

USDA North Central Region Pest Management Center

<http://www.ncpmc.org>

Quarterly Update to National Steering Committee September 26, 2002

North Central IPM Facilitator - Dr. Susan Ratcliffe continues to work closely with the 4th National IPM Symposium Planning and Steering Committees. Topic organizers have been identified and a third notice sent out September 16 included a Call for Session Organizers. Sponsorship to date of the symposium includes regional IPM programs, Regional Pest Management Centers, ARS, EPA and IR-4. Committee members are discussing the possibility of sponsorship with NRCS. As Local Arrangements Chair, Sue has participated in conference calls and met with the conference coordinator, Elaine Wolff from University of Illinois Conferences and Institutes.

Sue has worked closely with Dr. Michael Gray, NC Regional IPM Competitive Grants Manager to modify and disseminate the FY03 NC RIPM RFA. Mike, Sue and Dr. Michael Fitzner have reviewed this year's RIPM RFA and the approved document was broadly distributed to the north central region. Letters of Intent were due September 13, 2002 and full proposals must be received by Friday, October 18, 2002. A total of 78 Letters of Intent were received from the region. Mike and Sue have assembled an external peer review panel that will convene in Indianapolis on December 10-11, 2002. Sue solicited nominations from state IPM coordinators for qualified individuals to serve on external review panels. This list will be shared with the four regional IPM grants managers to assist them in identifying potential peer review panel members.

The West Nile Virus National Pest Alert has attracted considerable attention as the virus spreads and human death totals climb. In addition to the 70,000 printed copies, Sue continues to receive requests for the electronic pdf version. The West Nile section of the NCR web site is one of the most popular sections. A new National Pest Alert for the Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle has been released in electronic pdf format. It was designed to encourage on-line reporting of problems associated with the overwintering habits of this species through the Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle Watch web site located at <http://www.ncpmc.org/NewsAlerts/malb.html>. Other Pest Alerts in process are soybean rust and emerald ash borer, and the NCR web site currently includes sections on these pests.

As IPM Facilitator, Sue has visited six of the twelve north central states, most recently Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin. She met with members of the states' IPM program and to share information regarding the regional Pest Management Center and the North Central IPM Program. Special Project RFA was circulated among IPM coordinators and state project leaders to encourage collaboration between members of the IPM and Pest Management programs. The mini-grant program is designed to provide funding to address new and emerging pest management issues that may have a regional impact. For FY03, \$20,000 is available with a maximum award of \$10,000. The program has two submission dates annually and will be reviewed promptly to allow rapid response to the emerging pest issue.

Year 3 Pest Management Center Renewal Grants - The year 3 renewal RFP circulated August 1 resulted in 12 proposals requesting \$975,997 (Attachment 1) with \$886,072 in available funds. The Peer Review Technical Panel will meet by conference call October 18 to review all proposals. The Steering Committee will meet in early December by conference call to discuss the peer review panel comments, merit of the proposals, progress made on the second year proposals, and the level of funding recommended for this year.

Pest Management Strategic Plans -The Michigan Celery PMSP is completed and on the web site under Mary Hausbeck's leadership. The field corn PMSP for North Central Region, lead by Dave Pike Illinois project leader, is now on the web site. Dave and George Smith, Missouri project leader, visited EPA and OPMP staff in Washington DC to go over the corn PMSP. The popcorn PMSP, also lead by Dave Pike, is in final draft and will be on the web site soon. He also met with the Popcorn Board to discuss the popcorn PMSP and directions to go in the future. The Michigan Onion PMSP will be held November 4 and 5 in East Lansing. The NCR Soybean PMSP under the leadership of George Smith will be held November 7 and 8 in St Louis. The cabbage PMSP for Minnesota and Wisconsin will be held November 12 and 13 in Madison. December 17-18 are the tentative dates set for a regional sweet corn PMSP to be lead by Dave Pike. This is being done at the request of the Midwest Food Processors. Phil Glogoza, specialists and growers from North Dakota attended the international Pea/Lentil PMSP held in Canada June 25-27 with the Center paying for grower participation.

NC Pest Management Center Advisory Committee - The Advisory Committee for the NC Region was scheduled to meet on October 22-23 in Kansas City to provide input to the regional response for the next cycle RFA for Regional Pest Management Centers. As the release of the RFA was delayed from mid-September until mid-December, the meeting was postponed. Members were notified, but still expressed an interest in being involved in developing our next proposal.

Information Technology / Website - The PM Centers Technical Web committee met last spring in conjunction with the national directors meeting, and worked well together to streamline the organization of the information, make the page more attractive and easier to use. We have updated our web site in cooperation with the proposed changes. We've added many elements to the web site including the 2002-03 RIPM RFA, four pest alert pages, a portal site for the West Nile Virus National Pest Alert with links to many sites and specialists around the country, many other new links, and connections to the National PM Center sites. The last element is not only a link, but also software that pulls information from the national Program/Projects database for seamless access by a NCR web site visitor. The code for these pages is available to other Centers and we are available to help them implement it if requested.

Given recent intensification of virus and computer security threats, we have completely reconfigured our server to reduce the vulnerability of the NCR PM Center site to hackers. We have had no problems taking over the NCR portion of the web site from National site in North Carolina (Feb 2002). However we still maintain compatibility with the technology used by the National web site (e.g. ColdFusion web application server) and therefore with other regions.

Submitted by Larry G. Olsen