More information about EQIP: <http://www.ipm.msu.edu/work-group/about-EQIP.htm>