

## **NRCS and IPM Working Group Conference Call Notes from November 4, 2009**

Workgroup URL - <http://www.ipm.msu.edu/work-group/home.htm>

Workgroup listserv: [EQIP@LIST.MSU.EDU](mailto:EQIP@LIST.MSU.EDU)

Corrections/additions to Amrita Batra at [abatra@ipminstitute.org](mailto:abatra@ipminstitute.org)

**Next Call:** Friday, December 4, 9:00 Central/10:00 Eastern.

**Participating (15):** Seth Dibblee (US EPA), Jim Jasinski (OSU), Joy Landis (MSU), Tom Green (IPM Institute), Amrita Batra (IPM Institute), Peter Werts (IPM Institute), Jeff St. Ores (MN NRCS), Bill Kuentler (NRCS), David Lamm (NRCS), Joe Bagdon (NRCS)

### **Attachments:**

1. PRiME PowerPoint presentation
2. North Central Fruit IPM tool (draft)
3. North Central Field Crop IPM tool (draft)
4. IPM Practices Resource List for IPM tools (draft)
5. Cover Letter for North Central Fruit and Field Crop IPM tools. (draft)
6. State Conservationist Letter (from IPM Institute) regarding IPM CAPS.
7. Guide to Becoming an IPM CAP-Certified TSP.
8. Steps to Developing an IPM CAPs Program (for NRCS).
9. To-Do-List for Developing an IPM CAPs Program.

### **Agenda:**

1. **Pesticide Risk Mitigation Engine (PRiME) presentation.**
  - i. PRiME is a web-based, user-friendly pesticide evaluation tool that calculates site-specific risks associated with agricultural pesticide applications.
  - ii. The tool's development began in November 2007 and is funded primarily by an NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant.
  - iii. Project team: Paul Jepson, Michael Guzy, Kellie Vache (Oregon State University), Tom Green, Wade Pronchinske, Amrita Batra (IPM Institute), Pierre Mineau (Environment Canada), Susan Kegley (Pesticide Research Institute), Chuck and Karen Benbrook (BCS Ecologic), Marty Williams, Mark Cheplik (WaterBorne Environmental), Jonathan Kaplan (Natural Resources Defense Council), Scott Martin (University of Illinois), NRCS Advisor: Joe Bagdon.
  - iv. Uses include: environmental risk assessments to evaluate: one or more pesticides, different application rates for one pesticide, historic pesticide data, proposed pest

management plan for the coming season and pest applications with mitigation measures proposed by PRiME.

- v. Risk calculations are based on site-specific information provided by user, i.e. product name, amount of product used, method of application, mitigation measures applied. Users map their fields and sensitive sites using Google Earth imagery. PRiME automatically retrieves soils data from NRCS's SSURGO database for the mapped area.
- vi. Use Pattern Adjustment Factors: Risk calculations are adjusted based on form of product applied and method and time of application.
- vii. Calculated risk summary is on a probability of impact scale.
- viii. Risk summary includes risk scores for the following indices: Dietary, inhalation, dermal, VOC, avian (acute), avian (reproductive), earthworms, small mammals, fish, algae, aquatic invertebrates and pollinators.
- ix. Users can mouse over the risk bars for basic explanations of risk calculations and a link to published white papers.
- x. Program Evaluation output allows users to evaluate their progress over a number of years.
- xi. A third of the risk indices' white papers are currently out for peer review.
- xii. PRiME will be launched online for public use by the end of January, 2010.
- xiii. Users will pay a nominal subscription fee of \$24.95 per year to save pesticide use data and use all PRiME features.

## **2. Nominations for co-leadership of NRCS & IPM WG.**

- i. Working group members are requested to email [Tom Green](#) their nominations or self-nominations for co-leader of the working group by Friday, November 13.*
- ii. Responsibilities include serving as Co-PI on the working group funding proposal and collaborating with Tom to propose activities to the working group.

## **3. Planning renewal grant application for NRCS & IPM WG:**

- i. The renewal grant application for our working group is due by December 15, 2009 to the North Central IPM Center.
- ii. Proposed activities/goals for this year's renewal grant application for our working group:
  - 1. Expand the geographic scope of our working group:
    - a. Expand working group activities to a national level.

- b. Invite representatives from other regions to join our working group.
    - c. Secure resources from other regions for our working group for e.g., track EQIP contract numbers in other states.
    - d. The Southern Region IPM Center has expressed an interest in collaborating on future projects with our working group.
    - e. Collaborate with working groups that have a similar mission as ours, e.g., Great Lakes Vegetable working group.
  2. Address grower incentives through other NRCS conservation programs such as IPM Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), such that we contribute towards making it easier for growers to participate in such programs.
  3. Training for NRCS staff:
    - a. Include outreach for North Central IPM tools.
    - b. Incorporate an on-farm training component for participants to see IPM in action.
    - c. Conduct workshops similar to those organized by Jim Jasinski in Ohio for sweet corn and pumpkin- cover specific IPM elements with State and Extension specialists.
  4. Continuing mini-grant opportunities has been a challenge this year. We could propose more activities for the working group to be directly involved in improving IPM in states with low IPM adoption and practice.
  5. Revisit and revise the working group's priorities outlined in 2006.
  6. Incorporate a water quality objective. Local issues of pesticides in water could be highlighted through an NRCS training opportunity.

*iii. A draft of our renewal proposal will be discussed on next month's conference call. Working group members are requested to review the proposed activities (above), particularly 1. and 2. and provide feedback via email to [Tom](#) or during our December 4 conference call.*

**4. IPM Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs) update:**

- i. National IPM CAPs Working Group consists of over 70 individuals within the major working group and three sub-committees (Financial Assistance, Extension Involvement

and Training Curriculum). The working group is a collaboration of NRCS staff, independent Technical Service Providers (TSPs), University specialists, non-profit organizations and others.

- ii. CAPs identify whole-farm, site-specific conservation opportunities. There are 12 types of CAPs, including IPM; in 2009, NRCS State Conservationists had to select which CAPs would be available to growers in their state. Only four states (CA, ME, RI, WV) chose IPM last year and eight IPM CAP applications were funded, all in CA.
- iii. Bottleneck lies in the number of TSPs certified to write IPM CAPs and lack of awareness of the opportunity.
- iv. In 2010, states are not required to choose to offer specific CAPs; any grower in any state can apply for funding for a TSP to write an IPM CAP.
- v. NRCS offers growers a 75% cost-share rate for hiring a consultant to write the plan; a 90% cost-share rate is available for minority, new or financially restricted growers. Dollar amounts paid out (i.e., equivalent to the 75% cost-share) are determined by State Conservationists depending upon the market cost for putting together a plan in their state.
- vi. The IPM CAPs working group is developing a curriculum to train individuals interested in developing an IPM CAP. One training will be held in conjunction with the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC) conference in Orlando in January, 2010.
- vii. There is some concern that if growers are required to complete CAPs in order to participate in other NRCS programs such as EQIP, the number of growers who participate in EQIP 595 could decrease considerably.
- viii. The National IPM CAPs Working Group's [website](http://www.ipminstitute.org/IPMCAPs) was recently revamped ([www.ipminstitute.org/IPMCAPs](http://www.ipminstitute.org/IPMCAPs)).
- ix. Three guidance documents are attached with the call notes:
  1. "NRCS Steps to Developing an IPM CAP Program" – for NRCS use in building their state's infrastructure for an IPM CAP program.
  2. "To-Do List for Developing an IPM CAP Program" – for Extension, public agencies, university Ag specialists, etc. to help NRCS develop an IPM CAP program.
  3. "Guide to Becoming an IPM CAP-Certified TSP" – for crop consultants and other interested in writing an IPM CAP.

- x. The attached guidance documents are also available on the ‘Resources’ section of the working group [website](#).

**5. Minnesota IPM initiative**

- i. Develop a work plan that focuses on NRCS programs such as EQIP, CAPs and CSPs and opportunities for growers to transition to more IPM.
- ii. Peter Werts is working towards setting up a meeting in Minnesota for NRCS and growers to outline a work plan for this initiative.
- iii. The idea for this initiative came about from a prior meeting with packer-supplier in Minnesota.
- iv. Suggestions to incorporate in work plan:
  - 1. Encourage growers to sign up at NRCS field offices for the following CSP activities:
    - a. “Pilot” activity: participate in an on-farm testing or NRCS field day
    - b. “Research and demonstration” activity: participate in research for of an on-farm project using scientific methodology.
    - c. Growers are not eligible for dollars through these activities, but would qualify for performance points.
  - 2. Incorporate activities focusing on the three focus areas chosen by the state.

**6. North Central Fruit and Field Crop IPM tools update**

- i. The tools are ready for distribution to NRCS field staff.
- ii. We received positive feedback from a WI state conservationist.
- iii. Tools include a common IPM Resources List that can be used for both tools.
- iv. Next steps: Participate in conference calls with state conservationists and state agronomists to present the tools and encourage their use.

**Next call:** December 4, 2009, 9:00 AM Central/10:00 AM Eastern