IN THE CENTER
NORTHEASTERN Pest Management Center
• MAY 2002 •

From the Coordinator

In March, the Northeastern Pest Management Center (NE PMC) held its second annual meeting in Baltimore. The Center's advisory council, leaders of information network projects and commodity working groups, and the NE PMC leadership and staff shared expertise and discussed the organization's goals and activities.

The group heard from national pest management center leaders and from the Southern Region PMC. We discussed the progress of information network and commodity working group projects. Decisions were made to establish a listserve that will facilitate better communication among key Center participants, and to increase outreach to professional societies and other groups. The advisory committee also reflected on and assessed the Center's communication efforts, including the website and newsletters.

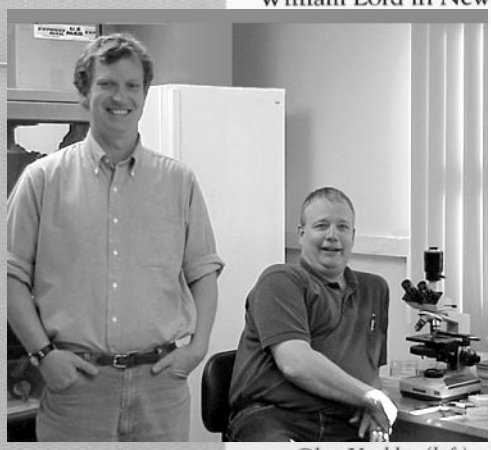
The Center's leadership expressed interest in gathering some key information about readers of this newsletter. This information will help us to determine what kind of content and distribution methods will best serve our readers. With this goal in mind, we ask you to complete the postcard survey on page 4. You may find it easiest to complete the survey online (nepmc.org/inthecenter/may2002/survey.html), or you can fill it out by hand and drop the completed postcard in the U.S. mail. Your feedback is crucial to our efforts, so we appreciate your willingness to spend a few moments to help us understand your needs.

–Jim VanKirk
NE PMC Coordinator

Networking in New England

Six states have teamed up to form the New England Pest Management Network (NEPMNet), a collaborative effort that connects pesticide users and others interested in pest management issues (e.g., farmers, educators, consumer groups, and regulators). Supported by USDA and NE PMC through a competitive funding process, NEPMNet develops new knowledge and planning tools and improves access to reliable pest management information relevant to New England.

The project team, led by James Dill and Glen Koehler of the University of Maine, includes cooperators from universities in the each of the New England states: Candace Bartholomew in Connecticut; Natalia Clifton and Patricia Vittum in Massachusetts; William Lord in New Hampshire; Margaret Siligato and Steve Alm in Rhode Island; and Alan Gotlieb and Sarah Kingsley-Richards in Vermont.



Glen Koehler (left) and James Dill of Maine are the NEPMNet leaders

The searchable website, called **P**est Management **R**esources **O**nline for New England (PRONewEngland.org), provides links to some of the best pest management information available. It presents regularly updated news sorted by both geographic and topical relevance, and includes a directory of federal, state, university, government, and private pest management agencies, programs, and interest groups. The site also provides opportunities for feedback to regulatory agencies and educational programs, as well as dialogue through e-mail discussion groups. A foundation for online weather-based predictive pest and crop models is also being developed.

The NEPMNet project cooperators are developing pest management tactic surveys and crop profiles to help regulatory agencies and educational programs better understand real-world pest management practices in New England. They then create pest management strategic plans, which are essential in setting research, extension, and regulatory priorities for the region. The commodities they're focusing on for 2001–2003 are peaches, pears, tomatoes, apples, winter squash, peas, beans, and carrots. Each survey, profile, and strategic plan produced will be published on the website.

To enhance awareness of pest management concerns and improve the ability to address them effectively, NEPMNet fosters communication among stakeholders, particularly emphasizing interaction with regulators. Communication tools include the web directory and a census of stakeholder pest management regulatory concerns, with feedback solicited at NEPMNet meetings, through e-mail discussion groups, and on the website. This feedback is distilled into annual regulatory review reports disseminated to policymakers at the federal, state, and university levels.

To learn more about other information network projects being launched throughout the Northeast, visit the NE PMC website: http://nepmc.org/infonet/.

School IPM Now Law in Pennsylvania. **A new law effective January 1, 2003, requires Pennsylvania public schools to adopt integrated pest management (IPM) plans and provide notification before pesticide applications. IPM plans will focus on prevention, sanitation, maintenance, and monitoring to reduce reliance on pesticides. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) will assist schools in creating the plans and will maintain a hypersensitivity registry to assist in the notification of students and employees who are especially sensitive to pesticides. The Pennsylvania IPM Program, a collaboration between Penn State and the PDA, houses a website (paipm.cas.psu.edu) that provides valuable information and resources about school IPM.**

International IPM Conference. **NE PMC was represented with a poster at the International IPM Conference held in Toronto in March. The event drew visitors from as far as Pakistan and New Zealand. Topics included new technologies, IPM measurement systems, removing barriers to IPM, IPM as a marketing tool, and the future of IPM.**

Fruit Group Makes Progress. **NE PMC's Fruit Commodity Working Group held its first meeting in March to plan what contributions they will make to fruit IPM in the Northeast. With representatives from all twelve states, the group will document fruit IPM resources available throughout the region, such as fact sheets, production guides, videos, treatment thresholds, and people with IPM expertise. The group also hopes to survey regional stakeholders to determine research, regulatory, and education priorities.**

Crop Profiles Offer a Critical Snapshot

One of the most important tasks being carried out by NE PMC's state-based information networks is the development of crop profiles. These descriptions of crop production and pest management practices, compiled by commodity, form the basis for decisions about the future of pest management in U.S. agriculture.

What's in a crop profile? Crop profiles contain data about crop acreage, typical pest management practices, the amounts of pesticides used, and how these pesticides are used (not just data based on pesticide labels). Usually produced on a state-by-state basis, all crop profiles have common components:

- agricultural statistics for the crop
- crop information for regions within the state
- an inventory of pests and strategies used for their management, such as cultural practices, biological control, and pesticides
- lists of key contacts, references, and online resources.

Crop profiles are considered living documents, so as the pest management situation changes, older crop profiles are revised and updated versions made available.

Where do crop profiles come from? Crop profiles were introduced in May 1998 to meet the pesticide data requirements for the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), which instructs USDA and EPA to obtain pesticide use and usage data on major and minor crops. Of particular concern are classes of pesticides whose uses may be cancelled under the FQPA, some of which may be vital to the production of many of our crops. The profiles are produced by land-grant university scientists, individuals from commodity groups, and other interested parties. In some cases, such as New England, information for the profiles is gathered using surveys, which provide an especially reliable basis for determining the current status of pest management practices.

Who uses crop profiles, and why? Crop profiles provide valuable information to numerous audiences. In addition to using crop profiles for FQPA pesticide reassessments, EPA uses them to fill gaps in its crop matrices for pesticide use, and to replace the default or worst-case assumptions made in the absence of reliable data. The profiles are used by both EPA and USDA in preparing and evaluating pesticide risk management and mitigation plans. Crop profiles form the basis for pest management strategic plans (PMSPs) for agricultural crops, which many NE PMC groups are presently working to develop. USDA also uses them to identify critical pest management needs and to prioritize funding for agricultural research that will help us meet the needs of the future. Land-grant universities use them to inform elected officials, college administrators, producers, commodity groups, students, and others about crop production and pest management. Agricultural producers and pesticide applicators look to the profiles for information on typical production and pest management practices, as well as alternative pest management practices and resources.

Completed crop profiles are submitted by the land-grant universities and commodity groups to the USDA's Office of Pest Management Policy, where they are reviewed and then placed on a searchable web database. You can find completed crop profiles at www.pmcenters.org/cropprofiles/.

Thanks to Steven Toth for information provided in the transcript of his June 22, 2000, presentation to the Committee to Advise on Reassessment and Transition (www.epa.gov/pesticides/catat/).

Fourth National IPM Symposium Planned

A national integrated pest management (IPM) symposium is planned for April 8-10, 2003, in Indianapolis. The theme will be "Building Alliances for the Future of IPM," and topics addressed will include biological control, risk assessment, invasive species, the building of alliances, urban IPM (landscapes, schools, homes), international IPM, new technologies, IPM for vertebrate pests, communicating and marketing IPM, and the transition to ecologically based IPM. Details are on the web at www.conted.uiuc.edu/ipm.

Veggie Group Finds Fertile Common Ground

NE PMC's Vegetable Commodity Working Group (CWG) held its first meeting in March to address the concerns and challenges of the northeastern vegetable industry. The group, led by Ruth Hazzard (University of Massachusetts) and Curt Petzoldt (Cornell University), discussed how it can best contribute to successful vegetable integrated pest management (IPM) in the region. The group's members come from 10 of the 12 northeastern states and represent diverse stakeholders, including growers with a range of markets, processors, consultants, environmental groups, marketers, regulators, and researchers. These participants are working to ensure that the Center is responsive to the needs of all those concerned with IPM for vegetables throughout the region.

The Vegetable CWG had a very positive discussion, during which they identified several common goals and discussed what the group's role should be. They see a need for incentives that would encourage growers to adopt IPM and integrated crop management (ICM) tactics. These incentives might include the availability of on-farm scouts, who could bring expertise that would help growers plan effective pest management strategies.

The group also decided to collect and document the existence of IPM "elements" or "growing protocols" that define IPM methods and can thus help producers assess their practice of IPM. The CWG will identify elements in each northeastern state and examine how these elements can be used to help vegetable farmers improve their economic return and environmental stewardship. The vegetable CWG also sees a need to inform growers about available IPM resources and to determine what other types of information resources would be useful.

Finally, the group recognized the importance of pest management strategic plans (PMSPs), which can be used to establish future goals for research, education, and regulation in specific crops. As a region-wide group, they are in a unique position to look for common issues across all the northeastern states. The Vegetable CWG decided that it would like to participate in the development of a PMSP for a crop grown throughout the northeastern region. They identified several criteria that could help determine which crop(s) would be their focus, and they intend to work with other groups in the region to find the most appropriate crop for a PMSP.

Ruth Hazzard and Curt Petzoldt lead the Vegetable Commodity Working Group

___ crop consultant ___ scientist ___ journalist
___ pesticide applicator ___ Coop. Ext. staff ___ other _____
___ educator ___ policy maker

find the following types of information most useful:

_ Regional and national IPM news ___ IPM tips
_ News on NE PMC efforts and progress ___ News of upcoming events
_ Tips on information sources (e.g., websites) ___ Other: _____
_ Planned crop profiles and PMSPs

received this newsletter via: ___ Web download ___ Cooperative Extension
_ U.S. mail ___ Handout at meeting or other venue: _____
_ Campus mail ___ Other: _____

would prefer to receive this newsletter: ___ in printed form ___ via e-mail / web

our state: CT DC DE MA MD ME NH NJ NY PA RI VT WV Other: _____

omments/suggestions (e.g., topics you'd like to see in the newsletter):

_____

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you would like to be on our e-mail list, please provide:
our name:_____ E-mail address: _____

NE PMC Needs Your Opinion!

Please help us make this newsletter more useful and interesting to you by answering the questions at left. Just check or circle all that apply, tear at the perforations, and mail the postcard back to us (no stamp necessary). You can also complete this survey on the web at nepmc.org/inthecenter/may2002/survey.html.

Thanks for the feedback!

This newsletter is online at nepmc.org/inthecenter/may2002. For more information on NE PMC, visit our website (nepmc.org) or contact NE PMCs Coordinator Jim VanKirk (315-787-2378; jrv1@cornell.edu) or Information Specialist Liz Thomas (315-787-2626; egt3@cornell.edu), NYS IPM Program Office, NYSAES, Geneva, NY 14456. Publication supported by CSREES, USDA, project number 1952-CU-USDA-9759. Writing and design: Elizabeth Myers.
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